

Topic: Holidays and Traditions – Mother’s Day

Let’s get started... As a group – see if you can come up with ideas to describe what makes a “good mother”? (What characteristics are important?)

Background:

Everyone has a mother, and every mother has an influence on her child. Mothers do many things for us – they feed us, clothe us, take care of us when we are sick, help us learn about life and teach us how to do many things. Mothers come with their own personalities, styles, values, interests, opinions and ideas about life. As we grow up, we may agree or disagree, but one thing is certain: Mothers are an important influence in our lives. In many countries, there is a special day to honor mothers – to stop and remember mothers, and to say “thank you” to our mothers. Mother’s Day may be a difficult time for those who have lost their mothers, whose mothers have died or are very ill, or for those who have had a difficult time or a difficult relationship with their mother. But even these difficulties highlight the important role a mother has in her child’s life.

History: In the United States, Mother’s Day was established as a national, federal holiday, in 1914, by President Woodrow Wilson. The holiday is celebrated each year on the second Sunday in May. Approximately 40 other countries around the world celebrate a form of mother’s day.



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

- In your native country, do you have a special day to honor mothers? If yes, when is the day? How do you celebrate? Do you wear special clothes or eat special foods?
- In your native country, do you have a special day to honor other family members (fathers, grandparents, children)? If yes, when is the day? How do you celebrate? What do you do? Do you wear special clothes or eat special foods?
- Since coming to the United States, do you celebrate your native country’s special day? How is your celebration the same, or different from, the way you celebrated in your country?

Share your partner’s answers with the group.

Discussion Questions:

What advice did your mother give you that you remember? Why do you remember?

What is something your mother told you that you did not agree with? Why did you disagree?

What is your mother's favorite hobby? Does she still practice this hobby?

What was your mother's favorite toy when she was a child? What did she tell you about it?

What was your mother's favorite subject in school? Why did she like this subject?

What is your mother's favorite color? How do you know this is her favorite color?

What is your mother's favorite flower? How do you know it is her favorite?

What values were important to your mother? How did she let you know about her values?

When you were a child, did you like your mother's cooking? Did she have some favorite recipes that you especially loved? Tell about one recipe, and how she made it.

Did your mother have brothers and sisters? Tell about her relationship with her family, her parents (your grandparents), her brothers and sisters (your aunts and uncles)? Were they a close family? Did they spend holidays together?

When you were a child, did your mother enjoy entertaining friends or relatives with dinner parties at your home for holidays? What special foods did she make? What special activities did she organize for the celebrations?

When you were a child and you were sick, what special things did your mother do to help you feel better?

Did your mother have any special songs or lullabies that she sang to you when you were young?

Was music important to your mother? Did she play any musical instruments?

Was dance, art, athletics (sports), sewing, knitting, crocheting, or cooking important to her? How do you know these things were important to her?

Which family traditions of your mother do you, or will you, continue with your children?

New words and Idioms: lullaby (lullabies); celebrate; celebration; recipe; special; activities; entertaining; especially; advice; characteristics; hobby; appreciate; advice; favorite; organize; (school) subject; toy; honor; establish; proclamation; approximately; influence; punish; reprimand; highlight; role; let (someone) know about (something); values; sewing; knitting; crocheting; family traditions.