

Christmas in Sweden

The holiday season in Sweden begins with Advent, which marks the four Sundays before Christmas. On Saint Lucy's Day, December 13, girls around Sweden take part in a special procession, or parade. They dress in white robes and carry candles or sweets, such as saffron buns. They sing a special song about Saint Lucy. One girl is crowned for the day. They also sing Christmas carols or other songs about the saint.



Saffron buns are carried on Saint Lucy's Day in Sweden.



A Julbock, or Christmas goat, made of straw.

In December, Swedes decorate with candles, lights and stars. Christmas trees are popular in Sweden. A special Swedish decoration is the Julbock, or Christmas goat. Small ornaments of the goat hang on the Christmas tree. Large goats made of straw are set up in towns.

any nice children here?" If there are, the children will receive toys and sweets. Many families leave a bowl of porridge outside for Tomten. If they don't leave it, they might have bad luck the next year.

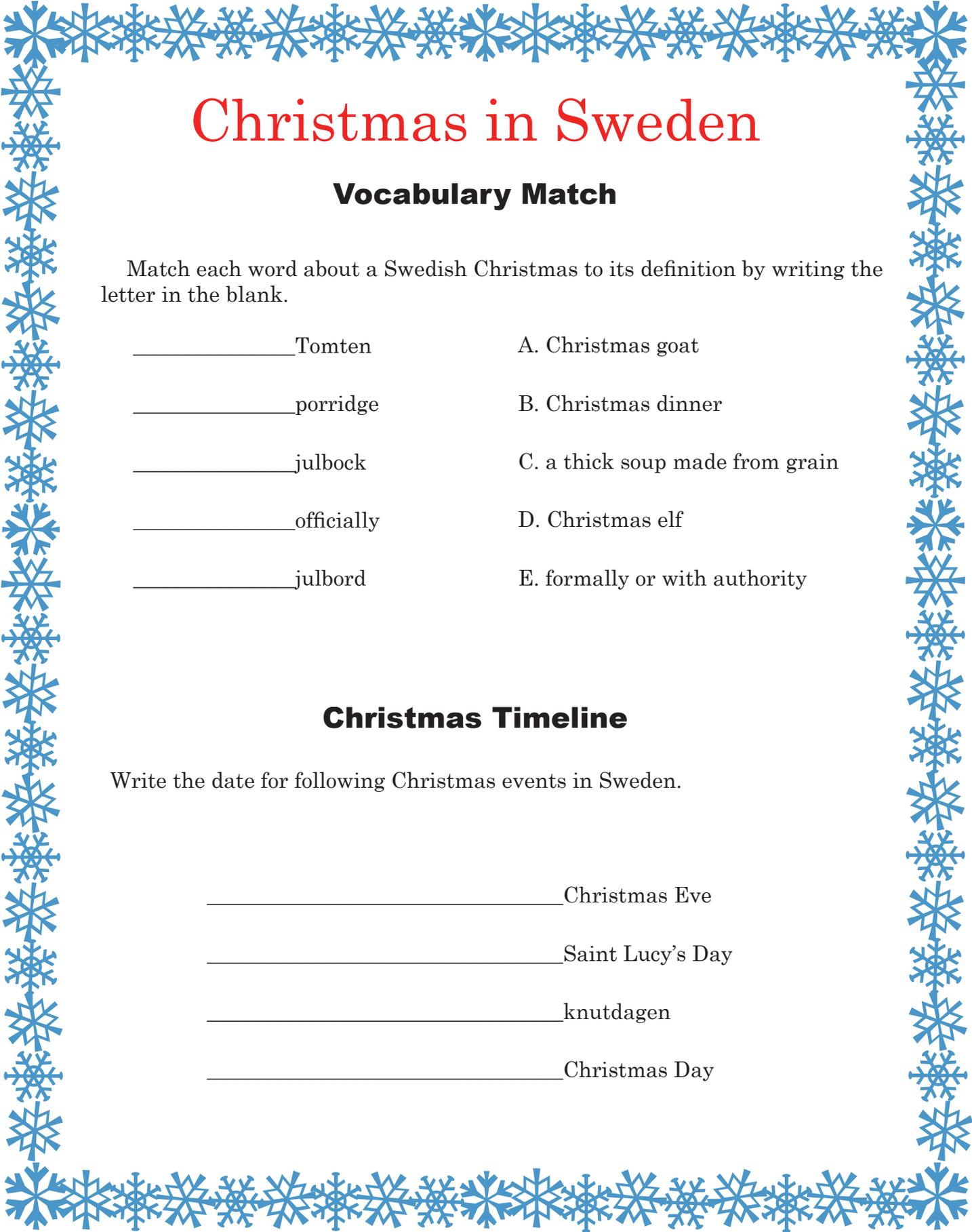
After a large Christmas Eve dinner, called a julbord, families open their presents. Each present has a rhyme attached to it that gives a hint about the present.

Christmas Day is quiet in Sweden. Families go to church or watch TV specials. The holiday season is officially over on January 13 when all the decorations come down. This day is known as knutdagen.

December 24, Christmas Eve, is the day when children receive presents from Jultomten, or Tomten, the Christmas elf. He knocks on doors and asks "Are there



A Swedish Christmas tree with a Swedish flag at the top



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Vocabulary Match

Match each word about a Swedish Christmas to its definition by writing the letter in the blank.

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|------------------|---------------------------------|
| _____ Tomten | A. Christmas goat |
| _____ porridge | B. Christmas dinner |
| _____ julbock | C. a thick soup made from grain |
| _____ officially | D. Christmas elf |
| _____ julbord | E. formally or with authority |

Christmas Timeline

Write the date for following Christmas events in Sweden.

- _____ Christmas Eve
- _____ Saint Lucy's Day
- _____ knutdagen
- _____ Christmas Day