



THE BIG BOOK OF FESTIVALS

FANTASTIC FESTIVITIES,
CRAZY CELEBRATIONS AND
HOLY HOLIDAYS FROM ACROSS THE GLOBE

MARITA BULLOCK & JOAN-MAREE HARGREAVES Illustrated by LIZ ROWLAND

TEACHERS RESOURCES

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INTRODUCTION

Graveside picnics, epic dance-offs, tomato-throwing frenzies, crying-baby competitions and the biggest bathing ritual on the planet – these are just some of the amazing events in this big book of world festivals.

The Big Book of Festivals introduces young people to some major festivals and some lesser-known regional festivals from around the world. Children aged seven and older will adore this collection of fantastic festivities, crazy celebrations and religious holidays from across the globe.

This gorgeously illustrated hardback features a total of 38 festivals, including: Lunar New Year, Day of the Dead, Kumbh Mela, Holi, Diwali, Gelede, Christmas, La Tomatina, Eid ul-Fitr, Konaki Sumo, Carnaval, Hanukkah, Anastenaria, Festival of Giants, Matariki, Halloween, The Birthday of Guru Nanak, Buddha's Birthday, Bunya Dreaming, Easter, Inti Raymi, and more.

An alphabetical listing of key festivals is followed by examples of seasonal festivals and regional festivals. There is something for everyone in this book of celebrations and it will entice young readers to find out about many other festivals as well.



THEMES & CURRICULUM TOPICS

Several themes and curriculum topics (for primary school students) are covered in this book which might be related to: *Australian Curriculum* <https://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/f-10-curriculum/humanities-and-social-sciences/>

STUDY OF SOCIETY AND ENVIRONMENT

FESTIVALS

ACTIVITY: Research any festival described in this book further.

DISCUSSION POINT: What festivals do you celebrate with your family or community? Encourage students to share their stories of multicultural festivals which other students may not be aware of.

ACTIVITY: Which countries were not mentioned in this book? Find out the names of other festivals in other countries, and research them as well.

DISCUSSION POINT: On each page a child is named and their activity in relation

to the festival is described. This offers a personal insight into how children might celebrate, eg. on Día de Muertos, or Day of the Dead 'Arturo leaves a teddy bear at the gravesite of his little sister on All Hallow's Eve.' (p 17) See the list of each of the children who appear at the front of this book. How do you personally celebrate any of your festivals during the year? Write a sentence describing that and draw a picture of yourself as well.

DISCUSSION POINT: Festivals often celebrate flowers, eg. Canberra's Floriade, Toowoomba's Carnival of Flowers, Grafton's Jacaranda Festival, Kings Park Festival in Perth celebrates Western Australia's wildflowers, Blooming Tasmania's Flower and Garden Festival or the Tulip Festival in Wynyard, Tasmania, are examples. What others can you locate?

DISCUSSION POINT: The arts are celebrated in many festivals throughout the world, eg. Glastonbury Music Festival, Cannes Film Festival, Edinburgh Fringe Festival, New Orleans Jazz Festival, Bologna Children's Book Fair. And in Australia, we have Adelaide Writers Week, SA, Tamworth Country Music Festival, NSW, Brisbane Festival, Qld, Splendour in the Grass Music Festival, Byron Bay, NSW, Dark Mofo, Tasmania, DreamBIG Children's Festival, SA, Fringe World Festival, WA, the Garma Festival, NT, and WOMAD, SA. What is the best known arts festival in your town or city?

DISCUSSION POINT: Some festivals include unusual rituals or ideas. 'La Tomatina' consists of people throwing tomatoes at each other! 'The Running of the Bulls' in Pamplona is self-explanatory. Or the 'Verona in Love Festival'? 'The Up Helly Aa Fire Festival' in Lerwick, Scotland, is Europe's largest fire festival which includes the burning of a full-scale Viking ship. Australia has the Parkes Elvis Festival, NSW, where Elvis impersonators gather and perform! What other rituals did you find unusual or interesting?

DISCUSSION POINT: Explore the similarities and differences between different festivals - discuss the things that are the same, for example, similar motifs, symbols, and reasons for celebrating. Discuss the differences, as well.

DISCUSSION POINT: Discuss social science terminology such as the words, 'traditions', 'customs', 'cultures', 'values' and 'rituals' and their meaning with students.

DISCUSSION POINT: Why do different cultures celebrate festivals? Why do festivals occur in so many countries throughout the world?

COMMUNITIES & CULTURES

DISCUSSION POINT: Communities are bonded via their cultures. And festivals can do a great deal to cement those bonds. Examine, for example, the Greek festivals throughout Australia which have been celebrated for decades, and one in Brisbane known as 'Paniyiri'. Such gatherings bring people of similar backgrounds together. And they invite others to learn about Greek culture. 'Oktoberfest' celebrates German culture in Munich and is similarly celebrated throughout Australia. What other major ethnic festival is celebrated in Australia?

DISCUSSION POINT: Many festivals also celebrate a vibrant mixture of cultures in a particular area and many cities have multicultural festivals. Conduct your own school-based multicultural festival day drawing on your students' backgrounds.

DISCUSSION POINT: Food lies at the heart of a lot of festivals. How many food festivals can you discover either in Australia or overseas?

DISCUSSION POINT: Heritage and history are other aspects of communities which are celebrated. For example, The 'Dragon Boat Festival' (Duanwu Festival, Du nw Jié, Double Fifth, Tuen Ng Jit) is a traditional holiday that commemorates the life and death of the famous Chinese scholar Qu Yuan (Chu Yuan). Investigate how your community celebrates its history via festival celebrations.

DISCUSSION POINT: Many festivals are spectacular. The Harbin International Ice and Snow Sculpture Festival is one of the most stunning displays in the world. Have you discovered any that were outstanding in your view?

DISCUSSION POINT: What other types of communities have festivals?

RELIGIOUS CELEBRATIONS

ACTIVITY: Christian celebrations such as Easter and Christmas are covered here, as are celebrations from the Hindu, Sikh, Jewish and Islamic calendars. What religious celebrations are you aware of, or have participated in?

ACTIVITY: 'Setsuban' in Japan is a cleansing ceremony during which several rituals are observed such as families throwing roasted soybeans out of their houses, a family member dressing up as an evil spirit, and the rest of the family chanting a song to chase away evil spirits. 'Krishna Janmashtami' is celebrated primarily by Hindus to commemorate the birth of Lord Krishna. The religious festivals take place in temples where people decorate the Lord Krishna's image with flower garlands. Feasting, dancing, dispersal of incense and reading of scriptures also take place. Discuss such symbolism and how various religions construct such rituals.

VALUES

DISCUSSION POINT: Discuss the key values celebrated by festival organisers and participants.



ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Each double page spread in the main part of this book is dedicated to a festival and contains text which is both informative and creative. The text of this book might be studied in relation to the following:

ACTIVITY: Study this as an expository text. [See also **Worksheet 2** below.]

ACTIVITY: Test your students' comprehension by asking them questions about the written text. [See also **Worksheets 4** and **5**.]

ACTIVITY: Invite students to write an acrostic poem using the letters in FESTIVAL. [See **Bibliography**.]

ACTIVITY: Write a poem celebrating a particular festival. [See **Bibliography**.]

ACTIVITY: Write a story about visiting a festival.



VISUAL LITERACY

The visual text in this book illuminates the points made in the written text in vibrant colours, and depicts the cultures being described in culturally appropriate imagery.

ACTIVITY: The **cover** of the book depicts a variety of festival figures who appear in the text. Ask students to identify some of them before and after they have read the book. Design your own cover for this book.

ACTIVITY: The **half-title** and **title page** contain text with an image of a man in a national costume and then of kites pulled by two people in ornate dress. Design another appropriate title page.

DISCUSSION POINT: The **format** of the book allocates a double page to each festival, and then under headings for 'seasonal' it includes one on each page and then under 'regional' festivals it includes several on each double page spread. The class could create their own book of festivals by collecting various pieces of research done by each student and arranging them in a similar format.

ACTIVITY: The **medium** employed is gouache, watercolour, oil and pastel. Set students the task of responding to this text using any of these mediums.

ACTIVITY: Create a **collage image** of a Calaveros. [See **Worksheet 1** below.]

ACTIVITY: Students might be encouraged to use critical literacy skills, by looking closely at the images, to explain what they see, and then what the text says. [See also **Worksheet 3.**]

ACTIVITY: Create a simple storyboard for a picture book based on the story you wrote above. [Discuss the conventions of the picture book format before embarking on this exercise.]



CREATIVE ARTS

There are many creative activities suggested by this text:

- 1. Craft:** Make a **mask** to wear at a Carnevale di Venezia. Provide craft paper, feathers, sequins, paint, glitter, and glue to students and encourage them to be as inventive as possible in creating a distinctive mask.
- 2. Craft:** Design a **poster** to advertise a festival which you found interesting.
- 3. Music:** Discover and sing **simple songs** associated with certain festivals.
- 4. Dance:** Practise any of the dances associated with a festival in this book.
- 5. Script: Create a Book Trailer** to promote this book. [See **Bibliography** for relevant resources.]

LEARNING TECHNOLOGIES

ACTIVITY: Research topics suggested in these notes online.

MATHEMATICS

ACTIVITY: Have fun discovering mathematical facts about any of these festivals.

FURTHER TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION AND RESEARCH

- Research the work of the authors and illustrator of this book.
- Students might research this book in comparison to texts listed in the **Bibliography**.
- Investigate any other topic suggested by this text.

CONCLUSION

Festivals celebrate community life. They provide an opportunity for communities, small and large, to share their cultural, religious and social connections in a public and meaningful way.



ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Marita Bullock has worked as an academic and secondary school teacher across the fields of Cultural Studies, Film, Art and Literature, most recently at the University of Sydney. She has published numerous articles on art and the visualisation of 'difference', and her academic book – *Memory Fragments: Visualising Difference in Australian History* – investigates the relationship between object fragments and cultural memory in Australian art, museums and culture (Intellect Ltd.) Together with Joan-Maree Hargreaves, Marita runs a creative production house called Three Peaks Studio.

Joan-Maree Hargreaves is inspired by the bravery and optimism of children. She is driven by a desire to tell stories about 'real' life in a visually captivating and unexpected way. She has a special interest in social justice and representations of diversity. Joan-Maree has worked in publishing and magazines for more than a decade and has edited a number of Australian and international children's titles including *National Geographic Kids* (Australia and New Zealand), *K-Zone* (Australia) and *Kraze Club* (United Kingdom and Germany). She has also written hundreds of articles for *The Sydney Morning Herald*, including specialised educational supplements for children. Together with Marita Bullock, Joan-Maree runs a creative production house called Three Peaks Studio.

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

Liz Rowland is a British illustrator with a particular interest in people and cultures. Since graduating from Falmouth University in 2011, Liz has worked with clients including *Vogue*, *Gourmet Traveller* and *Visit Britain*. Liz's work is hand rendered, using a combination of gouache, watercolour, oil and pastel. She is inspired by colour and pattern. Through her work Liz explores our interactions both with each other and with our environment.

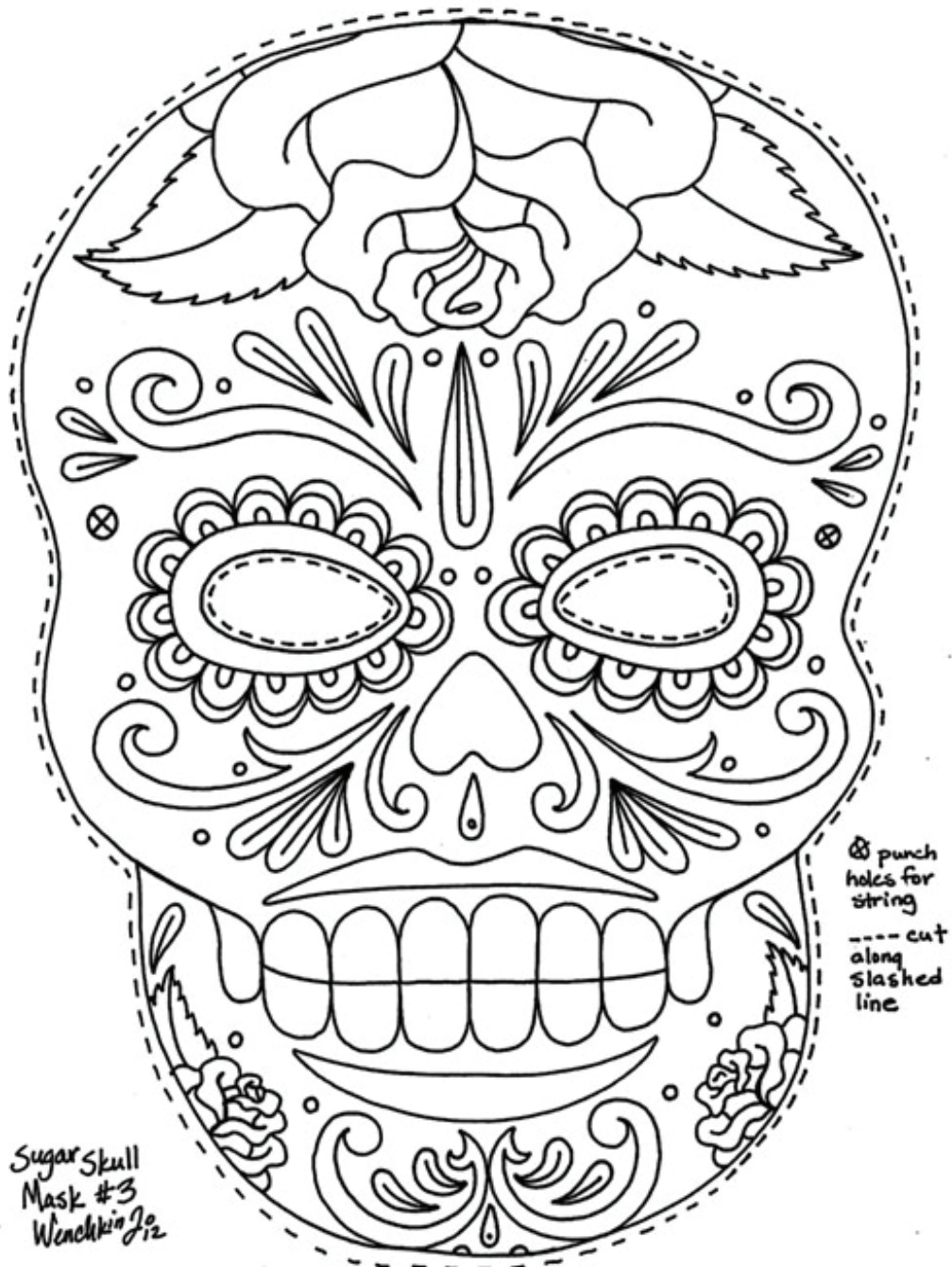
ABOUT THE AUTHOR OF THE NOTES

Dr Robyn Sheahan-Bright operates justified text writing and publishing consultancy services, and is widely published on children's literature, publishing history and Australian fiction. In 2011 she was the recipient of the CBCA (Qld Branch) Dame Annabelle Rankin Award for Distinguished Services to Children's Literature in Queensland, and in 2012 the CBCA (National) Nan Chauncy Award for Distinguished Services to Children's Literature in Australia, and in 2014, the QWC's Johnno Award.

WORKSHEETS

WORKSHEET 1. CREATE A COLLAGE MASK OF THIS CALAVEROS

Encourage students to use texta pens and a range of detailed materials, colours and textures, to make this collage mask, to achieve effect.



WORKSHEET 2. ALPHABET OF FESTIVALS

Fill in the names of festivals which don't appear in this book. Write the name of a festival, and then an associated practice or object in the middle column, and the country name(s) in the third.

	Festival	Associated Practice or Object	Country (ies)
A			
B			
C			
D	eg Día de Muertos, or Day of the Dead	Calaveros: Colourful skulls called calaveras are made out of sugar, chocolate or papier-mâché.	Mexico
E			
F			
G			
H			
I			
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Y			
Z			

WORKSHEET 3. NAME THIS FESTIVAL OBJECT OR SYMBOL



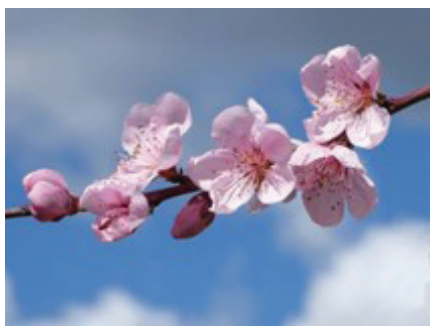
1.



2.



3.



4.



5.



6.



7.



8.



9.

Answers: 1. Pumpkins (Halloween). 2. Baubles on a tree (Christmas). 3. Menorah. 4. Cherry Blossom (Hanami). 5. Maypole. 6. Chinese Zodiac (Chinese New Year). 7. Whirling Dervishes Festival. 8. Tower of People (La Mercè Festival, Barcelona). 9. Dragon Boat Festival.



WORKSHEET 4. FESTIVAL QUIZ

1. Anastenaria in Greece, is a religious festival during which a fire-walking ritual takes place after singing and dancing in what place?
2. The birthday of Guru Nanak celebrates the birth of what religion?
3. The founder of Buddhism, Siddhartha Gautama, was born when and where?
4. Bunya Dreaming is an Aboriginal festival. Which two other such Indigenous festivals are named on this page?
5. Carnival in Rio de Janeiro is distinguished by what form of dance?
6. Celebrating the Carnevale di Venezia is distinguished by what form of headgear?
7. Why have we come to celebrate the birth of Christ in Bethlehem with European traditions such as decorating our houses with holly, ivy and Christmas trees?
8. What is the first day of the two-day festival known as Día de Muertos?
9. During Diwali or the Festival of Lights, India's biggest and most important holiday, 'Rangoli patterns are made out of flower petals, coloured rice, sand or flour, decorate the ground outside temples and on the floors of houses' for what purpose?
10. Why is Easter celebrated with symbols such as eggs, baby chickens and rabbits?
11. Eid ul-Fitr is a Muslim celebration which marks the end of the holy month of Ramadan. What sacrifice is made during Ramadan?
12. The Festival of Giants in Belgium and France is a real spectacle! In the town of Ath in Belgium what Biblical story is re-enacted by giant figures?
13. Gelede celebrates the power of mothers and takes place in what countries?
14. Trick-or-treating on Halloween is a modern-day version of what early Christian practice?
15. During Hanukkah a light is lit each night in a special candelabrum, called what?
16. The Indian Hindu festival of Holi involves a joyous ritual. What is it?
17. What is the objective of the Konaki Sumo or the Japanese Festival of Tears?
18. What is Kumbh Mela?
19. Where does La Tomatina, an annual tomato-throwing festival, take place?
20. Each Lunar New Year or Chinese New Year is represented by what?
21. In New Zealand the Maori people celebrate Matariki a cluster of stars also known as?
22. What is the Whirling Dervishes Festival?

Answers: **1.** The konáki (or special religious houses). **2.** Sikh religion. **3.** Between 563 and 480 BCE in Nepal's famous Lumbini Gardens. **4.** Garma Festival of Traditional Cultures and Laura Aboriginal Dance Festival. **5.** Samba. **6.** Masks. **7.** 'in Europe, the celebration of the birth of Christ overlapped with Europe's traditional midwinter festivities.' (p 14) **8.** All Saints Day (1 November). **9.** This is to attract Lakshmi, in the hope that she will bring good luck and prosperity in the new year. **10.** They symbolise new life and Christ's resurrection. **11.** 'Muslims abstain from eating during the day to show their devotion to Allah (God)' (p 22). **12.** The confrontation between David and Goliath. **13.** Gelede 'is celebrated by the Yoruba communities in southwest Nigeria and parts of Benin and Togo every year.' (p 26) **14.** Souling. **15.** A *menorah*. **16.** 'Friends, family and strangers gather from early morning to throw sacks of coloured paint powder, flower petals and water balloons with joyous abandon.' (p 32) **17.** Sumo wrestlers each hold a baby and the first one to make the other's baby cry is the winner. **18.** 'Kumbh Mela is an ancient mass bathing ritual celebrated four times over twelve years, the largest taking place in India's holy city of Prayag at the meeting of three rivers: the Ganges, the Yamuna and the Saraswati.' (p 36) **19.** 'La Tomatina takes place in the tiny Spanish town of Buñol in the province of Valencia.' (p 38) **20.** Twelve Chinese Zodiac Signs. **21.** The Pleiades star cluster, or the 'seven sisters'. **22.** A mystical Sufi ceremony in Turkey.

WORKSHEET 5. SEASONAL & REGIONAL FESTIVALS

QUIZ

1. Nowruz is an Iranian festival celebrated in spring in which countries?
2. What does the Japanese festival of Hanami herald?
3. The Abu Simbel Sun Festival is celebrated where?
4. On Midsommar, the summer solstice sees the sun reach its highest point in the sky and the longest and lightest day of the year. After a long, dark and cold winter, the longest day is a time of great joy in Sweden. What dance do people do when they celebrate outdoors?
5. When is Thanksgiving Day celebrated in the US?
6. During the Full Moon Festival in China they celebrate by eating mooncakes. What are they made of?
7. In Thorrablot, a winter festival in Iceland, not only do people eat blood pudding but also some other very strange-sounding foods. What were they?
8. Groundhog Day in North America actually originated in what country?
9. Bali's Pakul Sapu is marked by a rather violent ritual. What is it?
10. The Parade of the God of Medicine in Taiwan is sometimes called what?
11. Puck Fair in Ireland involves crowning someone king of the small town of Killorglin for three days and nights. Who or what is crowned?
12. Barcelona's La Mercè Festival is a celebration of Catalan culture which involves what death-defying feat?
13. Two Thai Festivals of Lanterns are called what?
14. Infiorata in Italy is a festival which involves what?
15. Inti Raymi began in the town of Cusco, Peru, in what century?
16. Junkanoo is a vibrant street parade enjoyed on Boxing Day and New Year's Day in which country?

Answers: **1.** 'It is observed in the Balkans, the Black Sea Basin, the Caucasus, many parts of Asia, the Middle East and other regions.' (p 46) **2.** The blooming of cherry blossom trees. **3.** At Rameses II's Great Temple in Egypt. **4.** They dance around a traditional Maypole covered in greenery. **5.** The fourth Thursday of November. **6.** Mooncakes are made of '(a dense pastry filled with sweet-bean or lotus-seed paste)'. (p 51) **7.** 'it is not uncommon to find fermented shark meat, boiled sheep's head, or congealed sheep's blood wrapped in a ram's stomach on offer! (p 52) **8.** Germany, where Candlemas Day was celebrated. **9.** Bare-chested men beat each other with homemade rattan or brushwood sticks. **10.** Baosheng Cultural Festival. **11.** A wild male goat. **12.** It involves tall towers of people, sometimes standing up to 12 metres high. **13.** Li Peng and Loi Krathong. **14.** Multi-coloured artworks and mosaics full of flowers. **15.** 'During the Inca Empire between the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries,'. (p 57) **16.** The Bahamas.

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