

Comprehension Workbook 10

Celebrating Holi



Find out about the meaning of stories and articles

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Comprehension Workbook 10

Celebrating Holi



Find out about the meaning of stories and articles

understand • key words • summarise • sequencing • AF2-3 • AF4-5 • AF6-7 • discuss • create

Hindu faith

Matches the requirements of the Literacy Strategy and designed to integrate with the study of world religions. (This material is independent of any specific text book and can be used alongside any publisher's books including our Hindu Faith, Mandir, Hindu art and writing and Hindu holy days books.)

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Unit 10: Celebrating Holi

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Celebrating Holi

'Holi is one of my favourite holidays, because I can get people wet and cover them in dye and they can't really get mad at me. During Holi, my friends and I throw water balloons filled with coloured water or dyes at people in the street. If they get angry, we just shout "Bura na mano, Holi hai," which means, "Don't feel offended, it's Holi". We always wear light coloured clothes during Holi, because it shows up the colours best.

On the night before Holi there is a big bonfire. My friends and I spend the week before Holi combing the neighbourhood for wood we can use for the bonfire. The fire is lit when the moon rises. Everyone gathers in the street for the event, and the air is filled with songs, dancing and shouts of laughter. My father carefully carries home some of the coals or ashes from the bonfire to light lamps at our home. The tradition is that this will bring us good luck.



In the week before Holi, the markets are filled with stalls selling coloured powders for throwing on people and for dying water. I always ask my mum to buy me lots of powders. Sometimes, my mum and I make our own colours instead. We make yellow powder by mixing turmeric powder with chickpea flour and yellow dye by soaking pomegranate peels in water overnight. Pink dye is made from beetroot and we make orange and red dyes by mixing henna leaves with water.

We also have a tradition of breaking a pot full of buttermilk at the beginning of Holi. Some people in my neighbourhood hang a clay pot full of buttermilk high above the streets. All the boys in the neighbourhood have to make a big pyramid by climbing on top of each other. The boy at the top breaks the pot with a stick while our parents throw buckets of coloured water on us.

On the second day of the festival we usually go to visit friends and family. This is almost as much fun as throwing water on people because we get to eat special Holi sweets, such as gujiya, which are made from fried dough and dried fruit, or a sweet pancake called puran poli. All the sweets are washed down with fresh, cold buttermilk mixed with almonds.

Holi is a time for fun, celebration and mischief, without worrying about getting into trouble. That's why I like it.'



Understanding words

Before we can understand a story we have to know what all of the words mean. Let's try one...

a Write a sentence in which you found the word '**mischief**'.

b From that sentence, write what you think '**mischief**' means.

c Write a new sentence using the word '**mischief**'.

d Use a dictionary to find words with a similar meaning (synonyms) to '**mischief**'.

e Give an example of a kind of '**mischief**' that you might do on Holi.



Finding key words

Next, we need to find the key words that tell us what the story is about...

Read the story and underline the key words. Write the most important of these key words in a list like the one below. Write next to it a word that means a similar thing (a synonym). You don't have to use all the spaces, but you should not use more.

Key word	Synonym (similar word)
Example: angry	furious

3

Summarising

(the gist of the story)

To summarise means to rewrite the story in a shorter version using as many of our key words from Task 2 as needed.

1 Write a heading for your summary.

2 Now write the main idea in one sentence.
e.g. "This story tells us..."

3 Now add some detail to the main idea by writing more sentences after it.

**Finally,
can you rewrite your
summary to make it better?**

1. Look out for errors such as using the same word too often – use alternatives.
2. Make sure you have summarised the author's purpose in your OWN words.
3. Make sure your summary is in a logical order.
4. Is your summary informative AND interesting to others?

**There is
nothing wrong
with rewriting; even
the best authors
rewrite their
work.**

123
4

Sequencing



Sequencing means getting the events in the right order. Write these sentences in the correct order, so they make sense.

All the boys in the neighbourhood have to make a big pyramid by climbing on top of each other.

My friends and I spend the week before Holi combing the neighbourhood for wood we can use for the bonfire.

During Holi, my friends and I throw water balloons filled with coloured water or dyes at people in the street.

All the sweets are washed down with fresh, cold buttermilk mixed with almonds.

Sometimes, my mum and I make our own colours instead.

My father carefully carries home some of the coals or ashes from the bonfire to light lamps at our home.



Get to the facts

Answer these questions to see how much you know about the facts of the story.



Write a sentence to answer each of these questions:

- (a) What does "Bura na mano, Holi hai," mean?
- (b) What can be used to make yellow dye?
- (c) What is hung above the street during Holi?
- (d) When are the Holi bonfires lit?
- (e) What are two kinds of sweets eaten on Holi?



Whys and wherefores

Answer these questions to see how much you know about the meanings in the story and how it was written.

1 Why does the writer like Holi?

2 Do kids get punished for throwing coloured water and powder on other people during Holi?

3 Why does the writer like the second day of Holi almost as much as the first?

4 Is the bonfire a serious event or a light-hearted event? Why?



Opinions matter

Answer these questions to give your views and to develop the story.

- 1 Do you think kids would be punished for throwing coloured water and powder on other people when it is not Holi?
- 2 Does Holi sound like fun to you? Why or why not?
- 3 How do you think you would feel if someone threw coloured water on you during Holi? How about if they did it at another time?
- 4 What do you think is the meaning of the tradition of breaking a pot of buttermilk?
- 5 Is Holi only about mischief, or is it celebrated in other ways as well?





Talking it through

It often helps if a group of people get together and discuss a problem.

(Source: Wikipedia)



Discussion topic: Holidays

What do you think is the reason for having a holiday where people throw coloured water and powder on each other and make a big mess? Do you think it helps people to behave the rest of the year?

Make a story...

When you read a description it often gives you ideas about how the event might be described differently.



Holi

Imagine that it is Holi and you are getting ready to celebrate. Write a story about what types of things you do to get ready for the holiday and how you will celebrate Holi.

Celebrating Holi

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