



Read the passage comparing two cultural celebrations. Then answer the questions using evidence from the text.

Look for details about food, music, traditions, dates, origins, and the meaning behind each celebration.

## Carnival vs Mardi Gras: A World of Festive Parades



Carnival and Mardi Gras are vibrant celebrations known for their lively parades, music, and colourful costumes. **Both** traditions mark a period of joyful festivities before the Christian observance of Lent, a time of fasting and reflection. Carnival is famously celebrated in Brazil, especially in cities like Rio de Janeiro, while Mardi Gras is a beloved tradition in the United States, most notably in New Orleans, Louisiana. These celebrations have historical roots in European traditions that travelled across the oceans.

The main traditions of **both** festivals involve grand parades. In Brazil, Carnival is famous for its massive samba parades, where samba schools compete with elaborate floats and thousands of dancers in dazzling costumes. Street parties called 'blocos' also fill the cities with music and dancing. **However**, Mardi Gras in New Orleans is celebrated by 'krewes,' social organizations that build intricate floats and parade through the streets, throwing beads, doubloons, and other trinkets to the cheering crowds. Masked balls are also a significant part of the Mardi Gras season.

Food plays a delicious role in these celebrations. **While** Carnival in Brazil often features festive snacks like 'coxinha' (fried chicken croquettes) and hearty meals like 'feijoada' (a black bean and meat stew), Mardi Gras in New Orleans is famous for its unique culinary delights. People enjoy 'King Cake,' a sweet pastry often with a small plastic baby hidden inside, and traditional Creole dishes like 'gumbo' and 'jambalaya.' **Unlike** the specific samba rhythms of Carnival, Mardi Gras often features jazz music.



A surprising connection between these two celebrations is their shared spirit of community and temporary freedom. **Similarly**, both Carnival and Mardi Gras allow people to let loose, dress up, and enjoy a period of joyous excess before a more solemn time. They are powerful expressions of culture, music, and art that bring people together from all walks of life to celebrate life and tradition.

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**COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS**

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(1) Which celebration is famous for its massive samba parades?

- A Carnival    B Mardi Gras    C Both    D Neither

(2) Which celebration features krewes that throw beads and doubloons?

- A Carnival    B Mardi Gras    C Both    D Neither

(3) "Both celebrations happen before the Christian observance of Lent." Is this a **SIMILARITY** or **DIFFERENCE**?

- A Similarity    B Difference

(4) "Carnival is known for samba music, while Mardi Gras often features jazz music." Is this a **SIMILARITY** or **DIFFERENCE**?

- A Similarity    B Difference

(5) Use two details from the passage to explain **ONE** similarity between Carnival and Mardi Gras.

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