

# LISTEN & RESPOND PRONUNCIATION PERFECTION

## Festivals from around the world!

### 1 Pre-listening

Look at the words and pictures below. Can you think of any festivals associated with these things?



### 2 Listening I

Listen to the article once to compare your ideas from the Pre-listening task. Which word from the Pre-listening task isn't mentioned?

### 3 Listening II

Listen to the article again. Then, write the name of a festival from below next to each statement.

- May Day
- St Ivan's festival
- Saturnalia
- Thanksgiving
- Oktoberfest
- Yule

1. It's celebrated in the US.
2. Festival goers dance around a Maypole.
3. It's a famous beer festival.
4. It was in honour of the god Saturn.
5. A log is burnt.
6. There are often bonfires.

### Discussion Ask and answer the questions.

- Do you have anything similar to May Day in your country? What happens?
- What else is celebrated in May in your country?
- Have you ever been to a drink or food festival?
- What did you eat or drink there?
- What was the purpose of the festival? How interesting was it? Would you go back? Why? Why not?
- Have you got anything similar to Thanksgiving in your country? What is it? What does it involve?
- What festivals involve the family getting together in your country? What do you like or dislike about them?



## The schwa sound: /ə/

### A

The schwa sound /ə/ is an unstressed weak sound. It occurs in many grammar words such as prepositions and articles when we're talking naturally: *a, the, to, for, than, of, an, can...*

For example:

- a) *as* /əz/ It isn't as good as the first one.
- b) *the* /ðə/ It's the best one here.

Remember, we use *the* /ði:/ before words with a vowel sound: *the only one, the alarm, the egg...*

The schwa sound can also be found in some words with more than one syllable. For example, you can hear the schwa sound at the end of these words:

sugar / brother / governor

The schwa sound also appears in many comparative forms. Notice the schwa sound /ə/ at the end of these words:

taller / smaller / shorter / bigger / later

**NOTE:** In US English the schwa sound is used less frequently.

### B

Listen and repeat these sentences. Notice the schwa sound in the parts marked in bold.

- a) This is **the** longest book.
- b) That's **the** most comfortable chair.
- c) This book isn't **as** long **as** the other one.
- d) That chair isn't **as** comfortable **as** this one.

### C

Now listen and write the sentences you hear.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

