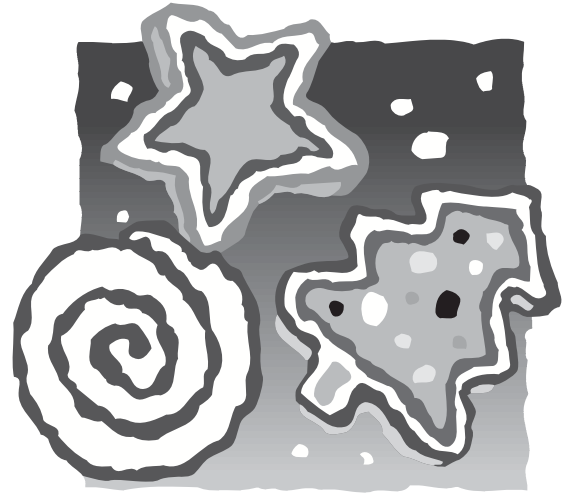


Now, read the text to check your answers.

1. The legend of Santa Claus began with Saint Nicholas. He is the patron saint of children, shopkeepers, pawnbrokers and sailors among other things.
2. The real Saint Nicholas was bishop of the town of Myra in Turkey. The Dutch named him Sinter Claes, which became Santa Claus when Dutch settlers took the tradition to the United States.
3. In the United Kingdom, children traditionally put out socks for Santa Claus to put their presents in. They are usually hung above the fireplace or at the end of the child's bed. Santa comes down the chimney, fills the socks and then drinks the wine that the family has left for him. It is traditional to leave a carrot or some other food for his reindeer.
4. The Christmas tree tradition started in Germany in the sixteenth century. Queen Victoria's husband, Albert, who was from Germany, brought the tradition to the United Kingdom and German immigrants took it to the United States at the end of the 1800s.
5. Since 1925, the United States' official Christmas tree has been a Giant Sequoia called 'General Grant' in King's Canyon National Park.
6. Electric Christmas tree lights were invented in 1895 by American Ralph Morris after concerns over accidents involving the use of candles.
7. The first charity Christmas card, produced by UNICEF in 1949, was painted by a seven-year-old girl. The girl was from Rudolfo, a small town in Czechoslovakia, which was one of the first places to receive aid after the Second World War. The picture was of children dancing.
8. The first British Monarch's speech broadcast to the nation in 1932 was written by Rudyard Kipling, author of *Jungle Book* and the poem *If*. Its opening words were 'I speak now from my home and from my heart ...'
9. In 1847, Tom Smith, an English confectioner, invented the Christmas cracker. The company he founded exists to this day and supplies Christmas crackers to the British royal family.
10. Since the crew of Apollo 8 became the first people in space over Christmas 1968, thirty-five people have so far spent Christmas Day in either in Salyut, MIR or the International Space Station.



11. Both Idaho and Indiana in the United States have a town called Santa Claus.
12. Rudolph the red-nosed reindeer first appeared in 1939 to promote the opening of the latest shop in the Montgomery-Ward department store chain. The story was written by Robert May whose four-year-old daughter chose the name Rudolph. The famous song of the same name was written by his brother-in-law.
13. In Finland, Santa travels on a goat made of straw called Ukko. Straw decorations are a great tradition at Christmas in Sweden.
14. In Syria, Christmas gifts are given out by a camel. It is supposed to have belonged to one of the three wise men who visited the new-born Jesus.
15. In Poland, as well as in many other eastern European countries, the main ingredient of the Christmas meal is fish. The meal, which consists of twelve different dishes, is eaten on Christmas Eve. Guests must sample each of the dishes. After the meal, a wafer is broken and shared among the guests.
16. In Lithuania, children must sing a song for Kaledu Senelis, or Grandfather Christmas, before they can receive their presents. If they don't do this, they forfeit the presents, which are given to another child.
17. In Greece, the only way to get rid of the Kallikantzori is by burning an old shoe. If you do not have an old shoe, salt may be burned instead.
18. In the Ukraine, if you find a spider's web in the house on Christmas morning, it means good luck. Legend has it that by spinning webs, spiders used to decorate the trees of poor families who could not afford decorations. Today, spiders and webs are often used as Christmas tree decorations in the Ukraine.
19. In Holland, Santa Claus is accompanied by his servant, Black Peter, when he gives out presents. It is Black Peter and not Santa who throws the presents down the chimneys. Black Peter also punishes naughty children by putting them in sacks and taking them to Spain.
20. In the United Kingdom, the day after Christmas is known as Boxing Day. The name derives from the 19th century tradition of charitable employers giving boxes of food and clothing to their employees on this day.

