

“Speaking Model 7 - Festival” @ <http://www.youtube.com/ESL4free>

Are there a lot of festivals in your country
(why/why not)?

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Sample 1: Let me see. Yes, there are a lot of festivals in Singapore as we are made up of many different ethnic groups. As there are many people of Chinese origin in Singapore the Chinese New Year is a very big event which coincides with the famous Chingay Parade - this mostly takes place in February. There is also a significant Indian community where I come from so Diwali is also a major event in October. The main Muslim festival is Hari Raya Haji, which marks the pilgrimage to the holy city of Mecca. As a Christian I always celebrate Christmas and Easter, as well, but I enjoy experiencing the other festivals - they are always lots of fun.

Note the use of “Let me see” at the beginning of the response - this is fine in spoken English. Here it allows time for the speaker to think about the variety of festivals in his country.

Sample 2: Actually, where I come from we don't have a lot of festivals throughout the year. I live in a farming community, so our main celebration is after the harvest. This festival, which translates as the “Thank You Festival”, attracts all the farmers and their families to the villages and usually runs for about three days in September. There is always a lot of food, dancing and games. We have so much fun then, we don't need any other festivals.

“Actually” at the beginning has a similar meaning to “to be honest” or “to tell the truth” but is used in a more positive way than the other expressions - even if there are not many festivals that is not important.