

# Harvest

## What Is Harvest?

Harvest is the time of year when **crops** are collected. Long ago, whole villages would work together in autumn to collect the harvest. People were thankful that they had food for the winter months. There were no supermarkets so a successful harvest was something for everyone to celebrate.

## Did You Know...?

The word harvest comes from the Old English word 'hærfest' meaning autumn.

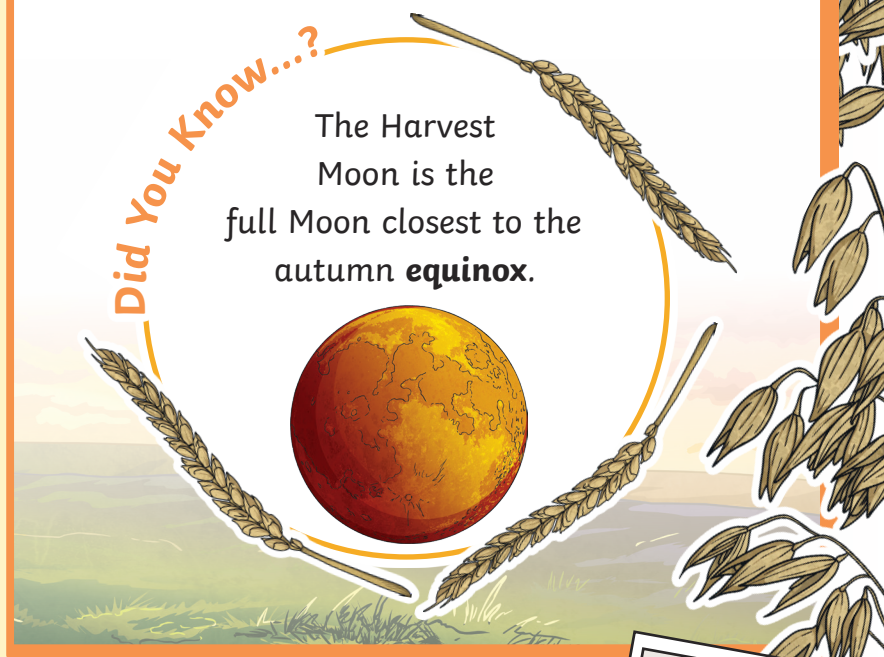
## When Is Harvest?

Harvest season in the UK begins in August or September. In the past, it would not end until the last of the crop was brought to the village. When harvest was complete, the celebrations would start.

Nowadays, the end of the harvest is marked by the Harvest Festival which always happens on the Sunday closest to the Harvest Moon.

Did You Know...?

The Harvest Moon is the full Moon closest to the autumn **equinox**.



## How Is Harvest Celebrated?

The end of harvest used to be marked by the Harvest Supper which was an enormous meal of meats, vegetables and puddings. The whole village ate together and celebrated with singing, dancing and games.

In recent years, the Harvest Festival has been mainly celebrated by schools and churches. Churches are decorated and use songs, readings and prayers to give thanks for the harvest. Children in some schools collect food to give to those who need it in the community.

**aloft:** High in the air.

**crops:** A plant that is grown in large quantities, especially as food.

**equinox:** One of the two times in the year when the Sun is above the equator and day and night are of equal length.



## Harvest Traditions

### Harvest

Different areas of the country have their own customs for the harvest season.

### Corn Dollies



The last stalks of corn are woven into a 'corn dolly' to honour the spirit of the corn. It is important in the celebrations.

### 'Crying the Neck'

The last of the crop is held **aloft** and there is a traditional ceremony that, when the last crop was cut, had the villagers chant, sing and cheer.



### Hollaing Largesse

In East Anglia, if a stranger happened to walk past during harvesting, they were then expected to help pay for the workers supper that evening!



# Questions

1. What season does harvest happen in?

- ☐ winter
- ☐ summer
- ☐ spring
- ☐ autumn

2. Draw **three** lines and match the harvest custom with its summary.

Corn Dollies

A traditional ceremony involving lots of singing and cheering.

Crying the Neck

A stranger passing by harvesting in the fields had to pay for dinner.

Hollaing Largesse

A traditional item made to honour the spirit of the corn.

3. Number the facts from 1-4 to show the order in which they appear in the text.

- ☐ Different areas of the country have their own customs.
- ☐ The Harvest Supper was an enormous meal.
- ☐ Harvest is the time of year when crops are collected.
- ☐ The end of the harvest is marked by the Harvest Festival.

4. Underline one word which means the same as 'fruitful' or 'rewarding'.

*There were no supermarkets so a successful harvest was something for everyone to celebrate.*

5. Look at the section **What is Harvest?**

Find and copy one word which shows that people were grateful for the harvest.

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6. Fill in the missing words.

The Harvest Moon is the \_\_\_\_\_ moon closest to the  
\_\_\_\_\_ equinox.

7. Why do you think that the end of harvesting was celebrated more than the beginning?

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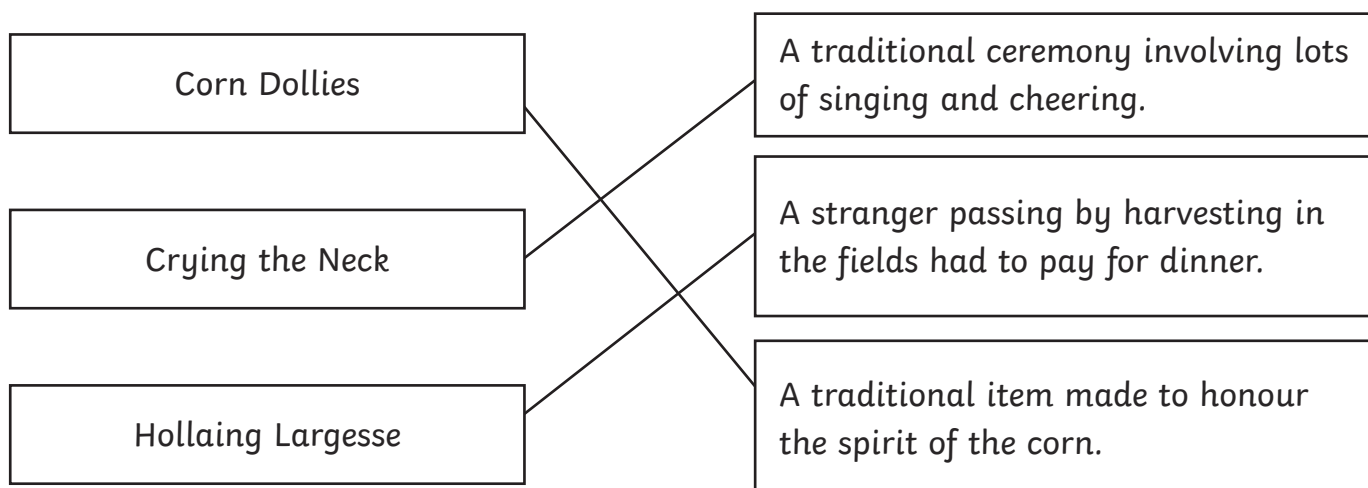


# Answers

1. What season does harvest happen in?

- ☐ winter
- ☐ summer
- ☐ spring
- ☒ **autumn**

2. Draw **three** lines and match the harvest custom with its summary.



3. Number the facts from 1-4 to show the order in which they appear in the text.

- 4** Different areas of the country have their own customs.
- 3** The Harvest Supper was an enormous meal.
- 1** Harvest is the time of year when crops are collected.
- 2** The end of the harvest is marked by the Harvest Festival.

4. Underline one word which means the same as 'fruitful' or 'rewarding'.

*There were no supermarkets so a successful harvest was something for everyone to celebrate.*

**Award 1 mark for:**

- successful

5. Look at the section **What is Harvest?**

Find and copy one word which shows that people were grateful for the harvest.  
**thankful**

6. Fill in the missing words.

The Harvest Moon is the **full** moon closest to the **autumn** equinox.

7. Why do you think that the end of harvesting was celebrated more than the beginning?

**Pupils' own responses, such as: I think that the end of harvest was celebrated more than the beginning because harvest was a lot of hard work but they were rewarded with lots of food for the winter months at the end so had reason to celebrate.**

# Harvest

## What Is Harvest?

Harvest is the time of year when **crops** planted in the spring are ready to be collected. Long ago, a good harvest meant guaranteed food for the harsh winter months. The whole community would work together to gather the crop and celebrate the success of the **yield**. With no supermarkets, the harvest was the only source of food so a bountiful harvest was for everyone to celebrate.

### Did You Know...?

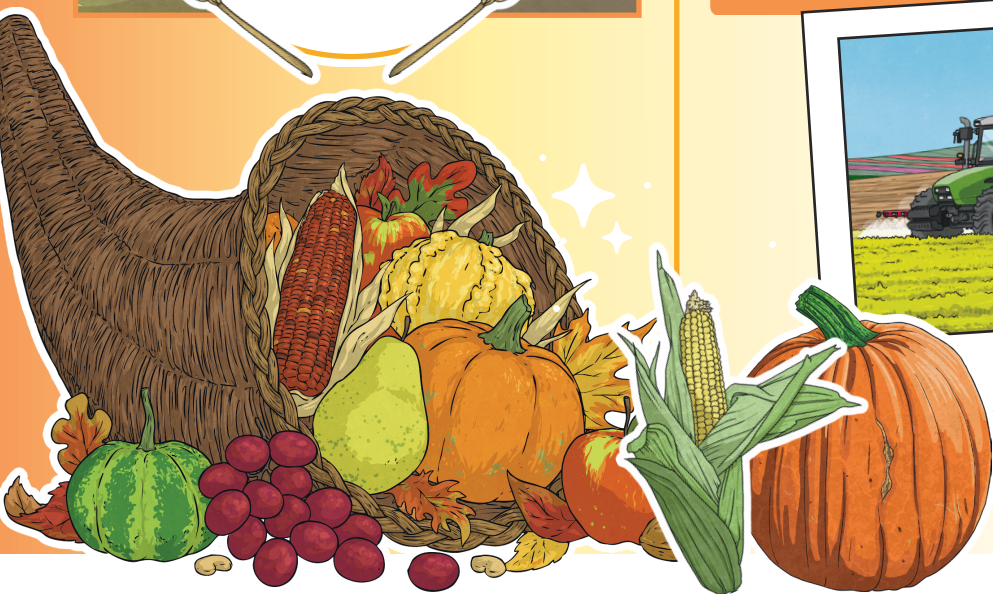
The Harvest Moon is the full Moon closest to the autumn equinox.

## When Is Harvest?

Harvest season in the UK begins at the end of August or the start of September. In years gone by, there was an ancient festival called Lammass to celebrate the beginning of harvest. But it has always been the end that sees the most festivities.

In the past, the harvest would not end until the last **sheaf** of the crop arrived at the village and there was often a grand procession to welcome it.

In more modern times, the end of harvesting and the start of celebrations are marked by the Harvest Festival on the Sunday closest to the Harvest Moon. The festivities include the Saint Michael's Mass on 29<sup>th</sup> September.





## How Is Harvest Celebrated?

In the past, the awaited arrival of the last crop meant the beginning of the Harvest Supper. A magnificent meal of meats, vegetables, fruits and puddings would be shared by the community. Everyone from the lord of the land to the labourers from the fields joined in with singing, dancing and games.

In more recent years, the Harvest Festival has been mainly celebrated by schools and churches. Decorations of fruits and grains can be found in churches and there are songs, readings and prayers that give thanks for the harvest. In some schools,, children are often asked to bring food to be shared out to those who need it in the local

## Glossary

**crops:** A plant that is grown in large quantities, especially as food.

**equinox:** One of the two times in the year when the Sun is above the equator and day and night are of equal length.

**sheaf:** A bundle of wheat tied together after being cut.

**yield:** The total amount of crops that are produced on an area of land.

Harvest season is steeped in wonderful traditions created over hundreds of years. Different areas of the country have their own legends and ways of honouring them.

## 'Crying the Neck'

In Cornwall, the final sheaves of corn in the field are held high in the air and then cheered by everyone present.

## Harvest Traditions

## Corn Dollies

'Dolls' are made from the last of the crop to honour the spirit of the corn within it.



## Hollaing Largesse

In East Anglia, if an unsuspecting stranger passed by the harvesting in the fields, they would be expected to donate towards a Harvest Supper for all of the workers!



# Questions

1. Which months can harvest begin in? Tick **two**.

- ☐ September
- ☐ August
- ☐ July
- ☐ October

2. Draw **four** lines and match the words to their definitions.

procession

To remind people of an important event or person from the past with a special action or object.

commemorate

A person whose job involves hard, physical work, especially work that is done outdoors.

labourer

A line of people or vehicles that move along slowly, especially as part of a ceremony.

honour

Having great respect for somebody.

3. Number the events from 1-4 to show the order which they occurred in.

- ☐ The Harvest Supper was shared by the whole community.
- ☐ The festival of Lammas celebrated the beginning of the harvest.
- ☐ The last of the crop was welcomed with a procession.
- ☐ St Michael's Mass is held on 29<sup>th</sup> September.

4. Underline one word which shows that harvest season has lots of traditions associated with it.

*Harvest season is steeped in wonderful traditions created over hundreds of years.*

5. Look at the section **How Is Harvest Celebrated?**

Find and copy **two** examples of alliteration.

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

6. Fill in the missing words.

In the past, the awaited arrival of the last \_\_\_\_\_ meant the beginning of the \_\_\_\_\_.

7. ... so a bountiful harvest was for everyone to celebrate.

What does this part of the sentence imply about the impact of a bad harvest?

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8. What do you think historians will gain from this text in the future? Explain your answer.

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# Answers

1. Which months can harvest begin in? Tick **two**.

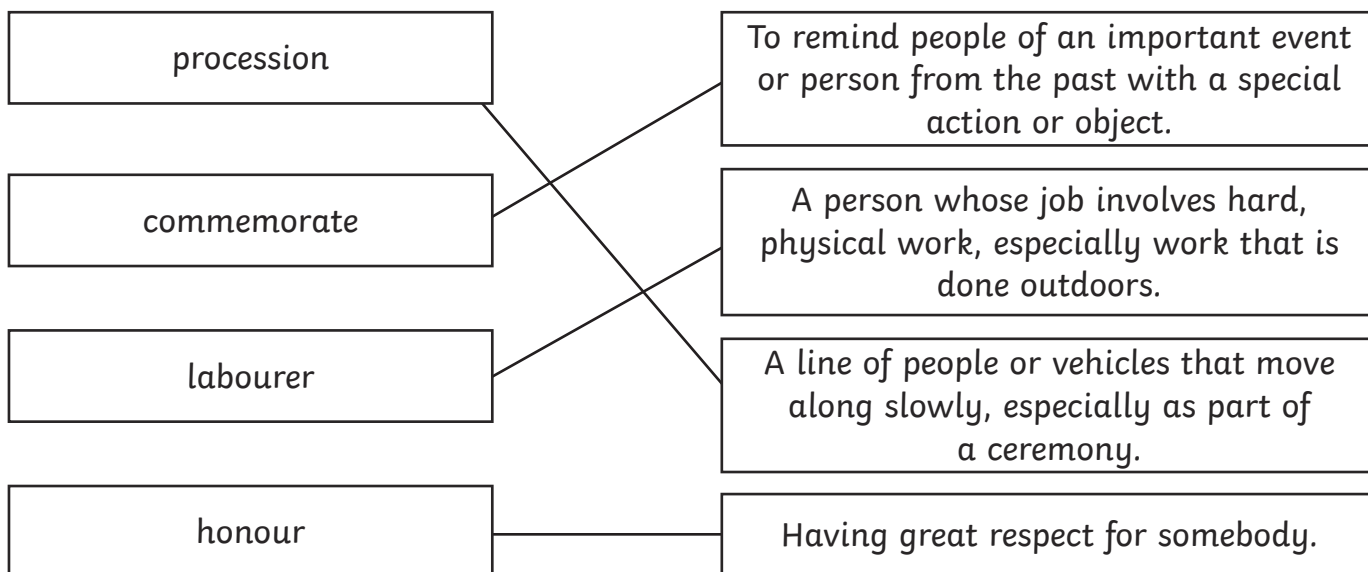
☐ **September**

☒ **August**

☒ July

☐ October

2. Draw **four** lines and match the words to their definitions.



3. Number the events from 1-4 to show the order which they occurred in.

**4** The Harvest Supper was shared by the whole community.

**1** The festival of Lammas celebrated the beginning of the harvest.

**2** The last of the crop was welcomed with a procession.

**3** St Michael's Mass is held on 29<sup>th</sup> September.

4. Underline one word which shows that harvest season has lots of traditions associated with it.

Harvest season is steeped in wonderful traditions created over hundreds of years.

**Award 1 mark for:**

- steeped

5. Look at the section **How Is Harvest Celebrated?**

Find and copy **two** examples of alliteration.

**Accept any two of the following: awaited arrival; magnificent meal; the lord of the land.**

6. Fill in the missing words.

In the past, the awaited arrival of the last **crop** meant the beginning of the **Harvest Supper**.

7. ... so a bountiful harvest was for everyone to celebrate.

What does this part of the sentence imply about the impact of a bad harvest?

**Pupils' own responses, such as: This part of the sentence implies that a bad harvest would leave them with little food for the winter months so they were grateful when it was good.**

8. What do you think historians will gain from this text in the future? Explain your answer.

**Pupils' own responses, such as: I think historians will gain knowledge of the old traditions of harvest and understand the way that harvest is celebrated now and why.**

# Harvest

## What Is Harvest?

Harvest is the time of year when the **crops** planted in the spring are ready to be collected. It has been celebrated for hundreds of years and, long ago, whole villages would work together to harvest the crop. People were thankful to know that they had food for the approaching winter months and an abundant harvest was something for everyone to celebrate.



## When Is Harvest?

The word harvest comes from the Old English word 'hærfest' (pronounced 'h-eer-fest') meaning autumn. Harvest season in the UK usually begins at the end of August or the start of September. Historically, there was a festival called Lammas, which means 'loaf mass', celebrating the beginning of harvest. However, it has always been the end of the harvest season which sees the most festivities.

Long ago, the harvest would not end until the last sheaf of the crop was collected and brought back to the village. Sometimes there would be a grand procession to welcome back the workers and their treasured load. Today, the completion of the yearly harvest and the start of celebrations are marked by the Harvest Festival, which always happens on the Sunday closest to the Harvest Moon during the autumn **equinox**.

The conclusion of the harvest festivities was usually marked by Saint Michael's Mass, in honour of Saint Michael the Archangel. Michaelmas, as it is often known, happens every year on 29<sup>th</sup> September.





## How Is Harvest Celebrated?

The arrival of the last crop meant that the Harvest Supper could commence. A bountiful meal of meats, vegetables, fruits, pies and puddings would be shared by everybody in the village. Singing, dancing and games involved all of those who had worked hard, from the **squire** of the land to the labourers from the fields.

Today, the Harvest Festival tends to be less prominent and it is mostly schools and churches that commemorate the occasion. Churches are decorated with fruit, vegetables and grains and there are specific songs, readings and prayers that give thanks for the harvest. Some schools will often ask children to bring tins or packaged food from home, which is then collected and delivered to those who need it most in the community, such as the elderly.

## Glossary

**crops:** A plant that is grown in large quantities, especially as food.

**equinox:** One of the two times in the year when the Sun is above the equator and day and night are of equal length.

**sheaf:** A bundle of wheat tied together after being cut.

**squire:** A man of high social status, who was a country landowner.

## Harvest

The harvest season has conjured up many wonderful traditions over hundreds of years. Different areas of the country have their own legends and ways of honouring them.

A practice called 'Crying the Neck' which, when the last crop was cut, had the villagers chant, sing and cheer.



The creation of corn 'dolls' made from the last of the crop, to acknowledge the spirit of the corn within it.



A custom called Hollaing Largesse. This happened whenever an unsuspecting stranger happened to walk past during harvesting. They were then expected to donate money to help pay for the labourers' supper that evening!

# Questions

1. Which festival marks the end of harvesting? Tick one.

- ☐ Lammas
- ☐ St Michael's Mass
- ☐ Harvest Festival
- ☐ Harvest Supper

2. Draw **four** lines and match the words to their synonyms.

abundant

grand

conclusion

unsuspecting

unwary

plentiful

splendid

end

3. Look at the section **When Is Harvest?**

Find and copy a phrase which shows that the last of the crop was valuable to the people.

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4. Why was an abundant harvest something for everyone to celebrate?

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5. Fill in the missing words.

Harvest season in the UK usually begins at the end of \_\_\_\_\_ or the start of \_\_\_\_\_.

6. Look at the following sentence. What does it imply about the harvest season?

**Today, the Harvest Festival tends to be less prominent and it is mostly schools and churches that commemorate the occasion.**

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7. If this text was to be rewritten in the future, how might it change?

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8. Summarise what harvest is in 25 words or fewer.

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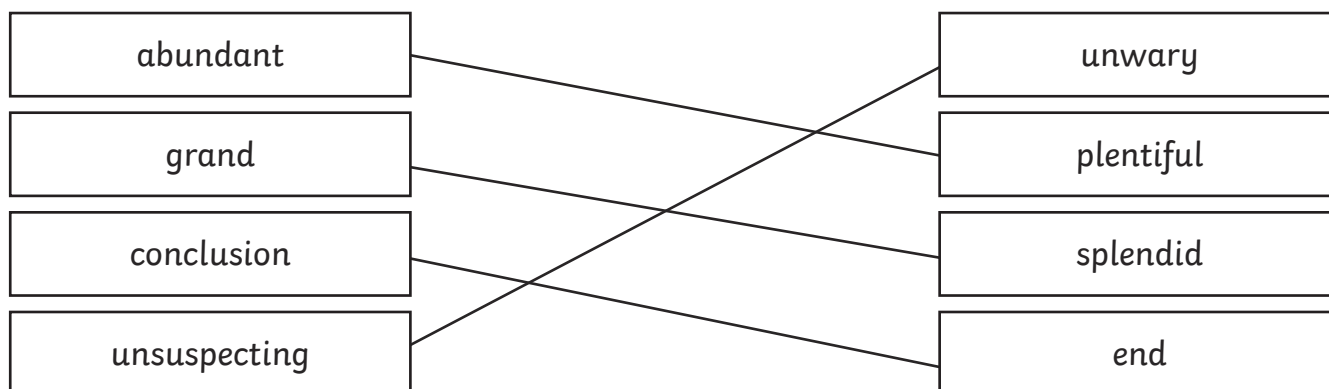


# Answers

1. Which festival marks the end of harvesting? Tick one.

- ☐ Lammas  
☐ St Michael's Mass  
☒ **Harvest Festival**  
☐ Harvest Supper

2. Draw **four** lines and match the words to their synonyms.



3. Look at the section **When Is Harvest?**

Find and copy a phrase which shows that the last of the crop was valuable to the people.

**treasured load**

4. Why was an abundant harvest something for everyone to celebrate?

**Pupils' own responses, such as: An abundant harvest was celebrated by everyone because it meant that there would be enough food to be shared out for the winter.**

5. Fill in the missing words.

Harvest season in the UK usually begins at the end of **August** or the start of **September**.

6. Look at the following sentence. What does it imply about the harvest season?

**Today, the Harvest Festival tends to be less prominent and it is mostly schools and churches that commemorate the occasion.**

**Pupils' own responses, such as: I think that the sentence implies that harvest is not so important anymore. It used to involve everyone in the village but now it's just some schools and churches celebrating it.**

7. If this text was to be rewritten in the future, how might it change?

**Pupils' own responses, such as: If this text was rewritten in the future, I think it would talk about harvest celebrations in the past tense because harvest wouldn't be considered a big event anymore.**

8. Summarise what harvest is in 25 words or fewer.

**Pupils' own responses, such as: Harvest is when the crops are gathered in the autumn. This involved the whole village in the past so there was food for everyone.**