

Transcripciones:

1. Maasai and the lions

For thousands of years the Maasai people in Kenya had no doubts about their relationship with the lions who shared the land with them. They were enemies. The lions wanted to kill the tribe's livestock and the Maasai had to protect the animals. It was even part of the coming-of-age ritual of young warriors to kill a lion.

But now things have changed and the Maasai are part of a new East African scheme to protect lions, called the Lion Guardians. The aim is for local people to be trained to manage and protect the lions without involvement from outsiders after the period of initial training. The Lion Guardians are taught basic literacy, how to manage data, how to deal with conflict between humans and lions, GPS and telemetry tracking of radio-collared lions. Some of them also learn how to speak in public and how to blog.

The Lion Guardians monitor the lions and other carnivores and inform cattle herders when to avoid the areas where there are lions. They also help improve the livestock enclosures and educate people about wildlife. Helping find lost livestock is another important job. In the past these would often have been killed by carnivores.

If anyone is about to carry out a lion hunt, the Lion Guardians try and persuade them not to. Since many of the Guardians have killed lions in the past and are very experienced, they are highly respected in the community and are listened to by their age-mates, or peers, and often by their elders. They explain the importance of the lions to culture and tourism and how they can now be arrested for killing protected animals.

One such Lion Guardian is Olubi Lairumbe. He has killed seven lions in his lifetime. The last one was a lioness who was pregnant with five cubs. He regretted killing her very much, had a massive change of heart and volunteered to become a Lion Guardian. Olubi's father used to hate lions and encouraged his sons to hunt them, but since Olubi became a Guardian, he has been advising them not to kill carnivores. Olubi was recently interviewed by Sir David Attenborough and appeared on the Africa documentary series.

Another Guardian, Mingati Makarot, is very good at tracking lions using his traditional skills and has a great knowledge of the area that acts as a refuge to many wildlife species. Mingati is a past lion killer but has completely converted to being one of its ardent protectors. His name, Mingati, is a 'lion name' given to him meaning one who is fast and doesn't lag behind.

In the past, a moran (a Maasai warrior) received a lion name after spearing a lion. In Maasai culture the name represents the characteristics of both the warrior and the lion he has killed. A warrior with a lion name feels that he has achieved something great. When the successful warrior brings the lion's mane and tail back to his manyatta (his home in the community) to be put on display, he is treated as a hero. Other young men who don't yet have their lion names are called by the general name of 'moran'. They long to have recognition and dream about the day that it will be their turn to bring home the lion trophy.

Now, this naming tradition is changing. The Lion Guardians experimented by giving lion names to boys who had not killed lions and it worked. Other young people called them by the lion names, then the older people did so too. There were still some boys who wanted to do something to prove their bravery, and they were assigned conservation tasks to do. Now young men can earn respect by protecting lions, rather than killing them.

Another change is that the lions are now given Maasai names and each has a card explaining who the lion is related to and which lions they keep company with. Personalising the lions helps them to be seen as individuals by the community.

Since the programme began in 2007, no lions have been killed in the area patrolled by Lion Guardians. Compare that to a similar neighbouring area without Guardians, where 63 have been killed, and you can see just how successful the scheme is. The Maasai have managed to successfully adapt their culture to changing times without giving up their identity.

Fuente: <https://learnenglishteens.britishcouncil.org/skills/listening/upper-intermediate-b2-listening/maasai-lions>

2. Unusual British Festivals

Hello. I'm going to talk about British festivals. I'm sure you've heard about the Notting Hill Carnival in London and the Edinburgh Festival, but today we're going to look at a lot more that you might not know about. Actually, a lot of these are not exactly festivals, but strange races or competitions. Some of them are ancient and some are modern.

So, let's start in January in the north of Scotland with the Burning of the Clavie. This is a whisky barrel which is set alight then carried through the streets as a bonfire. It's an ancient tradition which always takes place on 11th of January, the first day of the year, according to an older form of the calendar. The bonfire brings good luck for the coming year and people used to keep bits of burnt wood as protection against evil spirits. At the end of January, even further north, in the Shetland Islands, there's another fire festival, the Up Helly Aa. This seems like an ancient festival, but has actually only been going for about 130 years – well, it is fairly old, I suppose. People carry fire-lit torches and a Viking boat through the streets, then set fire to the boat. There's lots of dancing; it's good fun.

Now to the north of England. On Shrove Tuesday in February, otherwise known as Pancake Day, a special Pancake Bell is rung in Scarborough. Everyone goes down to the road next to the beach where they skip – yep, they jump over long ropes, up to fifteen people to one rope. And they have pancake races. This is quite common in the UK – running with a frying pan and tossing a pancake at the same time.

Another kind of race takes place in spring – cheese rolling. In Gloucestershire, in the south-west of England, round cheeses in round boxes are sent rolling down a hill and people run after them and try and catch them. The hill is very steep, so people often fall over – if you take part in this you need to be very fit and wear your oldest jeans. Nowadays this strange custom attracts visitors from all over the world, but the people from the local village are usually the ones who catch the cheese.

From people-racing, to animals, very tiny animals. World Championship Snail Racing takes place in a village in Norfolk. The snails have to race from an inner circle to an outer circle and the winner gets a lot of lettuce. There's a party and barbecue for the snail owners and observers. This custom began in the 1960s after a local man saw something similar in France. In the UK we don't eat snails, by the way.

More fun, in my opinion, are the onion-eating contest, also in Gloucestershire – a race to finish eating a raw onion – and the Black Pudding Throwing Championship, in Lancashire. Black puddings are like big sausages made mainly from dried blood. Contestants bowl three black puddings each at 21 Yorkshire puddings set on a six-metre platform; the winner is the one who knocks down the most. Another fun contest takes place in September at the Egremont Crab Fair in Cumbria in the north of England. The World Gurning Championship is a competition to pull the ugliest face. It sounds ridiculous but this is an ancient British tradition and the Crab Fair itself dates back to 1267. The man who won the title of best gurner the most in recent years had all his teeth taken out so he could make terrible faces more easily.

Finally, let's go back to the south of England. In Brighton there's a Burning the Clocks Festival to celebrate the winter solstice on December 21st. This custom started twenty years ago and is very popular. People make clock lanterns and time-themed figures of paper and wood, then walk through the town to the beach where the sculptures are set on fire and there's a massive firework display.

So, that's just a taste of a few of our old and more modern traditions. Would you like to take part in any of them?

Fuente: <https://learnenglishteens.britishcouncil.org/skills/listening/upper-intermediate-b2-listening/unusual-british-festivals>