

## Reading Level 2/3: Christmas traditions

23<sup>rd</sup> December 2013**Topics:** Christmas, traditions**Learning points:**

- vocabulary
- adverbs
- present perfect and past simple
- 2-part verbs

1 I have had the good fortune of going to several Christmas markets this year. Actually, the first one I went to  
2 was back at the end of November when we happened<sup>1</sup> to be driving past St Wolfgang and stopped there for a  
3 break. We unexpectedly walked into the middle of a Christmas market, which I thought was very attractive,  
4 even though<sup>2</sup> unfortunately it was raining rather than snowing.

5  
6 Since then, we have been to three different Christmas markets in Tirol. Normally we would go to Innsbruck to  
7 visit that market at least once, but we haven't done that yet this year and I don't suppose we will now! I had  
8 wanted to see the market in Hall, too, but we didn't make that either<sup>3</sup>. As for going to Vienna to do a tour of  
9 the Viennese Christmas markets, as many people seem to do, we'll have to leave that for another year!

10  
11 Instead, we went to Brixlegg when they had their St Nicholas procession through the village, complete with  
12 Krampus following very sedately<sup>4</sup> behind. It was especially nice to see so many families there with young  
13 children and a special event put on<sup>5</sup> for them particularly to enjoy. We missed the Christkindl procession this  
14 year, but saw it last year and it was even more attractive – certainly a family-friendly Christmas market! And,  
15 by the way<sup>6</sup>, one with the best Glühwein of this year (well, OK, it was really an amoretto punch, but it was  
16 delicious).

17  
18 We have also been to the Rattenberg Christmas market. The last time we went there was several years ago,  
19 and since then we have tended to avoid it because we thought it would be too busy, too overrun with  
20 tourists. Actually, it was delightful. The atmosphere in the town is certainly special, perhaps uniquely so,  
21 with the candles in all the windows and the old buildings. It almost seems made for a romantic Christmas  
22 atmosphere! While we were slowly warming ourselves in front of the blazing<sup>7</sup> log fires, I couldn't help but  
23 wonder that they are allowed – in the UK there would sadly be no chance of having fires like that in the open.  
24 The health and safety risk – let alone<sup>8</sup> the risk of the council being sued<sup>9</sup> – would be too great to allow it.

25  
26 Finally, we briefly popped into<sup>10</sup> the Christmas Market in Reith yesterday evening – the last one before  
27 Christmas. It was pretty crowded as it seemed like half the village had turned out<sup>11</sup>, and we didn't stay too  
28 long. Incidentally, my impression was that it had the best selection of food on offer!

29  
30 So that was our Christmas markets for 2013. Maybe we will make it to Hall next year. I hope you have all  
31 enjoyed advent and the seasonal festivities as much as we have.

---

<sup>1</sup> happen to = zufällig etw tun

<sup>2</sup> even though = obwohl

<sup>3</sup> either = auch nicht

<sup>4</sup> sedately = ruhig

<sup>5</sup> put on = veranstalten

<sup>6</sup> by the way = übrigens

<sup>7</sup> blazing = lodernd

<sup>8</sup> let alone = geschweige denn

<sup>9</sup> sue = klagen

<sup>10</sup> pop into = schnell vorbeischaun

<sup>11</sup> turn out = erscheinen

## Level 2/3 questions

### **Adverbs**

We have focussed a bit on adverbs over the past few weeks at the Level 2 level, and this text is another example to give you a feel for how adverbs can be used in English.

1. To get you thinking a bit more about adverbs, go through the text and categorise the adverbs you find into the following types:
  - a. adverbs of time – when something is done
  - b. adverbs of manner – how something is done
  - c. adverbs of emphasis – more of a feeling about the action/adjective
  - d. adverbs of probability

### **Present simple and past perfect**

This text is also good for showing one of the key differences between the Past Simple and Present Perfect.

Although all of the text is about the past, some sentences focus on a specific time/event, and some sentences refer more generally to the period of time until now.

2. Which tense – Past Simple or Present Perfect – refers to:
  - a. a specific event in the past
  - b. an event which happened at some time before now
3. As you read through the text, try to identify this difference in meaning.
4. Look at the other 'Level 2/3' Christmas traditions text and identify plenty more adverbs there, too!

### **2-part verbs**

2-part verbs fit the style of language here – personal and informal.

Two-part verbs are made up of a verb and a preposition ('made up' is an example).

Two-part verbs can be difficult to remember, but the more you can learn and use, the more English you will sound.

5. What 2-part verbs can you find in this text?

## Level 2/3 answers

1.
  - a. adverbs of time: normally, finally, briefly, since then
  - b. adverbs of manner: sedately, slowly, sadly
  - c. adverbs of emphasis: actually, unexpectedly, unfortunately, particularly, really, uniquely, pretty, incidentally
  - d. adverbs of probability: certainly
2.
  - a. a specific event in the past (at a known time) = Past Simple
  - b. an event which happened at an unknown time in the past = Present Perfect
3. For example, line 18 (We have been to the Rattenberg Christmas market) = Present Perfect  
Line 18 (the last time we went was several years ago) = Simple Past
- 4.
5. put on; pop into; turn out