

Topic: Spring Activities

Let's get started... Spring is a time of renewal for many people. The weather is becoming warmer, days are lasting longer, trees are beginning to bud with new leaves, and flowers are starting to bloom. Birds that had flown south for the winter are beginning to return to our northern climate. New animals are born. There is a new energy in the air.

Background:

In the United States, in the spring, people start thinking about planting vegetable gardens. More people come out of their houses to get outdoor exercise. You see more people walking, riding bicycles, and playing outdoor games with their children. Many people also start to think about summer, and planning summer vacations and summer activities with their children. In the Seattle area, there are some special festivals celebrating spring – for example, the Tulip Festival in La Conner, Washington, in April, and the Northwest Folk Life Festival at the Seattle Center, at the end of May. April 22 is Earth Day. Arbor Day is celebrated in Washington State on the second Wednesday in April (this year, April 9).



In pairs for 5 minutes, ask and answer these questions:

- Is spring weather in your native country similar to the weather here? What is it like? What is your favorite season? (spring? summer? fall? winter?) And why do you like it?
- Does your native country have a special day in the spring to celebrate flowers, trees, or plants similar to the Tulip Festival, or Arbor Day? If yes, tell a partner about it.
- Does your native country have a special day to celebrate the environment, similar to Earth Day in the United States? If yes, tell a partner about this day.
- In the United States, do you have a garden? What do you plant? Do you enjoy gardening? Do you plant fruit, vegetables, or flowers? Do you have any special gardening “tips” to tell your partner?

Share your partner's answers with the group.

Discussion Questions:

What are some spring activities you did in your native country? Did you plant vegetable or flower gardens? Did you clean your house? Did you buy new clothes?

If you planted gardens in the spring in your native country, what vegetables, fruits or flowers did you plant?

Do the same plants grow in Seattle as you grew in your native country? Tell about some of the similarities and differences.

Did you paint your house or do any other special home projects? Tell a partner about your spring activities around the home.

Do you do the same activities in Seattle? Tell about some similarities and differences between your spring activities in your native country and in Seattle.

Are there special sports or outdoor activities in the spring in your native country? Tell a partner about sports and outdoor activities in the spring in your native country.

What is your favorite spring sport? Do you play this sport? Do your children play this sport? Do you watch other people play this sport? Do you watch this sport on TV?

Are there any special holidays or traditions about spring in your native country? Tell about a spring holiday or spring tradition in your native country?

Do people in your native country enjoy hiking in the spring? If yes, tell about some of the places people like to go.

Do you enjoy walking? Where do you like to walk? Where do people go to walk in your native country?

Do you enjoy camping? Tell about some places in your country to camp. Have you been camping in the United States? If yes, tell about a camping trip – where you went, what you did, what you saw.

What is your favorite spring activity? Does your family (wife, husband, children, mother, father, brothers, or sisters) enjoy the same activity?

New words and Idioms: renewal; bud; bloom; special; festivals; tulip; Folk Life; Arbor; celebrate; similar; environment; “tips”; home projects; outdoor activities; traditions; hiking; camping; spring cleaning; “March comes in like a lion and goes out like a lamb.” “April showers bring May flowers.”