



Victoria Day
(intermediate level)

VICTORIA DAY

1. Victoria Day is a Canadian public holiday that celebrates Queen Victoria. The holiday takes place **annually** on the last Monday before May 25th. Queen Victoria's birthday was on May 24th, 1819. Victoria Day has been celebrated in Canada since 1845.
2. Queen Victoria **reigned** in Britain from 1837 until 1901, during what is known as "The Victorian Era." This was the longest reign of a female **monarch** in history. Victoria was the daughter of Prince Edward, whose father was the reigning King George III. She inherited the throne at age 18 when her uncle William IV died. King William, like her other uncles, had no living **heirs**. A few years later, Victoria married her first cousin, Albert. The couple had nine children together. When Prince Albert died in 1861, the Queen became very depressed. She wore mainly black for the rest of her life.
3. The Victoria Day long weekend unofficially marks the beginning of summer in Canada. Canada's population increases **exponentially** at this time of year because retired **snowbirds** return home. Many Canadians wait until this weekend to open their **cottages** and set up patio furniture and BBQs. This is the busiest time for garden shops and nurseries. While it may still be cool, the risk of **frost** is usually over. Regardless of the weather, campgrounds and other outdoor facilities often open this weekend. Victoria Day falls on the weekend before American Memorial Day.
4. Victoria Day celebrations take place across Canada, with fireworks, parades, concerts and outdoor festivals. Firework displays typically take place on Monday night at the end of the long weekend. On the West Coast, many Canadians flock to the queen's **namesake** city: Victoria, British Columbia. In Ontario, the May long weekend is also known as "May Two-Four." A "two-four" is slang for a 24-pack of beer. To prevent parties from getting **out of hand**, many campsites do not allow alcohol on this long weekend. The police are typically out **in full force** on Canadian highways to reduce drinking and driving. In Ottawa, the May long weekend often **coincides** with the final weekend of the Canadian Tulip Festival. Each spring, the capital of Canada has over 3 million tulips in bloom. It is the largest tulip festival in the world, and it attracts hundreds of thousands of visitors.
5. Some Canadians feel that it is time to give up the British monarchy. Others are more interested in the monarchy than ever before, thanks to Prince William and Duchess Kate. Despite disagreements about the role of the monarchy, Canadians do not want to give up their May long weekend! After a long Canadian winter, the Victoria Day weekend is often the most memorable weekend of the year.



READING COMPREHENSION

Directions: Practice asking and answering the following questions with your partner. Then write the answers in the spaces below.



1. When is Victoria Day celebrated?

2. When did Queen Victoria reign?

3. How did Queen Victoria inherit the throne?

4. What does Victoria Day “unofficially” mark in Canada?

5. Why does Canada’s population increase in May?

6. What important event ends in Ottawa after the May long weekend?

7. What do Canadians do in Queen Victoria’s namesake city?

8. What is a “two-four”?

9. What do some campsites ban on Victoria Day weekend?

10. Why are some Canadians more interested in the monarchy now than they were in the past?

VOCABULARY REVIEW

A. Match the words on the left with the correct meanings on the right.

- | | |
|-------------------------|--|
| _____ 1. annually | a) a small layer of snow on a surface when the temperature is below freezing |
| _____ 2. reign | b) in rapid numbers |
| _____ 3. monarch | c) to happen at the same time |
| _____ 4. cottage | d) a person who inherits a rank or property |
| _____ 5. heir | e) a summer vacation home |
| _____ 6. exponentially | f) with full strength |
| _____ 7. snowbird | g) every year |
| _____ 8. frost | h) something that is named after a person or place |
| _____ 9. namesake | i) to be in power |
| _____ 10. out of hand | j) a person who goes south to escape winter weather |
| _____ 11. in full force | k) out of control |
| _____ 12. coincide | l) royal head of state (not elected) |



B. Choose the word or phrase closest in meaning to the underlined words in the following sentences.

- Mother's Day sometimes coincides with my mother's birthday.
 a) overlaps b) makes me forget c) gets in the way of
- In Canada, the monarchy is a controversial subject. Some people don't think it belongs in Canada. Others are more traditional.
 a) army b) flag c) royal family
- A female heir to the throne is a princess. A male heir is a prince.
 a) inheritor b) protector c) creator
- The world's population increased exponentially following World War II.
 a) too high b) in rapid numbers c) expectedly
- We bring our boat to the cottage on the May two-four weekend.
 a) dock b) coast c) summer home

C. Choose the correct word from the left column in Exercise A to complete the following sentences.

- My grandparents are _____. They drive south from Ontario every December, and spend winters in Florida.
- Don't plant any flowers yet. There is still a risk of _____.
- The parade takes place _____ on the Victoria Day weekend.
- The party got _____, so the campers were asked to leave.
- Security will be out _____ when the prince and princess are in town.

PAIR WORK: Sharing Information (Student A)

Directions: You and your partner each have part of a family tree showing how Victoria became a queen. You have *some* of the same information. Describe your family tree to your partner. Spell out names that your partner doesn't know how to write. Try to complete the family tree and answer the question at the bottom of the page. (Don't look at each other's paper.)

Example questions to ask your partner: *How long did King George IV reign? How many children did King George's second son have? What was the name of Queen Victoria's husband?*

King George _____

Reign: 1760–_____

Claim to fame: _____

Relationship to Queen Victoria: _____

King _____ IV

Reign: _____

Daughter

Charlotte died giving birth.

Baby was _____.

Frederick

1763–1827

Had _____ children.

King _____ IV

Reign: _____

(7 years)

Had 2 _____.

Both died as babies.

Edward

17____–1820

Died _____

King George III.

Relationship to Queen Victoria: Father

Queen Victoria (1819–1901)

Reign: 1837–1901

Married her first cousin (Prince _____).

Had _____ children.

Why did Edward's child become the queen instead of his older brother's children?

PAIR WORK: Sharing Information (Student B)

Directions: You and your partner each have part of a family tree showing how Victoria became a queen. You have *some* of the same information. Describe your family tree to your partner. Spell out names that your partner doesn't know how to write. Try to complete the family tree and answer the question at the bottom of the page. (Don't look at each other's paper.)

Example questions to ask your partner: *How long did King George IV reign? How many children did King George's second son have? What was the name of Queen Victoria's husband?*

King _____ III
Reign: 1760–1820
Claim to fame: "Longest reigning king in British history."
Relationship to Queen Victoria: _____

King George IV
1738–1830
Reign: 10 years
Daughter

died giving
birth. Baby was
stillborn.

1763–1827
Had 0 children.

King
_____ IV
Reign: 1830–

Had 2 daughters.
Both _____
as babies.

Edward
1767–1820
Died a week
before King
George III.
Relationship to
Queen Victoria:

Queen Victoria (1819–1901)
Reign: 1837–1901
Married _____ (Prince Albert).
Had 9 children.

Why did Edward's child become the queen instead of his older brother's children?

GROUP ACTIVITY

Directions: Work in a small group or as a class.

FAMOUS VICTORIAS

The name “Victoria” comes from the word “victor” or “conquerer.” It was not a popular name when Queen Victoria was born, but has been on **Top 100 Baby Names** lists for many years. The short form of Victoria is “Vicky” or “Vicki.” Some Victorias also *go by the name* “Tori.” The male version of the name is “Victor.” Work with a partner or small group. Try to place the correct words under each famous Victoria. Some words will appear under more than one Victoria.

Victoria Beckham	Victoria Spelling	Queen Victoria
		<i>British</i>

monarch

actress

British

singer-songwriter

married an athlete

starred in “Beverly Hills 90210”

married her first cousin

fashion designer

wealthy

born in the 1800s

nicknamed “Posh”

nicknamed “Grandmother of Europe”

born in the 1900s

goes by “Tori”

had 9 children

American

member of the “Spice Girls”

starred in a reality show

TEACHER'S NOTES

Important: Hand out Page 5 to half of the class. Hand out Page 6 to the other half.

Lesson description: Students read about Victoria Day, a Canadian public holiday. Includes a comprehension check, a vocabulary review, a family tree information gap, and a comparison chart on 3 famous “Victorias.”

READING COMPREHENSION

1. Victoria Day is celebrated on the last Monday in May before May 25th.
2. Queen Victoria reigned from 1837 to 1901.
3. Queen Victoria inherited the throne because her father and his brothers were all dead. None of her uncles' children were living.
4. Victoria Day “unofficially” marks the beginning of summer in Canada.
5. Canada’s population increases in May because the snowbirds return from their winter escapes.
6. The tulip festival ends in Ottawa after the May long weekend.
7. Canadians watch a parade in Victoria, BC, Queen Victoria's namesake city.
8. A “two-four” is a case of 24 bottles of beer.
9. Some campsites ban alcohol on Victoria Day weekend.
10. Some Canadians are more interested in the monarchy now than they were in the past due to Prince William and Duchess Kate.

VOCABULARY

A. Matching

1. g 2. i 3. l 4. e 5. d 6. b 7. j 8. a 9. h 10. k 11. f 12. c

B. Underlined Words

1. a 2. c 3. a 4. b 5. c

C. Fill in the Blanks

1. My grandparents are snowbirds. They drive south from Ontario every December, and spend winters in Florida.
2. Don't plant any flowers yet. There is still a risk of frost.
3. The parade takes place annually on the Victoria Day weekend.
4. The party got out of hand, so the campers were asked to leave.
5. Security will be out in full force when the prince and princess are in town.

Continued...

PAIR ACTIVITY

Pair students so that there is one student with Page 5 and one with Page 6.

<p style="text-align: center;">King George III Reign: 1760–1820 “Longest reigning King in British history.” Relationship to Queen Victoria: Grandfather</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Queen Victoria (1819–1901) Reign: 1837–1901 Married 1st cousin. (Prince Albert) Had 9 children.</p>		
<p>King George IV 1738–1830 Reign: 10 years Daughter Charlotte died giving birth. Baby was stillborn.</p>	<p>Frederick 1763–1827 Had 0 children.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">King William IV Reign: 1830–1837 Had two daughters. Both died as babies.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Edward 1767–1820 Died a week before King George III. Relationship to Queen Victoria: Father</p>

GROUP ACTIVITY - FAMOUS VICTORIAS

Allow your students to do some research if they don’t know these Victorias. They can go online in a computer lab or use their mobile phones.

Victoria Beckham	Victoria Spelling	Queen Victoria
<i>born in the 1900s</i>	<i>American</i>	<i>monarch</i>
<i>British</i>	<i>born in the 1900s</i>	<i>married her first cousin</i>
<i>singer-songwriter</i>	<i>goes by “Tori”</i>	<i>British</i>
<i>married an athlete</i>	<i>wealthy</i>	<i>wealthy</i>
<i>fashion designer</i>	<i>starred in “Beverly Hills 90210”</i>	<i>nicknamed “Grandmother of Europe”</i>
<i>nicknamed “Posh”</i>	<i>actress</i>	<i>had 9 children</i>
<i>member of the “Spice Girls”</i>	<i>starred in a reality show</i>	<i>born in the 1800s</i>
<i>wealthy</i>		
<i>starred in a reality show</i>		