

Cultural Curiosity: What We Learn from Other Traditions

Intermediate (B1–B2)



WARM-UP DISCUSSION

Part 1. Discuss the following questions.

1. Have you ever experienced a tradition from another culture? What was it?
2. Do you enjoy learning about other people's customs? Why or why not?
3. Which tradition from your own culture would you like to share with others?
4. Can traditions help people from different countries understand each other better?

Part 2. Match each tradition with the correct country.

USA	India	Thailand	Mexico
South Korea	Spain	Brazil	UK

1. _____ Throwing tomatoes at La Tomatina
2. _____ Lanterns released on rivers during Loi Krathong
3. _____ Families gather for a turkey dinner at Thanksgiving
4. _____ Colourful powders thrown during Holi Festival
5. _____ Visiting cemeteries and making altars for Día de los Muertos
6. _____ Eating hot cross buns at Easter
7. _____ Wearing traditional hanbok during Chuseok
8. _____ Dancing and parades at Carnival in Rio

READING TEXT

Part 1. Read the following text.

Learning Through Traditions

When we travel or meet people from different backgrounds, we often notice their traditions. A tradition could be a festival, a family custom, or even a daily habit. At first, these differences may feel unusual, but they can also spark curiosity.

Experiencing traditions from other cultures teaches us more than just facts. It gives us cultural insight — a deeper understanding of values, history, and ways of life. For example, joining a local festival might show us how a community celebrates family or honours nature.

Respecting and learning from traditions doesn't mean we must follow them ourselves. Instead, it reminds us that there are many ways to live, celebrate, and connect. Being open-minded allows us to appreciate diversity and reflect on our own customs, too.

Traditions from around the world can teach us about other cultures, and at the same time they help us understand ourselves more clearly. For instance, during Thailand's Loi Krathong, people float lanterns on rivers to release worries, reminding us of the value of letting go. In Mexico's Día de los Muertos, families decorate altars to remember loved ones, showing how traditions keep memories alive. In India's Holi Festival, communities throw colourful powders to celebrate renewal and joy, highlighting how traditions can bring people together through play and connection.

Part 2. Discuss the questions below based on the text.

1. What kinds of traditions are mentioned in the text?
2. What does "cultural insight" mean?
3. How can joining a festival help us understand a community?
4. Why doesn't respecting a tradition mean we must follow it?
5. Do you agree that learning about other traditions helps us learn about ourselves? Why or why not?



VOCABULARY & SPEAKING

Part 1. Match the words/phrases to their meanings.

Cultural insight	Open-minded	Diversity	Reflect on
Community	Values	Customs	Celebrate

1. _____ habits or practices shared by a group of people
2. _____ willingness to accept different ideas or traditions
3. _____ what a group believes is important in life
4. _____ to think carefully about an idea or experience
5. _____ variety or difference among people or things
6. _____ special events or actions to mark an occasion
7. _____ knowledge or deeper understanding of another culture
8. _____ group of people living together or sharing common interests

Part 2. Complete the sentences with the correct words/phrases.

1. Travelling gives us _____ into how people live around the world.
2. It is important to be _____ when you meet people with different habits.
3. Our school _____ include morning assemblies and national celebrations.
4. The Lunar New Year is a time when families _____ together.
5. Meeting people from many countries helps us value _____.
6. Each _____ has traditions that bring people closer.
7. Before making a decision, I like to _____ my experiences.
8. Respect for family is one of the strongest _____ in many cultures.

Part 3. Act out the role-play below with your teacher/partner, making sure to use today's vocabulary. Once finished, swap roles and repeat the activity.

Cultural insight

Open-minded

Diversity

Reflect on

Community

Values

Customs

Celebrate

Student A: You are visiting another country. Ask your friend about their local traditions.

Student B: Explain one tradition from your culture, using today's vocabulary.

Part 4. Imagine your town wants to organise an "International Traditions Day." Plan:

- One tradition to share
- One tradition to learn about
- How these traditions show cultural insight

Part 5. Discuss the question below. Aim to recall and use today's vocabulary in your answer.

Think of one tradition (from your own culture or another) that has inspired you. How did it make you reflect on your own life?



REFLECTION

Discuss the following questions.

1. Which tradition from another culture (e.g. Holi, Loi Krathong, Día de los Muertos) would you most like to experience? Why?
2. How can learning about traditions improve communication between cultures?
3. What lesson from today's discussion could you apply to your own life?

WRAP-UP TASK (OPTIONAL HOMEWORK)

Write 8–10 sentences about a tradition that interests you, using at least 5 of today's vocabulary items.

