**Blue Group 22/06/20**

Geography

**Summer Solstice**

As you are probably aware this Saturday marks the summer solstice – the longest day of the year, here in the northern hemisphere.

If you want a refresher on why this happens, watch this short video:

<https://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=solstice+explained&&view=detail&mid=83C62D09C410597D75DA83C62D09C410597D75DA&&FORM=VRDGAR&ru=%2Fvideos%2Fsearch%3Fq%3Dsolstice%2Bexplained%26FORM%3DHDRSC4>

Falling usually between 20-22nd of June, the Summer Solstice marks the longest day of the year. It is when the sun reaches its highest point in the sky, as the earth tilts on its **axis**, causing the North Pole to be at its closest to the sun. Daylight can last for 16 hours or longer in the UK. It can be considerably longer nearer to the North Pole: parts of Norway, Finland, Alaska and Greenland are called ‘the land of the midnight sun’, as they have very little darkness, and there is **continuous** daylight at the North Pole itself.

The word ‘solstice’ is from two Latin words: ‘sol’ meaning ‘sun’ and ‘sistere’ meaning ‘to make stand still.’ It’s as if the sun stops briefly before its **descent** towards winter. For this reason, the Solstice is also called, ‘Midsummer’.

This event has been commemorated for thousands of years. At places like Stonehenge in Wiltshire, which was built over 4,000 years ago, the rising sun aligns with two stones, the Heel Stone and the slaughter Stone, before falling directly onto the altar. This is seen as so special that hundreds gather every Solstice to witness the **spectacle**. Many of these are Pagans, who call the Summer Solstice, ‘Litha’, when they believe the battle between dark and light is won by the sun. Worshippers meet at sunrise on the Solstice to honour the sun at Stonehenge and other sacred sites.

Other religions also celebrate Midsummer. In the Christian calendar, 24th, June is the Feast day of St John the Baptist. There are many, many celebrations of this day throughout Europe, and in South America. At the same time, the Chinese Goddess of Light, Li is also honoured. This is the power of the sun, especially at this time of year.

However, for most of us the Summer Solstice is simply an opportunity to enjoy more daylight, hopefully in warm sunlight, before we move towards autumn, when the Winter Solstice brings us the shortest day.

Find the answers to these questions:

1. When does the Summer Solstice usually occur?
2. How long does a day last in the U.K. during the Summer Solstice?
3. How long does a day last in the North Pole during the Summer Solstice?
4. Why is the Summer Solstice also called ‘midsummer’?
5. Why do many Pagans go to Stonehenge for the Summer Solstice?
6. What other celebrations occur around this time?
7. What is the meaning of: axis/ descent/ continuous/spectacle? These are in **bold** in the text. ,
8. Can you find two superlatives in the first paragraph?

(Superlatives are comparisons, like the most beautiful, often these

comparisons end -est, like the biggest, the toughest)

1. **It’s** means it is or it has. **Its** is a pronoun, like his or her. Both are used in the passage.

Can you decide whether it should be it’s or its in the sentences below?

* ……….. nearly the end of term.
* ……… an old car; …….. doors don't open.
* When the sun is high ……… rays are strong.
* ……….. my turn!
* ……….. been a good year.
* Although ……… an old rose, ……….. perfume is sweet. ……….. in need

of water as ……….been so dry lately.

1. Write about a typical summer activity. It could be a hot day playing tennis, a day out at the park or seaside, or a torrential downpour when you're out at a picnic!

Describe the scene as vividly as you can so your reader can picture the

scene.

Mathematics

**Percentages**

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