

Practice Exercise 11

In the Creole life of old New Orleans, Christmas was a day for solemnity, religion, and family observances; and New Year's was the time for friendship. The holiday season reached its climax on *le jour de l'an*—New Year's Day.

The Santa Claus of the Creoles was Papa Noel, who looked like any other Santa yet had the extra graces of Gallic ancestors. Almost unknown was the traditional American Yuletide menu of turkey and cranberries. In New Orleans, Yule tables groaned not only with Creole dishes but with imported wines and preserved food from France. Christmas Day and the eve preceding were a time for religion, as Creoles dutifully attended church services, and it was a time for families. In early river and bayou towns the night before Christmas brought the *messe de minuit*—Midnight Mass—where all Latin Catholics of South Louisiana observed solemn moments.

1. The main function of the details in this passage is to
 - a. explain a fact or idea.
 - b. set a tone or mood.
 - c. reveal character.
 - d. advance a sequence of events.
2. The Creoles of old Louisiana considered Christmas
 - a. an occasion to exchange gifts.
 - b. an opportunity to express their French heritage.
 - c. a solemn time of religious observance.
 - d. a time of gala festivities.
3. Old Louisiana Creoles served a holiday table loaded with
 - a. Creole specialties and French delicacies.
 - b. traditional American food.
 - c. pastries and cakes.
 - d. turkey and cranberries.
4. Underline the sentence that states the most significant detail for someone interested in the role of Santa Claus in other cultures.