

History of Christmas Study Guide

1. Sol Invictus Roman celebration also known as the “birthday of the unconquered sun.”
2. yule Ancient northern European winter festival that included feasting and evergreen decorations.
3. Mithras Deity honored in the Roman festival “dies natalis solis invicti.”
4. St Nicholas Fourth-century bishop whose generosity influenced the modern Santa Claus.
5. Christmas tree Decorated evergreen tradition popularized in Germany before spreading worldwide.
6. celebration General term for the communal joy and gatherings central to Christmas throughout history.
7. Saturnalia Roman festival known for feasting, role reversals, and gift-giving.
8. evergreens Plants symbolizing life and resilience during the winter season.
9. Germany European country famous for Christmas markets and early tree traditions.
10. nativity play Performance reenacting the birth of Jesus.
11. nativity Christian celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ.
12. commercialization Modern criticism of Christmas for becoming too focused on shopping.
13. Charles Dickens Victorian author whose work helped revive Christmas traditions.
14. Easter The most important Christian holiday in the early centuries of the church.
15. Victorian era Period in which Christmas became more family-centered and charitable.
16. Puritans Group in New England that banned Christmas celebrations in the 17th century.
17. feasting Common activity in ancient winter festivals such as Saturnalia and Yule.
18. Sinterklaas Dutch figure who contributed to the modern Santa Claus image.