

Chinese New Year Lantern Festival

A festival is a celebration. Festivals take place all around the world for different reasons. They are fun and can bring families and friends together.

The Chinese New Year Lantern Festival began in China but is now celebrated in different places around the world. In London, it is called the Magic Lantern Festival.

The festival is the final day of the Chinese New Year celebrations and usually takes place in February or March.



How Did It All Start?

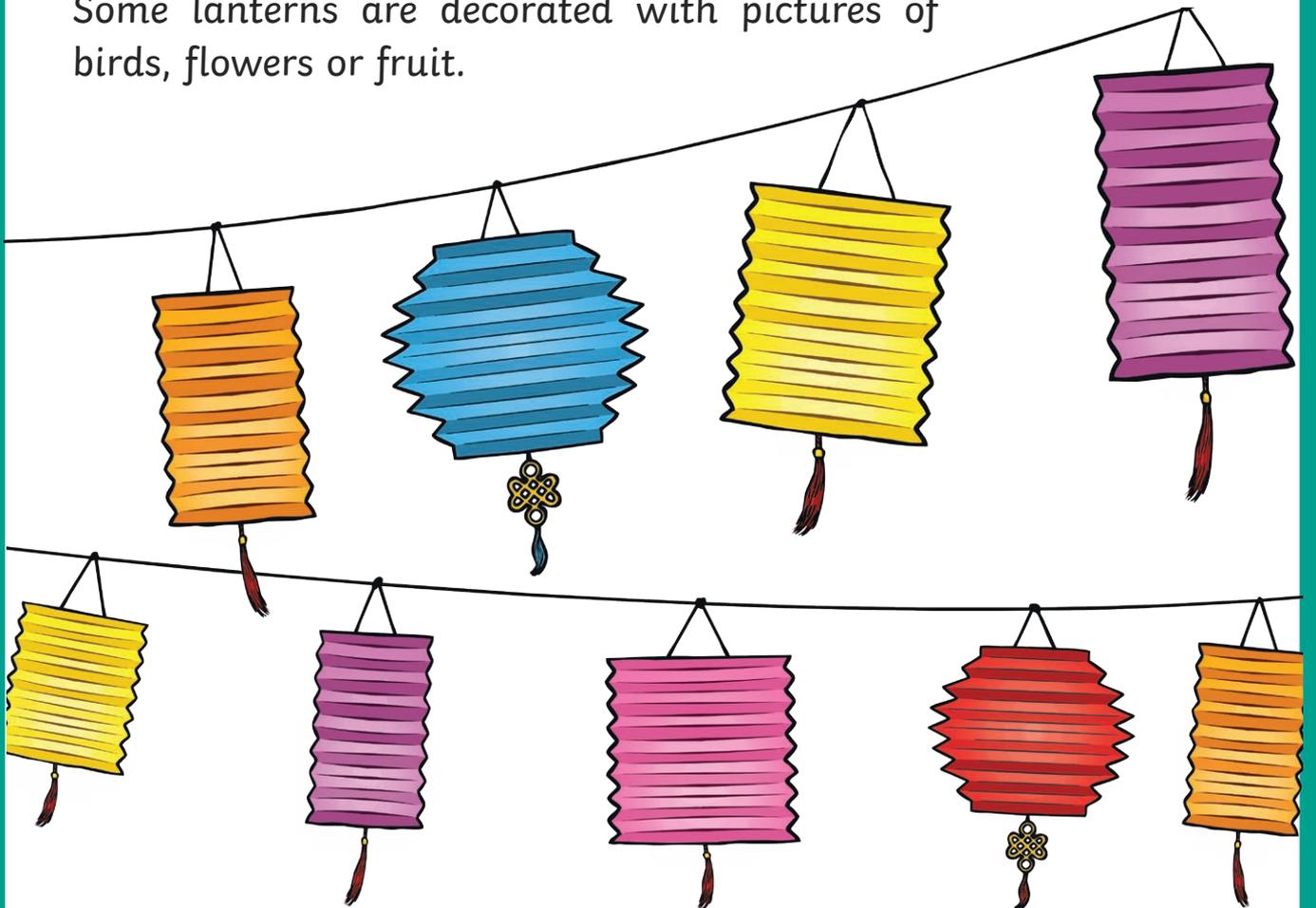
Many people have different ideas about how this festival began. Some people think the first festival was a way of keeping a Chinese city safe from the God of Fire. All over the city, people lit red lanterns and set off firecrackers to distract the god. The plan worked and the city was saved.



Lanterns

Lanterns of all shapes, sizes and colours can be seen in homes, shopping centres, parks and streets, but most lanterns are red as this is thought to be a lucky colour.

Some lanterns are decorated with pictures of birds, flowers or fruit.



Activities

During the festival, you might eat tangyuan (sweet dumplings) and watch firework displays.

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Riddles

Riddles hang from lanterns. If you can solve the riddle, you could win a prize from the lantern owner.

Can you solve these riddles?



I'm an arch.
I am different colours.
What am I?



I live in a flock.
I eat grass.
My coat is fluffy and warm.
What am I?

At the festival,
you may also
see a lion or
dragon dance.



Questions

1. Using the text, what is another word for a festival?

2. In which country did this festival first begin?

3. When does the Chinese New Year Lantern Festival take place?

4. What is the name of the lantern event in London?

5. Give two examples of pictures you might see on lanterns.

6. What might you see hanging from lanterns?

7. What are tangyuan?

8. What do some people think is the reason for the first ever lantern festival?

9. Write down an adjective to describe this festival. Why did you choose that word?
