Months of the year

Why do months have the names they do? It's all the ancient Romans' fault!

January got its name from god Janus, who has two faces so he can look behind and in front at the same time.

February is called after a Roman festival, Februa.

March is the first because it was the month of the Roman New Year. They celebrated it on the first day of spring. Its name comes from the god of war, Mars.

Nobody is sure how **April** got its name. Perhaps it comes from the Latin word for "open" (*aperire*), because it is when flowers and grass grow.

May got the name from the Greek (not Roman!) goddess of earth and plants, Maia.

June is named after Juno, the main Roman goddess. She protected children and marriage, so June has been a popular month for weddings for a very long time.

July got its name from a famous Roman emperor, Julius Caesar.

August is also named after a Roman emperor. This time it is August.

September, October, November and **December** are the easiest. They got their names from numbers. In the past they were the seventh (*septem*), eighth (*octo*), ninth (*novem*) and tenth (*decem*) months.

Answer the questions.

1) How is the New Year's Day different today than it was in ancient Rome?

2) What number do we give the months of September, October, November and December today?

3) Are there more months with names of Roman gods and goddesses, or those of numbers?

4) In which month were you born? What name would you give it?

5) What is your favourite month (except your birth month)? Why?

6) Order the months from those with most to those with least days.

7) Look at the photos. What important dates can you find in each month?

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