

April Fool's Day

I want to tell you... I just gave birth to 5 babies last weekend. Isn't that exciting? Oh, you don't believe me? Okay then, I stole some money from a bank on Saturday night. Now do you believe me? (Actually, I hope you don't.) April 1st, or April Fools Day, is the day when we play jokes on people. Do you have it in your country?



Vocabulary

- **a fool**- someone who doesn't understand what is happening
- **to tease**- laugh at, make fun of someone, joke about something
- **to play a joke (on someone)**- to do something funny that another person doesn't know about or suspect at first
- **container**- something that holds something else, like a box, a bottle, or a jar
- **to play a trick (on someone)**- same as *play a joke*
- **in the spirit of fun**- with an atmosphere of fun, just for fun, lighthearted

April Fool's Day started in the sixteenth century in Europe. Before that time, New Year's Day was celebrated on April 1st. Then a new calendar was introduced called the *Gregorian* calendar. January 1st became the first day of the year, but many people did not know about it. So those who continued to celebrate New Year's Day on April 1st were teased. They were called fools.

Nowadays we play jokes on people on April 1st. For example, someone might put salt in the sugar container so another person could "accidentally" put it in their coffee. Or someone might change the time on another person's alarm clock so that person would unknowingly wake up earlier or later than planned. Or maybe a person would tell a lie to make someone else shocked.

After we play the trick, we say "April Fool." Then the poor person realizes he was fooled. It is generally done in the spirit of fun and doesn't cause any real harm to anyone. Do you have any great jokes to play on anyone today? Try it out. Just don't forget to say "April Fool" when the other person begins looking a little confused.

Check Your Understanding

Choose True or False. Check your answers by clicking the arrow below.

1. April Fool's Day started in 1908.

True

False

2. A long time ago, New Year's Eve was celebrated on April 1st.

True

False

3. Some people didn't realize that New Year's Day had changed.

True

False

4. People who celebrated New Year's Day on January 1st were teased.

True

False

5. People like to play jokes on January 1st.

True

False

6. Sometimes on April Fool's Day people lie to shock someone.

True

False

7. After you play a joke on someone, you should say "April Fools!"

True

False

