



The Mid-Autumn Festival — An Ancient Celebration of the Harvest Moon

Reading Worksheet — Level F | [tahricteaches.com](https://www.tahricteaches.com)

The Mid-Autumn Festival, also known as the Moon Festival, is one of the oldest and most cherished celebrations in Chinese and Taiwanese **culture**. Observed on the fifteenth day of the eighth lunar month, the festival marks the end of the autumn **harvest** and the moment when the moon is believed to be at its fullest and brightest. Its origins stretch back more than 3,000 years to **ancient** moon-worship ceremonies, making it one of the most enduring **traditions** still practiced today.

According to legend, the festival **honors** Chang'e, a woman who drank a potion of immortality and flew to the moon, where she remains to this day. Families in Taiwan still look up at the night sky and imagine her shadow on the lunar surface. This **symbol** of longing and reunion is why the festival is often described as a time to **gather** with the people you love, even if some of them live far away.

Among the many **customs** associated with the holiday, few are as recognizable as eating mooncakes, round pastries filled with sweet lotus paste or salted egg yolk that represent the unity and wholeness of the full moon. Paper **lanterns**, often shaped like animals or stars, are lit and carried by children through the streets, their soft **glow** illuminating neighborhoods long after sunset. In recent decades, Taiwanese families have added a modern **custom** of their own: grilling meat and vegetables outdoors with friends and neighbors.

Beyond its culinary and visual traditions, the Mid-Autumn Festival carries deep cultural significance. It is a **symbol** of gratitude for a successful **harvest**, a moment to **honor** ancestors, and an occasion to strengthen family bonds across generations. Businesses often close early, and highways fill with travelers making their way home, much like during Lunar New Year, underscoring how central reunion is to the holiday's meaning.

Although the festival's **ancient** rituals have evolved, its central message has remained remarkably consistent: beneath the same full moon, families everywhere pause to **gather**, reflect, and appreciate one another. Whether celebrated with a quiet family dinner or a lantern-lit barbecue among friends, the Mid-Autumn Festival continues to connect modern life with a **tradition** thousands of years in the making.

A. Vocabulary

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|-------------------|---|
| 1. tradition ____ | a. a usual way of doing something within a culture |
| 2. lantern ____ | b. to show great respect for someone or something |
| 3. gather ____ | c. a custom or belief passed down through generations |
| 4. harvest ____ | d. the customs, beliefs, and way of life of a group of people |
| 5. symbol ____ | e. to come together in one place |
| 6. custom ____ | f. the gathering of crops, or the season when crops are collected |
| 7. ancient ____ | g. something that represents or stands for an idea |
| 8. honor ____ | h. very old, from a long time ago |
| 9. glow ____ | i. to give off a soft, steady light |
| 10. culture ____ | j. a container that holds a light, often carried or hung for decoration |



B. True or False

1. The Mid-Autumn Festival is one of the oldest celebrations in Chinese and Taiwanese culture. ____
2. The festival's origins stretch back only a few decades. ____
3. According to legend, the festival honors a woman named Chang'e who lives on the moon. ____
4. Mooncakes are savory soups eaten during the festival. ____
5. Paper lanterns are often carried by children during the festival. ____
6. Taiwanese families never cook food outdoors during the Mid-Autumn Festival. ____
7. The festival is seen as a symbol of gratitude for a successful harvest. ____
8. Highways and businesses stay empty because nobody travels home for the festival. ____
9. The festival's central message is about family reunion and appreciation. ____



C. Fill in the Blanks

Word Bank: harvest, honor, gather, ancient, symbol

1. The Mid-Autumn Festival marks the end of the autumn _____.
2. Families _____ ancestors as part of the festival's traditions.
3. The holiday is a time for families to _____ together, even from far away.
4. The festival's _____ origins stretch back more than 3,000 years.
5. The full moon is a _____ of unity and wholeness.

D. Comprehension Questions

1. What event does the Mid-Autumn Festival traditionally mark, and when does it take place?
2. According to legend, who is honored during the festival, and why?
3. How do mooncakes and lanterns connect to the meaning of the festival?
4. What modern custom have Taiwanese families added to the holiday?
5. Why does the article compare the Mid-Autumn Festival to Lunar New Year?

E. Discussion Questions

1. Why do you think ancient festivals like this one continue to be celebrated in modern times?
2. What traditions or legends does your own culture connect to the moon or the harvest season?
3. The article mentions that businesses close early and highways fill with travelers during the festival. What does this suggest about the importance of family reunion in Taiwanese culture?



Answer Key

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A. Vocabulary: 1-c, 2-j, 3-e, 4-f, 5-g, 6-a, 7-h, 8-b, 9-i, 10-d

B. True/False: 1-T, 2-F, 3-T, 4-F, 5-T, 6-F, 7-T, 8-F, 9-T

C. Fill Blanks: 1-harvest, 2-honor, 3-gather, 4-ancient, 5-symbol

D. Comprehension:

1. The Mid-Autumn Festival traditionally marks the end of the autumn harvest, and it takes place on the fifteenth day of the eighth lunar month, when the moon is at its fullest.
2. The festival honors Chang'e, a woman from legend who drank a potion of immortality and flew to the moon, where families imagine her shadow still remains.
3. Mooncakes are round pastries that represent the unity and wholeness of the full moon, while glowing lanterns carried by children symbolize light and celebration after sunset.
4. Taiwanese families have added grilling meat and vegetables outdoors with friends and neighbors as a modern custom alongside the traditional mooncakes and lanterns.
5. The article compares it to Lunar New Year because businesses close early and highways fill with travelers heading home, showing how central family reunion is to both holidays.

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