

Father's Day

On 5th July 1908, a church in West Virginia, USA held the first event in honour of fathers. It was a Sunday sermon in memory of 362 men who had died the previous December in an explosion at the Fairmont Coal Company mines. Many of the men who died were fathers and grandfathers.

A year later, a young woman called Sonora Smart Dodd decided to try to get an official day started to honour all fathers. When Sonora was 10 years old, her mother died. She was one of six children who were raised by their father.

She went to churches, the YMCA, shopkeepers and the government, to try to get support to start a national day for fathers.

She was successful! The 19th June 1910 was the day chosen by Washington State to celebrate fathers.

Some people did not think it was important to have a Father's Day. However, Sonora was outraged and said:

“Either we honour both of our parents, mother and father, or let us desist from honouring either one.”

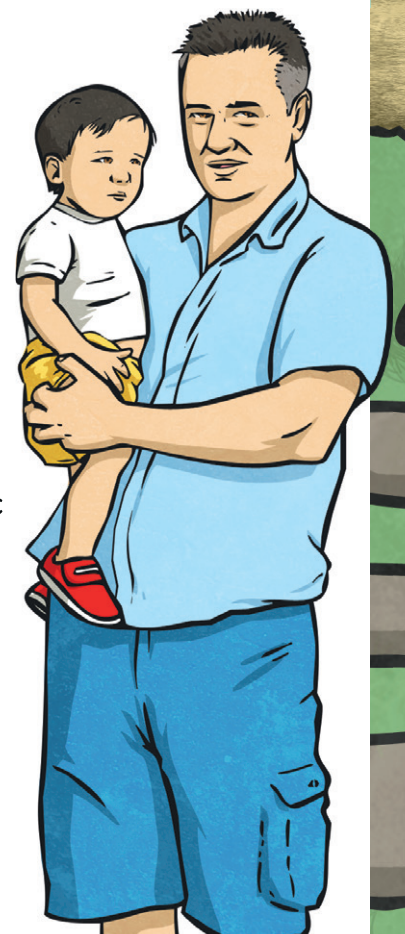
In 1972, President Richard Nixon made Father's Day an official national holiday.

There are no set traditions on how people celebrate Father's Day, but it is a great time to appreciate any man who plays the role of a father, whether they be a grandfather, uncle or other member of the family who has looked after us.

Did you know?

In the UK, Father's Day is celebrated each year on the third Sunday of June.

Often, fathers are given socks and ties, or sports and electronic equipment as a gift, although all dads are different and will like to receive different things. A homemade card is always a good option, or breakfast in bed.



Questions about Father's Day

Answer the questions below in full sentences.

1. Why was a special sermon given in a church in West Virginia in July 1908?

2. Who was Sonora Smart Dodd?

3. What do you think 'successful' means?

4. Who did Sonora try to get support from?

5. In what year was Father's Day made a national holiday?

6. Who else might be celebrated on this day?

7. What does 'role of a father' mean?

8. Will you celebrate Father's Day? If so, how?

Questions about Father's Day

Answers

1. Why was a special sermon given in a church in West Virginia in July 1908?
To honour men who had died in a mining accident.
2. Who was Sonora Smart Dodd?
A woman who tried to get a national day to celebrate fathers.
3. What do you think 'successful' means?
To achieve what you set out to do.
4. Who did Sonora try to get support from?
Local churches, YMCA and shopkeepers.
5. In what year was Father's Day made a national holiday?
1972
6. Who else might be celebrated on this day?
Grandfathers, uncles, male family members and friends.
7. What does 'role of a father' mean?
Acting like a dad/father to somebody who isn't necessarily their child.
8. Will you celebrate Father's Day? If so, how?
Pupil's own response.