Easter Traditions and Origins

Learning objective: To understand the origins and customs of Easter within the Christian faith.

Read the passage carefully, then answer the questions that follow in full sentences.

Easter is a significant festival in the Christian calendar, marking the celebration of the Resurrection of Jesus. For Christians, this event represents hope and new beginnings. The period leading up to Easter Sunday is known as Lent, a time of reflection and preparation lasting forty days. Following Lent, Holy Week begins, which includes Maundy Thursday and Good Friday, days dedicated to solemn remembrance.

Many Easter customs are deeply rooted in symbolism. The egg, for instance, is a traditional symbol of new life and the breaking of the tomb. In many homes, people enjoy decorating eggs or sharing chocolate treats, which has become a popular secular tradition alongside the religious observance. The date of Easter changes each year because it is determined by the lunar cycle, specifically the first full moon following the spring equinox. This means Easter always falls on a Sunday between late March and late April. Beyond the religious services, many families mark the season by enjoying the arrival of springtime, celebrating the blooming flowers and the warmer weather that signals the end of the winter season.

Word bank: Christianity · Resurrection · symbolism · observance · tradition · springtime

1. How many days long is the period of Lent? (1 mark)

2. Why does the date of Easter change every year? (2 marks)

3. Why might the egg be considered an appropriate symbol for Easter? (2 marks)

4. What does the passage suggest about the difference between the religious and secular ways people celebrate Easter? (2 marks)

5. Do you think it is important to keep traditional customs alive even if they change over time? Explain your answer. (3 marks)

Draw: Draw a scene that represents 'new beginnings' in spring, featuring a basket of decorated eggs and blooming spring flowers.

Extension challenge: Research why Easter is tied to the lunar cycle and write a short paragraph explaining how the moon affects the date of other festivals in different cultures.