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Subsequently, secular holidays commemorating historical occasions or distinguished persons outnumbered holy days, although many ancient religious rituals and customs have been carried over into modern times and incorporated into both secular and religious observations. Today, the outstanding holiday is one of religious observance and abstention from normal work routines, taking place on Sunday for Christians, Friday for Muslims, and Saturday for Jews. In the U.S., Sunday is not only a religious holiday but is also the only common-law holiday. National holidays are set aside by official government proclamation to celebrate such occasions as the achievement of independence, the founding of the nation, the adoption of a constitution, the birthday of the ruler, or the national patron saint's day. The U.S. has no national holidays as such legal holidays on which banks, schools, or other public institutions and most places of business are closed are designated by legislative enactment or by executive proclamation. Congress and the president designate the legal holidays for the District of Columbia and the federal territories but are without power to declare national holidays. Independence Day and other holidays are observed on a national scale as a result of action by the calendar date and requests national observance, and the states then usually enact the necessary legislation. Federal statutes often specify certain days as holidays for purposes related to the legislation. In order to give federal employees three-day weekends, a 1968 federal law made several changes in dates of holiday observances, effective in 1971: Washington's Birthday now falls on the third Monday in February. Memorial Day, on the

last Monday in May. Columbus Day, on the second Monday in October. Individual states later adopted these Monday holidays. A number of states commemorate important events in their history. In Vermont, for example, the Battle of Bennington, fought in the American Revolution, is commemorated annually on August 16. In Louisiana the Battle of New Orleans of the War of 1812 is commemorated on January 8. Patriot 's Day, commemorating the first battle of the American Revolution, is celebrated on or about April 19 in Massachusetts and Maine. and several southern states celebrate a confederate Memorial Day on different days in the spring.

参考译文: 假日是由于宗教仪式, 或为纪念某些特殊事件或著名人物而特地指定的日子。假日的主要特点是部分或完全停止工作和常规商务活动。一般来说, 假日往往伴有公众或私人庆祝会, 包括参加宴会、游行、狂欢会, 或者参观旗帜展览和做演讲等。在古代, 最初的假日主要以宗教为特色, 与自然现象如每年的太阳运行过程或月相等相关。实际上, “假日”一词是由“圣日”这个词演变而来的。而在之后的岁月里, 世俗假日如纪念历史事件或著名人物的次数远远超过了圣日, 尽管许多古老的宗教仪式和习俗一直流传到现在, 并且融于世俗和宗教仪式这两者之中。今天, 具有突出特点的假日是宗教庆典和远离日常工作的日子: 对于基督徒来说是星期日, 穆斯林是星期五, 犹太人则是星期六。在美国, 星期日不仅是宗教节日而且还是惟一的习惯法定假日。法定假日是由官方政府宣布的假日, 用于庆祝特殊历史事件, 如获得独立, 国家建立, 宪法实施, 统治者诞辰, 或圣徒纪念日。美国没有全国性的法定假日。法定假日, 即银行、学校

或其他公共机构和大多数商业场所都关门歇业的日子，是由立法机关制定或执行宣布的。国会和总统有权指定哥伦比亚特区和联邦领土内的法定假日，但却没有宣布全国性法定假日的权力。由于州政府的参与，独立日和其他节日得以在全国范围内进行。就拿感恩节来说吧，总统指定日历上的日期，建议全国举国欢庆。然后，州政府通常就开始立法并以颁布。联邦政府法令往往明确规定假日的具体日期以便与立法相对应。为了给联邦政府雇员提供为期三天的周末，1968年的一项联邦法案对假日做了几项修改，并于1971年生效。这项法案规定：华盛顿的诞辰日为2月的第3个星期一。阵亡将士纪念日是5月的最后一个星期一。哥伦布发现美洲纪念日为10月的第2个星期一。退伍军人节是10月的第4个星期一。各个独立州后来都采纳了这些星期一假日。许多州都纪念本州发生的重要历史事件。假如，在佛蒙特每年都会在8月16日纪念为美国独立战争而战的本宁顿战役。路易斯安那州在1月8日纪念1821年战争中的新奥尔良战役。为纪念美国独立战争的首次战役的爱国者日，于每年的4月19日左右在马萨诸塞州和缅因州举行庆祝活动。每年春天的不同时候，南方各州会有联邦阵亡将士纪念日。100Test 下载频道开通，各类考试题目直接下载。详细请访问 [www.100test.com](http://www.100test.com)