

CELEBRATIONS

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Wedding anniversaries

Teacher's notes

Age: Older teenagers / Adults

Level: Intermediate–Upper-intermediate (B1–B2)

Time: 60–90 minutes

Activity: In this lesson, students will:

1. read a text about wedding anniversaries, focusing on the language involved;
2. talk about married couples that they know;
3. decide on appropriate wedding anniversary gifts;
4. write and hold a wedding anniversary toast.

Language focus: vocabulary related to wedding anniversaries, gifts and short party speeches

Materials: one copy of the worksheet per student; internet access if available; extra paper for writing

Procedure

1. Warmer

Ask students if they, or any of their family members, celebrate the date they got married, or any other special dates such as the date of a first meeting or first date. Find out if they do anything special on this date (for example give a card/gift, go out for a meal). Find out from students if people in their country usually celebrate the date they got married each year (*wedding anniversaries*) and, if so, are there any special traditions associated with these celebrations.

Give out the worksheets. Students fill in the gaps with the names given to wedding anniversaries using the words in the box. If they are unsure, tell them to make a guess. As a clue, you can say that the gifts for the earlier year anniversaries are cheap, whilst the gifts for the later anniversaries are more expensive.

Key:

1st	paper
10th	tin
25th	silver
40th	ruby
50th	golden
60th	diamond

2. Key words

Students read the words on the left and match them with the definitions on the right. Then they should

read the text/facts and underline the words when they come across them and try to understand them in their contexts.

Key:

wreath	a circle of flowers or leaves that someone wears on their head
milestone	an event or achievement that marks an important stage in a process
represent	to be a sign or symbol of something
value	the amount that something is worth, measured especially in money
suggestions	ideas that you offer for someone to consider
delight	a feeling of great happiness and pleasure
application	a formal request for permission to do or have something
nearing	coming closer to a particular time or stage

3. Mixed grammar – to celebrate

Students work together to complete the six sentences with the correct form of the verbs provided in the box. The tenses are included in the key below, if the students are struggling and need a prompt.

Key:

1. are celebrating (present continuous for a planned future event)
2. would have been celebrating (perfect continuous conditional to express the continuous result of an unreal action in the past)
3. to celebrate (infinitive as part of a *whether*-clause)
4. celebrated (past simple)
5. have celebrated (present perfect for talking about experience up to the present)
6. will be celebrating (future continuous for an event that will be happening at a time in the future)

4. Me, my family and my friends

In this grammar, writing and discussion personalization task, students first work on their own and change details in the sentences in exercise 3 to make them true for either themselves, their family or their friends. An example sentence is given in which the details that have been changed and added are underlined.

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Teacher's notes

Once they have written their sentences and you have checked that they have used the tenses correctly, they should sit in pairs or small groups and read them out to each other. The listeners should ask questions so that what is written and read out becomes a springboard into further conversation.

5. Wedding anniversary – group task

In this communicative activity each student should first complete the text about a married couple they know. Then put the students together in small groups and tell them they have a maximum of 30 minutes to complete parts b, c and d of this exercise before they report back to the whole class as laid out in part e.

In part b, the students read out their texts to the others in their small group and provide any further information they think might help them choose an appropriate present for each couple, e.g. *Robert is my brother and Carmen is my sister-in-law. Robert is 45 years old and Carmen is 43 years old. Robert likes cooking. They like to hold dinner parties for their friends.* The students then come up with gift suggestions for each couple depending on how long they have been married. They should make

sure that their gifts are related to the name of the wedding anniversary, e.g. 15 years = crystal = possible gift a set of crystal wine glasses that they could use at their dinner parties.

Hand out sheets of paper. In part c, each group of students should choose one of their texts to continue working with. They should find out what the most popular music was at the time of the particular couple's wedding (using the internet, if necessary) and write a list of songs that could be included in the couple's wedding anniversary party playlist. If no internet access is available, then this part can be omitted.

In part d, they plan, write, hold and improve a short toast (speech) which they will give at their wedding anniversary party. This should focus on the personalities of the couple and any key details of their marriage. For higher level classes, they may want to include a short anecdote.

When the time is up, move onto part e, in which each small group reports back to the class, talking about the couple they chose a gift and playlist for, before they deliver their wedding anniversary toasts. The others in the group should give some feedback on the toasts.

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Wedding anniversaries

Worksheet

Exercise 1: Warmer



Each wedding anniversary traditionally has the name of a different material or product. These names often help people to choose a wedding anniversary gift. Work in pairs and write the missing wedding anniversary names in the box on the lines below.

diamond	golden	paper	ruby	silver	tin
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- 1st wedding anniversary: _____
- 2nd wedding anniversary: cotton
- 3rd wedding anniversary: leather
- 4th wedding anniversary: fruit & flowers (UK), or linen & silk (US)
- 5th wedding anniversary: wood
- 6th wedding anniversary: sugar (UK) / iron (US)
- 7th wedding anniversary: wool / copper
- 8th wedding anniversary: salt (UK), or bronze and pottery (US)
- 9th wedding anniversary: pottery
- 10th wedding anniversary: _____
- 11th wedding anniversary: steel
- 12th wedding anniversary: silk
- 13th wedding anniversary: lace
- 14th wedding anniversary: ivory
- 15th wedding anniversary: crystal
- 20th wedding anniversary: china
- 25th wedding anniversary: _____
- 30th wedding anniversary: pearl
- 35th wedding anniversary: coral
- 40th wedding anniversary: _____
- 45th wedding anniversary: sapphire
- 50th wedding anniversary: _____
- 55th wedding anniversary: emerald
- 60th wedding anniversary: _____

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Wedding anniversaries

Worksheet

Exercise 2: Key words

Match the words from the article with their definitions. Then read the text and underline the words when you read them.

wreath	a feeling of great happiness and pleasure
milestone	a formal request for permission to do or have something
represent	the amount that something is worth, measured especially in money
value	coming closer to a particular time or stage
suggestions	a circle of flowers or leaves that someone wears on their head
delight	to be a sign or symbol of something
application	an event or achievement that marks an important stage in a process
nearing	ideas that you offer for someone to consider

Wedding anniversary facts



- It is said that wedding anniversary celebrations go back to Roman times, although we have no evidence exactly how they celebrated. From the eighteenth century, a couple might receive a silver wreath from their friends for 25 years of marriage, and a gold wreath for 50.
- By the 1930s, different materials were added and connected to other milestone wedding anniversaries such as the 1st, 10th and 20th years. These materials are supposed to represent a gift suggestion. In general, the materials increase in value as the amount of years a couple has been married increases.
- Over the years, more materials and gift suggestions have been added to the lists, much to the delight of gift and greeting card companies, even though the gift suggestions don't always seem logical. For example, the first wedding anniversary is the paper anniversary but the suggested gift to give to a couple on this anniversary is a clock.
- In Britain, married couples can apply to receive a message from the Queen on their 60th, 65th and 70th wedding anniversaries, and on every wedding anniversary after that. To make sure that the message of congratulations is sent on time, the application needs to be made online by a relative or friend in advance of the special anniversary.
- US citizens who are nearing their 50th, 60th or 70th wedding anniversary can apply to the White House and request to be sent anniversary greetings personally signed by the president.
- A couple living in Bradford in the UK, Karam Chand and his wife Kartari, celebrated their 90th wedding anniversary in 2015. They were the world's oldest married couple. They got married as teenagers in 1925 in India when it was still part of the British Empire and moved to England 40 years later.

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Exercise 3: Mixed grammar – to celebrate

Complete these sentences with the best form of the verb *to celebrate*.

would have been celebrating
have celebrated

are celebrating
will be celebrating

celebrated
to celebrate

1. Zoe and Florian _____ their first wedding anniversary this coming September by taking the witnesses from their wedding out to dinner.
2. If they hadn't decided to split up, my parents _____ their 40th wedding anniversary this year.
3. We can't decide whether _____ our 25th wedding anniversary next year by throwing a big party, or whether to spend the money on a luxury city break for just the two of us instead.
4. It's strange, in all the years that we were married, we never once _____ our wedding anniversary with our friends.
5. For the past few years we _____ our wedding anniversary by going back to the restaurant where we held our wedding reception.
6. In two week's time we _____ our 10th wedding anniversary on a beach in Jamaica.

Exercise 4: Me, my family and my friends

Change the details in the six sentences in exercise 3 to make them true for you, your family or your friends. Provide extra information for each new sentence.

E.g. 1. *My sister Anna and her husband Johann are celebrating their twelfth wedding anniversary next week. That's their silk wedding anniversary. Perhaps I'll buy them a set of silk pillow cases.*

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Wedding anniversaries

Worksheet

Exercise 5: Wedding anniversary – group task

a. Complete the text about a married couple you know.

_____ and _____ got married in _____
_____ (place) in _____ (month and year). There
were approximately _____ (number) guests at their wedding. Afterwards, they
held their wedding reception at/in _____ (place). They have been married for
_____ years. Soon they will be celebrating their _____
(name) wedding anniversary.

b. Work in pairs or groups of three or four. Read your texts. Think of an appropriate wedding anniversary gift for each couple – one that fits with the name of the anniversaries and the number of years they have been married (see exercise 1).

c. Choose one of your texts for this task. Find out what the most popular music was at the time of the couple's wedding. Write the songs which you would like to include in their wedding anniversary party playlist. Did they have a special song at their wedding reception – perhaps for their first dance? Include this in your playlist.

d. You have been asked to make a short toast to the couple at their wedding anniversary party. Write a short speech together, read it out loud and then decide what improvements you could make.

e. Report back to the class. Tell them what you talked about in your groups and then hold your wedding anniversary toasts. Whose toast is the most touching / the funniest / the most personal / ... ?

