

Canadians Love To Watch NHL Hockey

The National Hockey League (NHL) has 26 teams. The teams belong to the Western Conference or the Eastern Conference. There are four divisions: Pacific, Central, Atlantic and Northeast. Each team in the NHL plays 82 games in the regular season. The play-offs between the 16 best teams begin in April. After the final game of the play-offs, the winning team gets the Stanley Cup.

The Stanley Cup gets its name from Lord Stanley. He was the Governor General of Canada from 1888 to 1893. Lord Stanley gave the Cup for the best hockey team in Canada. Today, the Stanley Cup goes to the winning NHL team.

Did You Know?

1. There are three periods in an NHL hockey game. Each period is 20 minutes long.
2. Hockey players skate up to 50 kilometres per hour.
3. A puck can travel 160 kilometres per hour.
4. A goalie wears about 16 kilograms of equipment.

Background Information

This story is about hockey? What do you know about hockey? Do you know where the Stanley Cup came from? If you like hockey, talk about your favorite team and why you like them. Also talk about what changes you've seen in the NHL since you started watching.

Questions

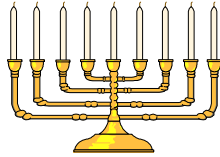
1. How many teams are in the NHL?
2. What are the names of each division in the NHL?
3. What is a play-off?
4. Why do you think teams play so many games per season?
5. Do you think April is too late for play-offs? Why?
6. What does the winning team get?
7. Where does the name Stanley Cup come from?
8. What is a Governor General?
9. Who did Lord Stanley give the Cup to?
10. Why do you think a goalie wears so much equipment?



Happy Holidays

Hanukkah

Hanukkah is a Jewish holiday. Hanukkah is called the Festival of Lights. Each night, families get together. They light a candle on the menorah. They exchange gifts and eat special food.



Christmas

Christmas Day is on December 25th. People celebrate the birth of Christ. There are special church services. There are many Christmas traditions. People decorate Christmas trees. They sing carols. They hang up stockings. They exchange gifts. They have a turkey dinner.



Julian Calendar

Some people celebrate Christmas Day on January seventh. They follow the Julian calendar. It is an older calendar of the church year.

Background Information

Not everyone celebrates Christmas the same way. In fact, not everyone celebrates Christmas at all. Talk about what you and your family do for Christmas or whatever holiday you might celebrate during December. If you do celebrate Christmas, talk about who might not celebrate Christmas and what they might celebrate instead.



Questions

1. What kind of holiday is Hanukkah?
2. What is a menorah?
3. What do people do during Hanukkah?
4. What are people celebrating during Christmas?
5. What are carols?
6. Why do people hang up stockings?
7. When is another date that people might celebrate Christmas?
8. What is the Julian calendar?
9. What do people do during Hanukkah and Christmas that are the same?

Other Activities: You and your tutor can do some research and find out what the origins are of some Christmas traditions, Hanukkah or other celebrations. Then write about what you find out.

Some People Feel Sad During The Holidays

Do you sometimes feel sad at Christmas and New Year's? You are not alone. Many people feel sad and alone on holidays. What can you do? Here are some ideas.

1. Make sure that you are not by yourself on holidays. Get together with a friend, neighbour, or classmate. Have a potluck dinner. Everyone can bring some food.
2. Enjoy the winter weather. Go skating or tobogganing. Take a walk in the woods with a friend. 
3. Make gifts you can give, like cookies, squares, or Christmas tree decorations.
4. Give gifts like coupons for babysitting or shoveling snow. 
5. Go to a Christmas concert or a craft sale.

Background Information

Sometimes people get a little sad during the holidays. Talk about why people might feel sad during this time. Have you ever felt sad during the holidays? How did you get over it?

Questions

1. What is an idea?
2. What is a potluck dinner?
3. How will getting together with friends help?
4. Do you think many people you know would be spending the holidays alone?
5. What is a toboggan?
6. What are some winter activities?
7. What other ideas do you have for helping someone cope with sadness during the holidays?
8. What kinds of gifts can you make?
9. What kinds of gifts could go on coupons?
10. What other activities could you do during the holiday season?



Birthday

by James McKoen.

A Birthday comes once a year,
Like a celebration!
We have all these good days,
Called Birthdays. We receive gifts,
And sometimes money.

It's a special day.
My special day is coming.
A special thing will happen.
I will receive nice gifts.
My special day brings me happiness.



Background Information

Birthdays are special no matter what your age. Talk about your best birthday experience and your worst.



Questions

1. How often does a birthday come?
2. What does the word birthday mean?
3. Why do you think James likes birthdays?
4. Why is a birthday a special day?
5. What do you get on your birthday?
6. What's another word for receive?
7. Do you think getting gifts is the most important thing about a birthday? What is?
8. Use the word special in a sentence.

Seasons

by Maria Flores.

The first snowfall of the season was a day before Thanksgiving Day. It was wonderful. I saw the children and adults sliding on the sleigh. Also I was happy when I saw the first snowfall. I like to sit in the window when the snow is falling. I like the dry snow. In my free time I go to Central Park and work for a long time in the snow. Like the children, I also play in the snow. I enjoy looking at the white city and think I am in a fairy tale. I only like this part of the winter.

The spring is a beautiful season because the plants grow and the flowers adorn parks and gardens. The tender leaves give us oxygen. The fresh temperature lets us feel well.



The summer is a mixture of rain, heat and breeze. The sun rises early in the morning. The days seem very long. We can go to the beach and travel.

Autumn also has a romantic side, like the colors of the trees' leaves. However, the wind blows the trees' leaves. They are gone until the spring comes again.

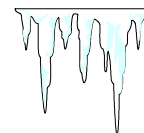
Sometimes, I feel like the leafless trees and snowless winter.

Background Information

Weather makes people remember things that have already happened. People may remember where they were or what they were doing during very bad and/or very good weather. Sometimes the weather makes people remember small things like watching the leaves fall in the autumn or watching children make a snowman in winter. Talk about your weather experiences. What do each of the seasons help you to remember?

Questions

1. When was the first snowfall of the season?
2. What were the children and adults doing?
3. What is another word for sleigh?
4. Where is Central Park?
5. What do you think Maria likes most about the winter?
6. Why is spring a beautiful season?
7. What do we need oxygen for?
8. Why do you think the days seem very long in the summer?
9. What is another word for autumn?
10. What do you think Maria means by the last line in her story?



Other Activities:

Imagine you live in Africa or Russia, or the Philippines. Describe what the seasons would be like there. Do you think it snows there? Does it rain? Write a story about the seasons in another country.

Write about your favorite season. Why do you like it? What kinds of things can you do then that you can't do at other times of the year?

Swimming in the Toiletbowl

by Murray Baillargeon.

Just sitting around in my wheelchair on a sunny beach in Hawaii with a cold drink in my hand, my brother-in-law approached me and asked me if I wanted to go for a swim in the toiletbowl. Having had a few drinks, I thought I would go along with the joke. He tilted my wheelchair back and we proceeded across the lava rocks towards the far end of the cove, laughing at one another because we were precariously close to the edge of the water. It seemed to me that we'd gone on for miles with me bouncing along in the wheelchair. Part of the frame of the wheelchair broke but we continued to forge on. Upon arriving at the far point of the cove, my brother-in-law pointed and said "There's the Toiletbowl".



The bowl was worn hollow in the rocks and when the waves came in they rushed into the hollow through a small hole, filling it up just like when you flush the toilet. In fact it almost made the same sound. As the waves went back out, the water left the bowl from a different hole in the rocks. The water level dropped just like the water in the toilet.

My brother-in-law and another fellow helped pick me up out of the chair and put me in the bowl. There

I was bobbing up and down like a cork and laughing heartily to myself, as the water flushed in and was sucked out, knowing no one would ever believe I swam in a toiletbowl.

Background Information

This story is about a place that looks like something else. Have you seen a potato chip that looked like someone's face or a cloud that looked like an animal? Or have you been to a place that looked like something you might find in your house (a rock that looks like a lamp or something like that)?



Questions

1. Where was Murray?
2. Did he think his brother-in-law was serious?
3. What is lava?
4. Did Murray have a good time?
5. What does the word precarious mean?
6. What happened to the wheelchair?
7. Do you think they should have kept going after the wheelchair broke?
8. Use the word forge as it's used in this story in a sentence.
9. What was the Toiletbowl?
10. Why do you think that Murray thought that no one would believe he swam in a toiletbowl?

Polar Bear Swim

Every year on New Year's Day some people in Vancouver swim in the ocean. This event is called the Polar Bear Swim. The water and the air are usually very cold on January first.



Celebrating Chinese New Year

The Chinese New Year is in February. People celebrate in many ways. For example:

1. Before the new year, people pay off debts and clean their homes.
2. On New Year's Day people wear new clothes and shoes.
3. People say "Gung hay fat choy". This means good luck in the new year.
4. Children get money in little red envelopes. It is called lai see or "lucky money".

Background Information

Talk about some of the things people do that may seem strange to you like riding a bike in the winter when it's -40 C. Why do you think people do these things?

Questions

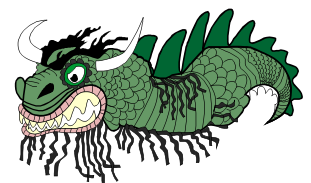
1. What do some people in Vancouver do on New Year's Day?
2. What is an event?
3. What is the event called?
4. What is another word for ocean?
5. What temperature are the water and air at that time of year?
6. What do you think would happen to a person's body if he or she jumped into freezing cold water?

Background Information

People from different cultures sometimes celebrate holidays differently than you may or they might not celebrate them at all. Talk about how you celebrate New Year's and if you know anyone who might celebrate New Year's at a different time or in a different way.

Questions

1. When is the Chinese New Year?
2. What does celebrate mean?
3. What do people do before the new year?
4. Why do you think people wear new clothes on New Year's Day?
5. What do people say?
6. What is luck?
7. What is another way to say children?
8. What kind of envelopes do children get?
9. What is lai see?
10. What other Chinese customs do you know of?



Justin's Holiday to Vancouver

In June, I went on a holiday with seven other people. We traveled by van west across Canada to Vancouver Island. The van was very full with so many bodies and tents, sleeping bags, food and other things.

The first day, we went to Sudbury.



Everyone got to know each other and the different music each person liked. People made some jokes about my country and western music. Our first night was spent at Norman's brother's cottage. The sky was full of stars. We got up early at 5 a.m. We had a good breakfast. After breakfast, we went in the van all day. It was a long time; we ended up having lunch Sault Saint Marie or Kenora. After lunch, we drove for a long, long time. We arrived in a K O A campground in Thunder Bay late at night. Some put up the tent. Some people made supper and Chris made a fire. After our meal and a late sunset, we all went to bed. The next day, we got up at about 11 o'clock. We ate and went to see old Fort William. They explained the history of the Fort. A student was dressed in costume and pretended to be a trader. Next, we went to the Dairy Queen for something cold.

The day after, we slept in. Bernie made pancakes. We went swimming behind a dam. We went

on a cruise. The captain told us about the harbour and about all the wheat that comes here from the western provinces. We had a snack on the boat. In town, we ate Chinese food. Yaohua met some of his people. I did not like all the mosquitoes. We left early for Winnipeg. Our camp was set up just outside the city. The next morning, we went to a Museum and a market. We had a long sleep in and then drove to Saskatoon to a nice campground. It was very hot. We went swimming in a pool. Norman put air in the wheelchair tires. Dallacy's tire blew out.

Next day we went to Edmonton. At lunch time, we stopped at the biggest egg in the world in Vegreville. We stayed at a campground outside Edmonton. We saw oil rig pumps and greener vegetation here.



On Monday, we woke up late to hear the seagulls. Chris made breakfast. Then we drove into Edmonton to fix Dallacy's chair and go to West Edmonton Mall. I liked that very much. It was big and there was lots to see and do. I would like to visit the mall again someday. That night it rained and we wrote postcards. The next day, I went to the Space and Science Museum. Norman and Germaine rested at the campground today. That night, it rained a lot. We had a good dinner of barbeque hamburgers and then some visitors came over to talk. Norman and I went for a small walk to Trout Lake.

June 29th was Chris's 15th birthday. By 7 o'clock in the morning, we were on the road to Kamloops. In Jasper, we stopped and had a big lunch and birthday dessert.

After lunch, I fell asleep in the van. I liked seeing the tall mountains and trees. This was a special part of my trip.



About 6 p.m., we arrived in Kamloops. We stayed at Bernie's sister's house for one night. Her name is Theresa; we had a beautiful dinner that night. We had to change the time on our watches.

The next day, we are off to Vancouver. We enjoyed our

dinner at the harbour, good fish chowder. We stayed at the L'Arche home for three nights. A special man founded the L'Arche homes around the world, Jean Vanier.

The next day was July 1st, Canada's birthday. It rained and was cool. Before lunch, we went to Granville Island. We visited the market and its shops. I didn't find it interesting. After we drove to Gastown. We



walked around this old part of the city. We had supper at a Chinese restaurant. Then, we went to Canada Place. This morning, July 2, we had a good breakfast of pancakes and red syrup.

This was a good start to the day.

We went to a beautiful park at Burnaby Point. We could see big mountains, trees, ocean and the city. In the park, we went to a restaurant where I ate two hotdogs and had a drink of Coke. That evening, we bought a big pizza and took a video to watch at L'Arche home.

Early the next day at 5 a.m., Germaine and Bernie got a ride to the airport with Norm to catch the airplane back to Ottawa. When I woke up we went to 11 o'clock mass. After church, we went to buy bread and juice for our lunch. Then we went to the ferry boat to catch a ride to Vancouver Island. It was a beautiful one hour trip on the water. When we arrived in Victoria, we had a look around. In the harbour, we saw many boats and a small airplane land on the water. The weather here was cool

and I liked the temperature. For dinner, we went to a restaurant in the harbour. Then we went to a friend's home, where we stayed for 3 nights. Sasha had a beautiful home. We had a good talk that night before going to bed.

On Monday, July 4, we had a good breakfast of toast, eggs and tomatoes. Then we visited Butchard Gardens and saw all the beautiful flowers. In late afternoon we went to the Museum of British Columbia. There we saw lots of big Indian Totem Poles, which we and Dallacy liked. After spaghetti dinner, we talked and went to bed.

July 5. Today we had a slow and relaxing day. Everyone did different chores. I made banana and yogurt cheesecake with Norman. In the afternoon, I had a sleep on soft round cushions. That evening, we went to listen to country and western music. At the club, there was a fight. I was afraid and we left.

July 6. We had porridge for breakfast. After packing up the van, we drove to Cathedral Grove near the country. In the park, there were big beautiful trees; one of them is 800 years old. We went for a walk between the trees. Today was cooler and it felt like autumn. I liked the temperature. Later that day, we camped at Pacific Rim



Campground near the ocean. It was beautiful. Some people went swimming in the ice cold water and they put water on my legs. There were lots of big waves. For dinner, we ate wieners then went to sleep in the tent and I had a

good sleep.

July 7 we woke up early at 5:30 a.m. It was ice cold. I thought it was funny and strange weather for the summertime. We saw where there had been a forest fire. We took the ferry boat from Nanaimo to Vancouver and took some pictures. Then we drove through Merritt to Kamloops, which took about 5 hours. The weather was a little bit warmer. We had a good dinner of salmon steaks, potatoes and cauliflower. But before supper, Norman and I went for a walk. Before going to bed in the tent, we cooked marshmallows and talked. July 8 we got up early and had pancakes for breakfast. We drove

from Kamloops to Revelstoke to Golden, where we saw more big beautiful mountains. We stopped at Lake Louise and saw a funny man in a snowsuit and bought a few gifts and postcards. Then we passed by Banff and stayed overnight in Canmore. Today, we had to change the time on our watches.



We woke up and had good pancakes for breakfast and then we went on our way. We visited the Drumheller museum and found the history and artifacts very interesting. This is where we ate our lunch. Now there are no more mountains to look at and the weather changes and it is much hotter. I prefer the cooler weather. That night, we stayed in L'Arche home in Calgary. We ate dinner with friends there. After sleeping late on Sunday, July 10, Norman and I went to church. In the afternoon, we went to the Stampede. I saw the cowboys on horses, went for a walk, ate a long hotdog and listened to country and western music. We ate dinner at Villamaria home with Priest Patrick, from Church, this morning. It was raining outside. Before going to bed, we talked and Norman and I went for a walk. The next day we drove across the flat and hot dirty prairies to Regina where we slept one night in the campground. That night, I heard a loud train and saw some beautiful stars. This is where we changed the time but we were confused about the time change when we woke up.

On Tuesday, July 12, we were driving in the van for most of the day. We ate our lunch in a schoolyard in Winnipeg. That night, we camped out in Kenora. Some people went swimming in the lake. It rained most of the night.

Wednesday, July 13. We got up early and had a fast breakfast. We got on our way after everything dried. Near Wawa, a friendly police officer stopped us and said, "Good morning", and gave Norman a surprise. Everyone laughed for about 5 minutes. After that, Norman slowed down. After lunch, we continued on our way. At four o'clock, we had an early dinner in a restaurant in Thunder Bay. Then we drove to a provincial campground on the shores of Lake Superior.



Here we saw beautiful colours including big blue water which was clear. It was a little bit dark outside when we set up the tents; also a bit cooler with a few friendly mosquitoes around.

Thursday, July 14. This morning, we drove to Sault Saint Marie and stopped for a submarine sandwich at lunch time. We drove for six more hours and arrived in Sudbury at supper time. We went to Norman's brother's cottage. I remember we all ate pizza that night. We put the tents outside to dry and slept inside. Everyone was tired and went to bed early.

On Friday, July 15, we slept in. We had a good, good breakfast of eggs and sausages. People went in swimming. I found the water a little bit cold; I was a big chicken. In the afternoon we went to the Big Nickel Park and went underground, into the mines. We went down a special elevator. It was very interesting to see where the men worked and go around on the tour. Then we went to dinner with Norman's family and celebrated his upcoming birthday on July 23. We had a good and beautiful talk about feelings.

On Saturday, July 16, we slept in. I woke up and had a sandwich for brunch. In the afternoon, Chris and I went in the paddleboat, and then I went back to the cottage and had a snooze. Norman's brother and mother came over to visit. The next day we went home to Ottawa. It was an interesting time.

Other Activities: Write a story about your best or worst vacation. Write it the same way that Justin did: in journal form. Don't worry if you can't remember exact dates. Just make them up. Include things like descriptions of the places you visited, what you and your family or friends did, how you traveled, what you ate, and anything else you can think of.

Background Information

Vacations are good. When you travel, you get to make your own world a little larger. Talk about any vacations you've gone on. Where did you go? What did you do? Was everything fun or did you fight with your family?

Questions

1. Where did Justin go on vacation?
2. How many people did he travel with?
3. Why do you think Justin had an "interesting time"?
4. What kind of egg did they see in Vegreville?
5. Where was Justin from?
6. What is a totem pole?
7. Why did Justin like West Edmonton Mall?
8. What is a postcard?
9. Why did the group have to keep changing the time on their watches?
10. What is another word for a church mass?