

The Queen's Birthdays



The Queen celebrates two birthdays each year. Her actual birthday is celebrated on 21st April and her official birthday falls on the second Saturday in June.

Why Does The Queen Have Two Birthdays?

King George II began the **tradition** of having two royal birthdays in 1748. He was born in November and he thought that the weather would be too cold for a birthday parade.

So, he decided to celebrate his birthday with a **military** parade in spring or summer called Trooping the Colour. This tradition has continued ever since. It is known as the **monarch's** official birthday.



Did You Know...?

There was no gun salute for the Queen's 95th birthday in April 2021. This was because Prince Philip, The Queen's husband, had died a short time earlier.

The Trooping the Colour parade was cancelled in 2020 because of the COVID-19 pandemic. A much smaller version was held inside the grounds of Windsor Castle instead.

When Is The Queen's Actual Birthday?

The Queen was born on 21st April 1926. She usually celebrates her birthday with her family and close friends.

There are usually gun salutes around London to wish Her Majesty many happy returns on her birthday.

What Is a Gun Salute?

Gun salutes are the safe firing of large guns in royal parks around London. These show respect for a member of the Royal Family. Gun salutes are usually fired at midday. Salutes are not fired on Sundays. So, the salute will happen on the following Monday if The Queen's birthday is on Sunday.



When Is The Queen's Official Birthday?

The Queen used to celebrate her official birthday on a Thursday but it was changed to the second Saturday in June.

What Is Trooping the Colour?

The Queen's official birthday in June is usually celebrated with a famous parade called Trooping the Colour.

The parade begins at Buckingham Palace and is a colourful celebration where thousands of people wave flags from the pavements. The Queen then returns to the balcony of Buckingham Palace to wave to the crowds.



Glossary

military:	Involving soldiers or the armed forces.
monarch:	A king or queen.
tradition:	A way of behaving or doing something that is repeated for a long time.

Questions

1. In which year was The Queen born? Tick one.

- 1961
- 1926
- 1969
- 1919

2. On which day are gun salutes **not** fired? Tick one.

- Saturday
- Sunday
- Thursday
- Monday

3. Draw **four** lines and match each word or phrase with its correct definition.

gun salutes	involving soldiers or the armed forces
Trooping the Colour	a parade on the king or queen's official birthday
monarch	the safe firing of large guns in royal parks around London
military	a king or queen

4. Where did the 2020 Trooping the Colour take place? Tick one.

- Buckingham Palace
- The Tower of London
- Windsor Castle
- The Mall

5. Fill in the missing words.

The Queen used to celebrate her official birthday on a _____ but it was changed to the second Saturday in _____.

6. Look at the section called **What Is Trooping the Colour?**

Find and copy a word that means the same as 'well known'.

7. Do you agree that The Queen should celebrate two birthdays every year?

Give reasons for your answer.

Answers

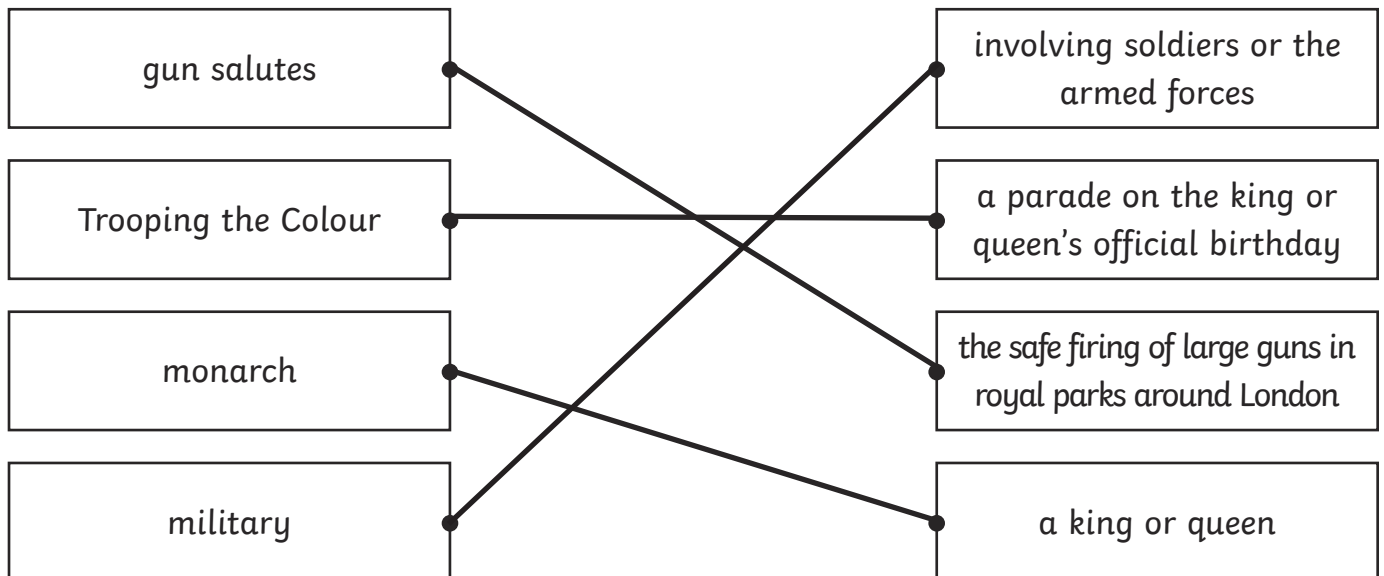
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5. Fill in the missing words.

The Queen used to celebrate her official birthday on a **Thursday** but it was changed to the second Saturday in **June**.

6. Look at the section called **What Is Trooping the Colour?**

Find and copy a word that means the same as 'well known'.

famous

7. Do you agree that The Queen should celebrate two birthdays every year?

Give reasons for your answer.

Pupils' own responses, such as: Yes, I think that The Queen should celebrate two birthdays every year because she is a special person. It is nice for her to have one day with her family and friends and another celebrating with the country.

The Queen's Birthdays

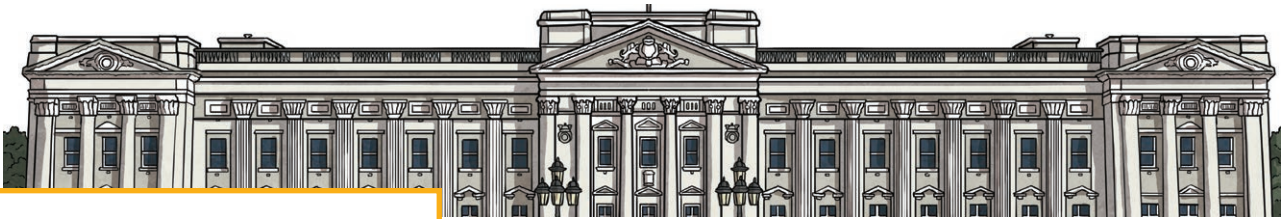


The Queen celebrates two birthdays every year. Her actual birthday is celebrated on 21st April and her official birthday falls on the second Saturday in June.

Why Does The Queen Celebrate Two Birthdays?

King George II began the tradition of having two royal birthdays in 1748. He was born in November and he felt that the weather would be too cold for a birthday parade.

So, he decided to celebrate his birthday with a **military** parade called Trooping the Colour. This event was to be held every spring or summer. This tradition has continued ever since and is known as the **monarch's** official birthday.



Did You Know...?

There was no gun salute for the Queen's 95th birthday in April 2021. This was because Prince Philip, The Queen's husband, had died a short time earlier.

The Queen's Actual Birthday

The Queen was born on 21st April 1926. Her birthday is usually spent privately with her family and close friends. However, there are usually gun salutes at various royal locations around London to publicly wish Her Majesty many happy returns.

What Is a Gun Salute?

Gun salutes are a mark of respect for special royal celebrations and involve rounds being fired from large guns in royal parks. Gun salutes are usually fired at midday. Salutes are not fired on Sundays so if The Queen's Birthday is on a Sunday, the salute will take place on the following Monday.



The Queen's Birthdays

The Queen's Official Birthday

The Queen used to celebrate her official birthday on a Thursday but it was later changed to the second Saturday in June.

What Is Trooping the Colour?

The Queen's official birthday in June is usually marked with a famous parade called Trooping the Colour.

The parade begins at Buckingham Palace and travels down The Mall before finishing at Horse Guard's Parade. It is a colourful celebration and thousands of people line the pavements of The Mall to enjoy the sight. The Queen then returns to the balcony of Buckingham Palace to wave to the crowds that have gathered to wish her well.



COVID-19 Pandemic

In 2020, the Trooping the Colour parade was cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic and a much smaller version was held inside the grounds of Windsor Castle. An announcement was made in March 2021 which said that arrangements were underway for another alternative parade that year.

Glossary

military:	Involving soldiers or the armed forces.
monarch:	A king or queen.

Questions

1. Who does The Queen usually spend her actual birthday with? Tick **two**.
 - the public
 - family
 - close friends
 - the prime minister
2. Why are gun salutes held around London on 21st April? Tick one.
 - to remember King George II
 - to signal that it is midday
 - to publicly wish Her Majesty many happy returns
 - to signal the beginning of the Trooping the Colour parade
3. Number the events from 1-4 to show the order that they happened in.
 - Queen Elizabeth II was born.
 - The Trooping the Colour parade was cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
 - The tradition of having two royal birthdays began.
 - King George II was born.
4. On which day of the week did The Queen used to celebrate her official birthday? Tick one.
 - Monday
 - Tuesday
 - Wednesday
 - Thursday
5. Fill in the missing words.

It is a _____ celebration and thousands of people line the pavements of
The _____ to enjoy the sight.
6. Look at the section called **Why Does The Queen Celebrate Two Birthdays?**
Find and copy one word that means 'a way of behaving or doing something that is repeated for a long time'.

7. ... thousands of people line the pavements of The Mall to enjoy the sight.

Why do you think that so many people have chosen to visit the Trooping the Colour parade?

8. Would you like to have two birthdays like The Queen? Explain your answer.

Answers

- Who does The Queen usually spend her actual birthday with? Tick **two**.
 - the public
 - family**
 - close friends**
 - the prime minister
- Why are gun salutes held around London on 21st April? Tick one.
 - to remember King George II
 - to signal that it is midday
 - to publicly wish Her Majesty many happy returns**
 - to signal the beginning of the Trooping the Colour parade
- Number the events from 1-4 to show the order that they happened in.
 - 3 Queen Elizabeth II was born.
 - 4 The Trooping the Colour parade was cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
 - 2 The tradition of having two royal birthdays began.
 - 1 King George II was born.
- On which day of the week did The Queen used to celebrate her official birthday? Tick one.
 - Monday
 - Tuesday
 - Wednesday
 - Thursday**
- Fill in the missing words.

It is a **colourful** celebration and thousands of people line the pavements of The **Mall** to enjoy the sight.
- Look at the section called **Why Does The Queen Celebrate Two Birthdays?**
Find and copy one word that means 'a way of behaving or doing something that is repeated for a long time'.
tradition

7. ... thousands of people line the pavements of The Mall to enjoy the sight.

Why do you think that so many people have chosen to visit the Trooping the Colour parade?

Pupils' own responses, such as: I think that so many people visit the parade because it seems like a fun day out with a great atmosphere. They may also want to catch a glimpse of The Queen.

8. Would you like to have two birthdays like The Queen? Explain your answer.

Pupils' own responses, such as: I would not like two birthdays. I like having one special day every year and I imagine that planning two parties would be quite confusing and expensive.

The Queen's Birthdays

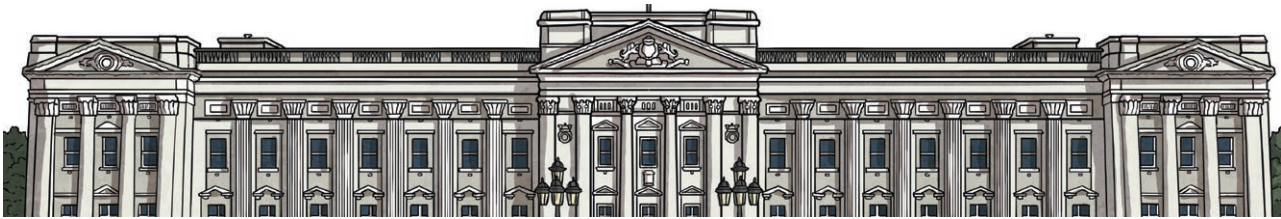


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Why Does The Queen Celebrate Two Birthdays?

King George II began the tradition of having two royal birthdays in 1748. He was born in November and he felt that the weather would be too cold for a birthday parade.

So, he decided to celebrate his birthday with a military parade, called Trooping the Colour, held every spring or summer. This tradition has continued ever since, no matter what month the king or queen was born. This is the monarch's official birthday.



The Queen's Actual Birthday

The Queen was born on 21st April 1926. Her birthday is usually spent privately with her family and close friends. To mark her birthday, there are usually gun salutes at various royal locations around London.

There was no gun salute for the Queen's 95th birthday in April 2021. This was because The Queen's husband, Prince Philip, had died over a week earlier and the Queen was still in **mourning**.

What Is a Gun Salute?

Gun salutes are a mark of respect for special royal celebrations and involve rounds being fired from large guns in royal parks.

Gun salutes are usually fired at midday. Salutes are not fired on Sundays so if The Queen's Birthday is on a Sunday, the salute will take place on the following Monday.



The Queen's Official Birthday

The Queen originally celebrated her official birthday on a Thursday but it was later changed to the second Saturday in June. Other countries of the **Commonwealth** celebrate The Queen's birthday on different days of the year.

For example, in Canada, celebrations are held on the last Monday before 25th May and in Australia, Her Majesty's birthday is celebrated on the second Monday in June.



What Is Trooping the Colour?

The **sovereign's** official birthday in June is usually marked with a famous parade called Trooping the Colour. The parade begins at Buckingham Palace and travels down The Mall before finishing at Horse Guard's Parade. It is a colourful celebration and thousands of people line the pavements of The Mall to enjoy the sight.

For many years, The Queen rode her horse, Burmese, with her troops but more recently, she has ridden in a carriage. Usually, members of the public line the streets to watch the parade while waving flags and cheering. Her Majesty returns to the balcony of Buckingham Palace to wave to the crowds that have gathered to wish her well.

COVID-19 Pandemic

In 2020, the Trooping the Colour parade was cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic and a much smaller version was held inside the grounds of Windsor Castle. An announcement was made in March 2021 which said that arrangements were underway for another alternative parade that year.

Glossary

Commonwealth:	A family of 54 countries that work together. The Queen is Head of the Commonwealth.
mourning:	An expression of sorrow following a person's death.
sovereign:	A supreme ruler, such as king or queen.

Questions

1. Why did King George II begin the tradition of having two royal birthdays? Tick one.

- he wanted to enjoy two celebrations
- his actual birthday was during the winter so he wanted to celebrate in spring or summer
- he wanted to celebrate the date that he was crowned king
- the queen asked him to

2. Draw **four** lines and match each statement with the correct year.

The Queen was born.	1926
The Queen celebrated her 95 th birthday.	2021
The Trooping the Colour parade was cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic	1748
King George II began the tradition of having two royal birthdays.	2020

3. When is The Queen's birthday celebrated in Australia?

4. In which section of the text would you find information about the arrangements for the 2020 Trooping the Colour parade?

5. Find and copy a word from the text that shows that The Queen often spends her actual birthday away from the public eye.

6. Would you like to attend the Trooping of the Colour parade? Give reasons for your answer.

7. Explain what the purpose of the glossary is.

8. Prince Charles is the next in line to the throne.

Do you think that he should also celebrate two birthdays when he is king? Explain why.

Answers

1. Why did King George II begin the tradition of having two royal birthdays? Tick one.

- he wanted to enjoy two celebrations
- his actual birthday was during the winter so he wanted to celebrate in spring or summer**
- he wanted to celebrate the date that he was crowned king
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2. Draw **four** lines and match each statement with the correct year.

The Queen was born.	1926
The Queen celebrated her 95 th birthday.	2021
The Trooping the Colour parade was cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic	1748
King George II began the tradition of having two royal birthdays.	2020

3. When is The Queen's birthday celebrated in Australia?

In Australia, Her Majesty's birthday is celebrated on the second Monday in June.

4. In which section of the text would you find information about the arrangements for the 2020 Trooping the Colour parade?

COVID-19 Pandemic

5. Find and copy a word from the text that shows that The Queen often spends her actual birthday away from the public eye.

privately

6. Would you like to attend the Trooping of the Colour parade? Give reasons for your answer.

Pupils' own responses, such as: Yes, I would like to attend the parade because it sounds like a really exciting and fun day out. I think there would be a really happy atmosphere in the crowd and I would like to see the parade and maybe catch a glimpse of the Royal Family.

7. Explain what the purpose of the glossary is.

Pupils' own responses, such as: The purpose of the glossary is to explain some of the trickier and technical words that are used in the text so that the reader can understand the text better.

8. Prince Charles is the next in line to the throne.

Do you think that he should also celebrate two birthdays when he is king? Explain why.

Pupils' own responses, such as: I think that Prince Charles should celebrate two birthdays when he becomes king because it is a tradition that dates back many years. It will also give him the chance to have both public and private birthday celebrations.