



We often think that we know a lot about Christmas but do we really? Read on to learn some fun facts about some Christmas traditions.

The Queen's Speech

The Queen's Speech is an important part of Christmas Day for many people. It is also known as the Royal Christmas Message.

The message is read by the king or queen of the United Kingdom on Christmas Day. It looks back over the past year and includes a personal message from the king or queen.

Queen Elizabeth II has read the Royal Christmas Message since she was crowned in 1953.



In 1932, King George V read the first King's Speech on the BBC radio. It was thought to be a good way for the world to hear the King.

His son, George VI (The Queen's father) continued reading the Royal Christmas Message when he became king and by 1957 it was on television as well as being on the radio.

Christmas Number Ones

The very first pop music single to be at number one on Christmas Day was Al Martino's song 'Here in My Heart' in 1952.

The Beatles reached Christmas number one three years in a row during the 1960s and St. Winifred's School Choir got to number one singing 'There's No One Quite Like Grandma' in 1980.

Cliff Richard has had four number ones on Christmas Day. In 1962, he was beaten by Elvis Presley and his song 'Return to Sender'.

In 2015, the Lewisham and Greenwich NHS choir sang 'A Bridge Over You' which stopped Justin Bieber from being number one with 'Love Yourself'. All of the profits made from the NHS choir's single were given to charity. Justin Bieber tweeted, "Just heard the news. Amazing. That is what Christmas is all about! Very cool!"

Bing Crosby's 'White Christmas' is the highest-earning Christmas song of all time. Written by Irving Berlin, it has sold more than 100 million copies since Bing Crosby sang it in 1942.



Questions

1. When is The Queen's Speech read? Tick one.

- ☐ Christmas Eve
- ☐ Christmas Day
- ☐ Boxing Day
- ☐ New Year's Day

2. When did Queen Elizabeth II start to read The Queen's Speech? Tick one.

- ☐ 1953
- ☐ 1952
- ☐ 1935
- ☐ 2015

3. Why did King George V agree to read The King's Speech?

4. What happened to the Royal Christmas Message in 1957? Tick one.

- ☐ The speech was just on the television.
- ☐ The speech was on both the television and the radio.
- ☐ No one read the speech that year.
- ☐ The speech was moved.

5. Draw **three** lines and match each date to the event that happened.

1980

Elvis Presley was at number one for Christmas.

1952

St. Winifred's School Choir were at number one for Christmas.

1962

Al Martino was at number one for Christmas.

6. Find and copy one word which means **someone got there first**.

7. Why do you think that Justin Bieber said that it was amazing when he was stopped from being number one?

Answers

1. When is The Queen's Speech read? Tick one.

- ☐ Christmas Eve
☒ **Christmas Day**
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2. When did Queen Elizabeth II start to read The Queen's Speech? Tick one.

- ☒ **1953**
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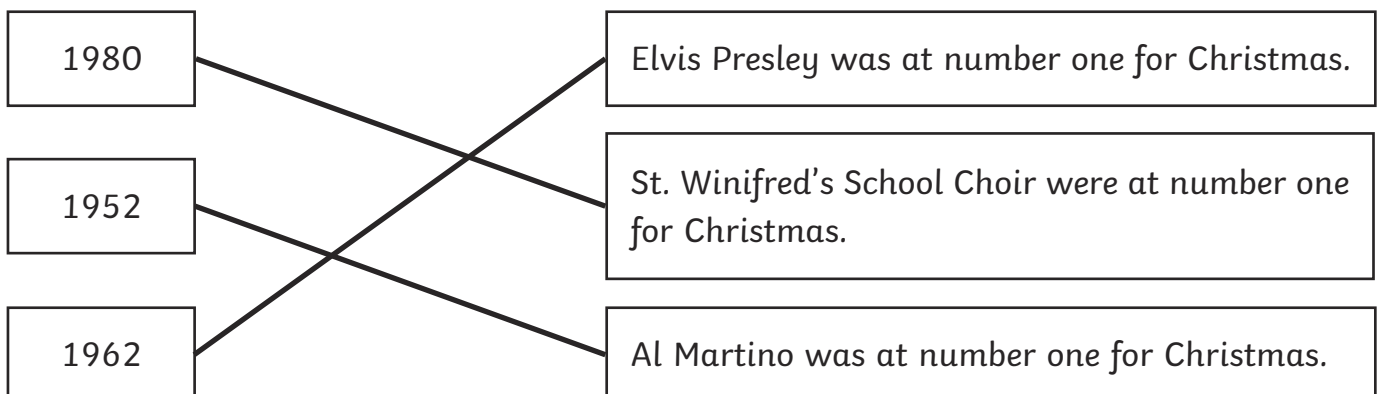
3. Why did King George V agree to read The King's Speech?

King George V agreed to read The King's Speech because it was thought to be a good way for the world to hear the king.

4. What happened to the Royal Christmas Message in 1957? Tick one.

- ☐ The speech was just on the television.
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5. Draw **three** lines and match each date to the event that happened.



6. Find and copy one word which means **someone got there first**.

beaten

7. Why do you think that Justin Bieber said that it was amazing when he was stopped from being number one?

Pupils' own responses, such as: I think that Justin Bieber said that it was amazing when he was stopped from being number one because profits from the choir's single went to charity. The charity would get lots of money and this is a good thing.



We often think we know a lot about Christmas but how much do we actually know? Read on to learn some interesting facts about Christmas traditions.

The Queen's Speech

The Royal Christmas Message, which is also known as The Queen's Speech, is a familiar part of Christmas Day for many people.

In 1922, King George V was asked if he would broadcast a Christmas message on the BBC's new radio service. The King refused as he felt the radio was just for entertainment. In 1932, the King was asked again and this time he accepted. His wife Queen Mary and the Prime Minister encouraged the King, saying it was a good way to be heard by people all over the world.



Did You Know...?

The Royal Message delivered in 1932 was written by author Rudyard Kipling, who wrote 'The Jungle Book'.

George VI continued reading the Royal Christmas Message when he became King. By 1957, it was broadcast on television as well as on the radio.



The message looks back over the past year and includes a personal comment from the king or queen at the time.

Queen Elizabeth II has read the Royal Christmas Message since she was crowned in 1953.

Christmas Number Ones

The singles pop music charts have been around since 1952, with Al Martino getting to number one with his song 'Here in My Heart' in that year.



The Beatles achieved Christmas number one three years in a row during the 1960s and St. Winifred's School Choir got to number one singing about their grandma in 1980!

Cliff Richard has had four number ones on Christmas Day. In 1962, he was overtaken by Elvis Presley's popular song 'Return to Sender'.



Did You Know...?

Only six Christmas number ones actually have the word 'Christmas' in the title. This doesn't include Slade's song, 'Merry Xmas Everybody' from 1973.

'X Factor' winners were often number one for Christmas but charity choirs have been successful in recent years. In 2015, the Lewisham and Greenwich NHS choir sang 'A Bridge Over You' which kept Justin Bieber from being number one. All of the profits made from the NHS choir's single were given to a few different charities. Justin Bieber tweeted, "Just heard the news. Amazing. That is what

Christmas is all about! Very cool!"

White Christmas

Bing Crosby's 'White Christmas' is the highest-earning Christmas song of all time. Written by Irving Berlin, it has sold more than 100 million copies worldwide since Bing Crosby sang it in 1942.

Questions

1. When was King George V first asked to read the Royal Christmas Message? Tick one.

- ☐ 1932
- ☐ 1902
- ☐ 1922
- ☐ 2015

2. Why did the King initially refuse to read the message?

- ☐ He didn't like Christmas.
- ☐ He thought that it was too early.
- ☐ He thought that radio was only for entertainment.
- ☐ He wanted to wait until New Year's Day.

3. Find and copy one word which means to **persuade someone to do something**.

4. Explain what the king or queen says in their Royal Christmas Message.

5. Who wrote the 1932 Royal Christmas Message? Tick one.

- ☐ King George V
- ☐ The Queen
- ☐ Rudyard Kipling
- ☐ The radio

6. Who has read the Royal Christmas Message since 1953?

7. Queen Elizabeth II has read the Royal Christmas Message since she was _____
in 1953. Tick one.

- ☐ accepted
- ☐ crowned
- ☐ broadcast
- ☐ commented

8. How did Justin Bieber feel about not having a Christmas number one?

Explain how you know.

Answers

1. When was King George V first asked to read the Royal Christmas Message? Tick one.

- ☐ 1932
- ☐ 1902
- ☒ **1922**
- ☐ 2015

2. Why did the King initially refuse to read the message?

- ☐ He didn't like Christmas.
- ☐ He thought that it was too early.
- ☒ **He thought that radio was only for entertainment.**
- ☐ He wanted to wait until New Year's Day.

3. Find and copy one word which means to **persuade someone to do something.**
encouraged

4. Explain what the king or queen says in their Royal Christmas Message.

Pupils' own responses, such as: In the Royal Christmas Message, the King or Queen says something about the past year and adds a personal comment.

5. Who wrote the 1932 Royal Christmas Message? Tick one.

- ☐ King George V
- ☐ The Queen
- ☒ **Rudyard Kipling**
- ☐ The radio

6. Who has read the Royal Christmas Message since 1953?

Queen Elizabeth II has read the Royal Christmas message since 1953.

7. Queen Elizabeth II has read the Royal Christmas Message since she was _____
in 1953. Tick one.

- ☐ accepted
- ☒ **crowned**
- ☐ broadcast
- ☐ commented

8. How did Justin Bieber feel about not having a Christmas number one?

Explain how you know.

Pupils' own responses, such as: Justin Bieber did not mind that he didn't have a Christmas number one because he was very pleased that the Lewisham and Greenwich NHS choir got to number one with their charity single. He tweeted that it was amazing and that was what Christmas is all about.



We often think we are very knowledgeable about Christmas but are we really? Read on to learn some fascinating facts about some Christmas traditions.

The Royal Christmas Message

The Royal Christmas Message, otherwise known as The Queen's Speech, is as significant to some on Christmas Day as exchanging presents.

It began in 1932 as a radio broadcast by King George V on the British Broadcasting Corporation's Empire Service, or the BBC. In 1922, the founder of the BBC, John Reith, asked the King if he would broadcast a Christmas message on the relatively new radio service. The King declined, as he felt the radio was only for entertainment purposes. However, in 1932, the King was asked again, and this time his wife, Queen Mary, and the Prime Minister, Ramsey MacDonald, persuaded the King that it was a good way for all the people around the world to hear the sovereign.

The Royal Message delivered in 1932 was written by author Rudyard Kipling, who wrote 'The Jungle Book'.

His son, George VI (The Queen's father), continued broadcasting the Royal Christmas Message when he became King and by 1957, it was seen on television in addition to being heard on the radio.

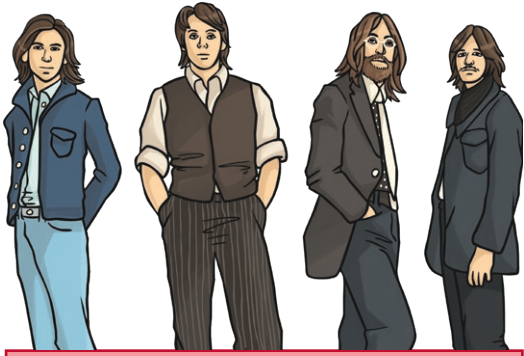
The message reviews events during the past year but also includes some personal reflections made by the monarch and their general good wishes for Christmas.

Queen Elizabeth II has delivered the Royal Christmas Message since her coronation in 1953. It is recorded a few days before Christmas Day but broadcast during the afternoon of 25th December.





Christmas Number Ones



Only six Christmas number ones actually have the word 'Christmas' in the title. This doesn't include Slade's song, 'Merry Xmas Everybody' from 1973.

The singles pop music charts were established in 1952, with the first Christmas number one going to Al Martino with 'Here in My Heart'. Since then, the race to reach the number one spot by Christmas Day has always been a highly important competition for musical artists.

Among the more usual Christmas-themed tunes, there are some surprising chart-toppers. The Beatles held the number one spot in the Christmas charts three years in a row during the 1960s. In 1980, St. Winifred's School Choir sang a song about their grandma, which got them to number one during the festive season.

Cliff Richard has had four number ones on Christmas Day but, in 1962, he was pipped to the post by Elvis Presley with 'Return to Sender'.

'X Factor' winners were often number one for Christmas but in recent years charity choirs have been successful, with the Lewisham and Greenwich NHS choir even managing to keep Justin Bieber's 'Love Yourself' from being number one with their song 'A Bridge Over You' in 2015.

All of the profits made from the NHS choir's single were given to a few different charities. Justin Bieber tweeted, "Just heard the news. Amazing. That is what Christmas is all about! Very cool!"

Christmas Songs

Bing Crosby's 'White Christmas' is the highest-earning Christmas song of all time. Written by Irving Berlin, it has sold more than 100 million copies worldwide since Bing Crosby sang it in 1942.

Another successful Christmas song was 'Do They Know It's Christmas?' by Band Aid in 1984. The song was written for the Live Aid concert which raised money for people in Ethiopia during a terrible famine. Many famous musicians and singers took part and the single went straight to number one in the pop charts selling 1 million copies in just the first week. It is still a well-known Christmas song today!

The only Christmas song to have reached number one twice in the festive charts by the same artist is 'Bohemian Rhapsody' by the band Queen. It initially reached number one in 1975 and had a repeat victory 16 years later following band member Freddie Mercury's death.



Questions

1. Who read the first ever Royal Christmas Message and when did they read it?

2. Which word closely matches the meaning of declined? Tick one.

- ☐ refuted
☐ agreed
☐ refused
☐ accepted

3. Why did Queen Mary and Ramsey MacDonald think it would be a good idea for King George V to read the Royal Christmas Message?

4. Fill in the missing word.

Only six Christmas number ones _____ have the word 'Christmas' in the title.

5. Summarise the Royal Christmas Message in 25 words or fewer.

6. Draw **three** lines and match each person to the fact about them.

Cliff Richard

He did not have a Christmas number one.

Elvis Presley

He has had four Christmas number one hits.

Justin Bieber

He had a Christmas number one with 'Return to Sender'.

7. How did Justin Bieber feel about not having a Christmas number one?

Explain how you know.

8. Why do you think the Christmas single 'Do They Know It's Christmas?' did so well in the charts?

Answers

1. Who read the first ever Royal Christmas Message and when did they read it?

King George V read the first Royal Christmas Message in 1932.

2. Which word closely matches the meaning of declined? Tick one.

- ☐ refuted
☐ agreed
☒ **refused**
☐ accepted

3. Why did Queen Mary and Ramsey MacDonald think it would be a good idea for King George V to read the Royal Christmas Message?

Queen Mary and Ramsey MacDonald thought it would be a good idea for King George V to read the Royal Christmas Message because it was a good way for all the people around the world to hear the sovereign.

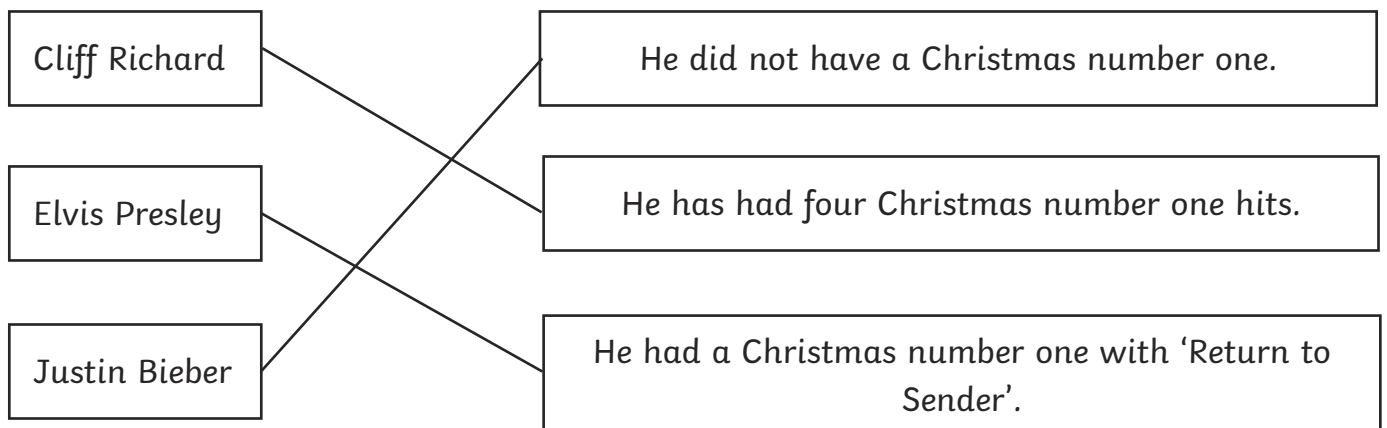
4. Fill in the missing word.

Only six Christmas number ones **actually** have the word 'Christmas' in the title.

5. Summarise the Royal Christmas Message in 25 words or fewer.

Pupils' own responses, such as: The Royal Christmas Message has been read since 1932. The message includes information about the past year and a personal message from the sovereign.

6. Draw **three** lines and match each person to the fact about them.



7. How did Justin Bieber feel about not having a Christmas number one?
Explain how you know.

Pupils' own responses, such as: Justin Bieber did not mind that he didn't have a Christmas number one because he was very pleased that the Lewisham and Greenwich NHS choir got to number one with their charity single. He tweeted that it was amazing and that was what Christmas is all about.

8. Why do you think the Christmas single 'Do They Know It's Christmas?' did so well in the charts?

Pupils' own responses, such as: I think the Christmas single 'Do They Know It's Christmas?' did so well in the charts because it was a charity song raising money for people in Ethiopia who did not have enough to eat. Christmas is a time for sharing with others and giving gifts and at Christmas people would have felt they could help by buying the single.