

Name: _____

Winter Solstices Through History



The Winter Solstice happens when the day is the shortest and the night is the longest. A long time ago, people noticed that the sun stayed in the sky for fewer hours during winter. They also saw that, after a certain day, the sun started staying out longer each day. This special day was the Winter Solstice. People believed it was a time of **rebirth** because the sun seemed to grow stronger again. They celebrated with feasts, fires, and special **ceremonies** to welcome back the light.

Ancient people used nature to figure out when the solstice happened. They watched the sun rise and set in different places in the sky. Some built tools like stone circles or tall markers to track where the sun's light fell on certain days. Stonehenge in England and Newgrange in Ireland are famous examples of these tools. These ancient "calendars" helped people know when winter would begin to end, so they could prepare for planting and warmer weather.

Match each word on the left with its correct meaning on the right:

Words	Meanings
Rebirth	Events or activities done to celebrate something
Ancient	Something very old or from a long time ago
Ceremonies	A fresh start or a new beginning

Complete the sentences:

1. The Winter Solstice was seen as a time of _____ because the sun seemed to grow stronger again.
2. _____ people built stone circles and markers to help track the sun and know when the Winter Solstice happened.
3. Many cultures held special _____ during the Winter Solstice to celebrate the return of the sun.

Check your understanding:

1. Why did people long ago celebrate the Winter Solstice?

- A. It was the longest day of the year.
- B. They believed it was a time of rebirth when the sun grew stronger again.
- C. It marked the start of planting crops.
- D. They thought it was the first day of spring.

2. What did ancient people use to figure out when the solstice happened?

- A. Telescopes and calendars
- B. Fire and candles
- C. Tools like stone circles and tall markers
- D. Shadows from trees

3. What is one example of a famous tool used to track the Winter Solstice?

- A. The Eiffel Tower
- B. Stonehenge
- C. A modern clock
- D. The Great Wall of China