

# Webquest: Independence Day

by Karen Kovacs

Level: Intermediate–Advanced

Target age: Teenagers / Adults

Time needed: 60 minutes +

Key skills: Reading, speaking

Materials: One copy of worksheet 1 per student; one copy of worksheet 2A for half the class and one copy of worksheet 2B for the other half

Perhaps the most famous independence day is that of the United States of America on 4 July. However, many other countries celebrate their own independence days. In the first activity, your students will investigate Independence Day in the United States. In activities 2 and 3, they will learn about the independence days of some other countries.

## Activity 1: Timed treasure hunt

The treasure hunt introduces how this holiday is celebrated in the United States. Students search for the answers to the questions on two websites. They have 15 minutes to find the answers. When they have finished, have groups exchange answer sheets and mark each other's answers as you go over the answers with the class. Collect in the scores and announce the winners of the treasure hunt.

Ask students to hide their answer sheets and see what they can remember by summarizing orally with a partner the most common ways Independence Day is celebrated in the United States. Alternatively, students can produce a written summary for homework.

**Key:**

1. The Second Continental Congress approved a resolution declaring independence from Britain.
2. The Declaration of Independence was printed.

3. 2 August, 1776
4. Thomas Jefferson and John Adams
5. Philadelphia
6. Addison, Texas, because its massive fireworks display rivals that of major cities
7. in Key Biscayne in Florida for the best float
8. Las Vegas; Clubs host big-name DJs, drink specials and even topless pool parties.

## Activity 2: More independence days

In this activity, students will learn about other countries' independence days. Put students in pairs. Hand out worksheet 2A to half the pairs and worksheet 2B to the other half. Each pair researches their three countries and completes the tables. Students then go and sit with a pair who researched the other set of countries and exchange information.

Remind students to try to make their informal presentations interesting for the other pair – there are some tips for this on the worksheets.

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## Key for group A:

country	independence day and year	independence from	celebrations
Mexico	16 September (1810) date marks when the war for independence began	Spain	(the day before) the president rings a bell, makes a cry of patriotism and honours war heroes; people sing the national anthem; (on the day) parades, marching bands, concerts
Ghana	6 March (1957)	Britain	fireworks, parades, marches
South Korea	15 August (1945)	Japan	hanging flags on their houses, making public museums free of charge to descendants of independence activists, singing the official 'Restoration of Light' song

## Key for group B:

country	independence day and year	independence from	celebrations
Chile	18 September (1810)	Spain	food, music, parades, historical reenactments, national parties that can last for weeks
India	15 August (1947)	Britain	flag-hoisting, parades, patriotic songs, kite flying
Greece	25 March (1821)	the Ottoman Empire	religious and secular parades and festivals

## Activity 3 (optional): Further research

Students research the independence day celebrations of one of the countries from the last activity in greater detail, using other websites. Alternatively, they can research their own country's independence day. In either case, they should make notes on when and how independence came about and what events will mark the day this/next year.

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## Activity 1: Timed treasure hunt

In this activity, you are going to learn about Independence Day in the United States. You have 15 minutes to complete this treasure hunt. When you have finished, swap answer sheets with another group.

### Websites

<http://time.com/4838700/americas-real-independence-day>

[www.roughguides.com/article/4th-of-july-celebrations](http://www.roughguides.com/article/4th-of-july-celebrations)

### Questions

1. What happened on 2 July, 1776?
2. What happened on 4 July, 1776?
3. When did most of the men sign the document?
4. Who died on 4 July, 1826?
5. Which place has the biggest free concert in the United States?
6. Which place is known as 'Kaboom! Town' and why?
7. Where, and for what, can participants win a \$1,000 prize?
8. Which place enjoys the most modern celebrations and what are they?

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## Activity 2A: More independence days

Now you're going to learn how other countries celebrate their independence days.

### Website

[mic.com/articles/10673/happy-independence-day-how-15-different-countries-celebrate-their-independence](http://mic.com/articles/10673/happy-independence-day-how-15-different-countries-celebrate-their-independence)

Research just the three countries below, completing the tables with the missing information. Then tell another pair what you learnt.

For each of your three countries, find out ...

- ... when their independence day is;
- ... what year they gained independence;
- ... who they gained their independence from;
- ... how they celebrate.

### Mexico

independence day and year	independence from	celebrations

### Ghana

independence day and year	independence from	celebrations

### South Korea

independence day and year	independence from	celebrations

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Now tell another pair what you learnt. Make your talk as interesting as you can. Here are some tips:

- Make eye contact!
- Do not simply read out your notes.
- Add personal information. For example:
  - » Which celebrations do you think are the best?
  - » Which independence days, if any, did you already know something about?
  - » Does your country celebrate independence in a similar way?
- Ask the other pair questions, such as:
  - » Do you know which country they won independence from?
  - » When do you think they won their independence?
  - » Would you like to attend these celebrations? Why (not)?

While the other pair are talking, you can encourage them by saying:

- Ah, ok.
- I see.
- Oh, I didn't know that!
- That sounds like fun!

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## Activity 2B: More independence days

Now you're going to learn how other countries celebrate their independence days.

### Website

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Research just the three countries below, completing the tables with the missing information. Then tell another pair what you learnt.

For each of your three countries, find out ...

- ... when their independence day is;
- ... what year they gained independence;
- ... who they gained their independence from;
- ... how they celebrate.

### Chile

independence day and year	independence from	celebrations

### India

independence day and year	independence from	celebrations

### Greece

independence day and year	independence from	celebrations

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