

## Words and Their Stories

June 30, 2013

Now, the VOA Special English program, Words and Their Stories.

I'm Rich Kleinfeldt.

Today we tell about the word fireworks.

The expression "fireworks" gets its meaning from the fireworks that people shoot into the sky when they are celebrating a great event. Rockets explode to fill the dark, night sky with bright reds and blues, with yellows and greens and whites.

The expression also means a great show of noisy anger, or something exciting. For example, a defense lawyer in a court trial may become very emotional in arguing with the government lawyer about evidence affecting the accused. The judge finally stops the loud argument and calls the two lawyers forward. He tells them, "I want no more of these fireworks in my courtroom."

Another kind of fireworks can be any event or activity that is especially exciting. One such event is falling in love. If anything can produce fireworks,

it is a sweetheart's kiss or the touch of a lover's hand. Often movie or television cartoons show fireworks to represent the excitement of a kiss.

People use the expression fireworks throughout the year. But if you live in the United States and want to see real fireworks, the best time of the year is about now. The Fourth of July is Independence Day in the United States. Americans traditionally celebrate their nation's freedom with giant public parties and fireworks at night.

In Washington, for example, large crowds gather near the Washington Monument to listen to music and watch a huge fireworks show. In other cities and smaller towns, local people listen to band concerts and watch fireworks explode in a dark sky.

Many other countries around the world also enjoy the tradition of exploding fireworks on special days. In Australia, the city of Sydney begins each new year with a fireworks show at midnight. China is the birthplace of fireworks. Large fireworks shows were held often during earlier times in China. Now, people use small fireworks to help celebrate weddings and birthdays.

France also has a great fireworks tradition. A large fireworks show always takes place on Bastille Day, which celebrates the beginning of the French Revolution. The French city of Cannes holds an international fireworks competition each year in July and August.

In India, people have been using fireworks for more than 500 years. A great Indian fireworks show takes place during the religious celebration of Diwali, every autumn.

Fireworks shows are popular around the world. But, if I do not end this program right now, there will be fireworks from my producer.

This VOA Special English program "Words and Their Stories" was written by David Jarmul. I'm Rich Kleinfeldt.