

Unit 8

How Do You Celebrate the Spring Festival?



It is a time-honored tradition that people perform lion and dragon dances during the Spring Festival.



It is a good idea that children had better not play with firecrackers on Spring Festival Eve.



It is important that the whole family put up couplets before New Year's Eve.

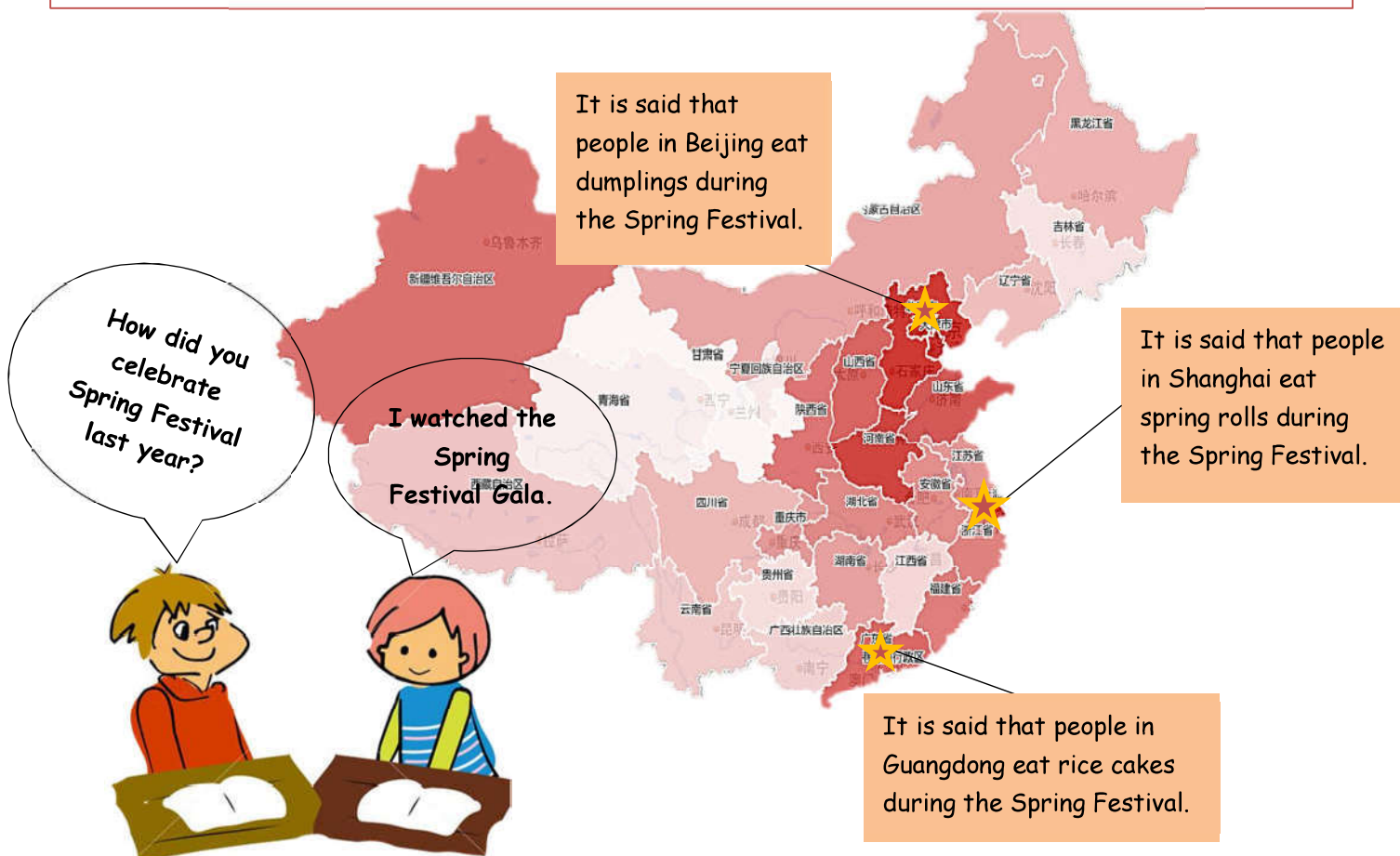


It is usually popular for Chinese people to watch the Spring Festival Gala after dinner.

- **Grammar Focus:** subject clause
- **Unit Objectives:**
 - ✓ **Listening:** Students will be able to listen for specific information to comprehend dialogue.
 - ✓ **Speaking:** Students will be able to utilize grammar points to practice the target language in real conversations.
 - ✓ **Reading:** Students will be able to use scanning and skimming skills to summarize the main idea, and search for information in the reading passage.
 - ✓ **Writing:** Students will be able to use to apply subject clauses to introduce the origin of Chinese traditional festivals.
- **Collocation:** "tradition"

Warm-up

Look at the map and talk with your classmates about how you celebrated the Spring Festival last year in your hometown (Please talk with your classmates by using the simple past tense).



Reading I

a. Listen to the dialogue and underline the customs of Spring Festival you heard.

(The first example is given in the dialogue.)

b. Read the following vocabulary items and match them with proper pictures.

- | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. play the firecrackers | 3. watch the Spring Festival Gala |
| 2. eat dumplings | 4. put up the couplets |



c. Lihua invites Sally to have dinner with his family, let's listen and read the dialogue.

A: Happy Chinese new year, Lihua! Thank you so much for having me over.

B: Don't mention it, Sally.

A: Thanks again! Are you sure I'm not imposing?

B: What are you talking about? It's the New Year! It is said that the more, the merrier.

A: Wow, look at the amazing food!

B: These are just the cold dishes. My mom is making a fish dish right now. It is well known that people should have fish on New Year's Eve, because it sounds like the word "surplus" in mandarin.

A: Yeah, I have heard of that tradition before. And you also eat dumplings, right?

B: People from Northern China do. But in Shanghai, we eat spring rolls. Also, we eat stick rice cakes called "Niangao". It sounds the same as "getting higher every year". It is a belief that eating "Niangao" will bring good luck to people in the New Year.

A: Nice! I love the play on words! I also heard of a famous TV show. What is it for?

B: Yes, it is popular for Chinese families to get together and watch the CCTV

Spring Festival Gala. Everyone tunes in. You will see it later.

A: I cannot wait to see it!



d. According to the conversation, fill in the blank with no more than five appropriate words.

Sally was invited by Lihua to take part in the Chinese family reunion dinner (年夜饭). She is amazed by the food on the table. It is well known that Chinese people _____ on New Year's Eve because fish sounds like _____ in mandarin. On New Year's Eve, Northern Chinese like to _____, whereas people in Shanghai prefer to _____ as well as _____, which sounds the same as "getting higher every year". After dinner, Chinese people usually get together and _____, which Lihua and Sally are going to see later.

Culture Awareness — Do you know other Chinese Traditional Festivals?

Mid-Autumn Festival

中秋节

(August 15th in every lunar year)



People usually eat moon cakes and enjoy the moon with family members...

Dragon-Boat Festival

端午节

(May 5th in every lunar year)



People eat rice-puddings and hold dragon boat competitions...

Lantern Festival

元宵节

(January 15th in every lunar year)



People eat sweet dumplings and hang lanterns...

Grammar Focus

a. Underline the clauses you found in text and write them down into the following blanks.

(The first sentence is given as an example)

1. It is said that the more, the merrier.

2.

3.

4.

Find and summarize the rule from the sentences above:

b. Grammar rules: Subject clause---"it" used as formal subject

a) It is + (adj.) + that...

E.g. It is (necessary/ clear/ true/ strange/ important/ possible/ likely, etc.) that...

b) It is + (noun phrase) + that...

E.g. It is (a fact/ a good idea/ a pity/ no wonder/ good news, etc.) that...

c) It is +(verb)+that

E.g. It (seems/ happens/ appears/ doesn't matter, etc.) that...



Grammar Task

a. Use lines and match the sentences with proper pictures.



It is necessary that Chinese people have the family reunion dinner on Spring Festival Eve.



It is popular for people to do Spring Festival shopping before the Chinese New Year.




It is popular for people to do Spring Festival shopping before the Chinese New Year.

b. Use the given information in each part of the chart, fill in the blank, and make sentences by using the sentence structures we learned above. (The first sentence is given as an example)


a	b	c	Complete sentence
1. a pity	Peter	miss the train back home (past tense)	It is a pity that Peter missed the train back home.
2. well-known	Earth	move around the sun	
3. reported	US	under the terrorist attack	
4. important	families	give their house a throughout cleaning	
5. seems	delicacies	make my mouth water	

Pronunciation



/s/

sticky	['stɪki]
spring	['sprɪŋ]
festival	['festɪvl]
gist	[dʒɪst]
assess	[ə'ses]
miss	[mɪs]



/z/

zip	[zɪp]
zone	[zoʊn]
puzzle	['pʌzl]
gaze	[geɪz]
as	[æz]
words	[wɜ:rdz]

a. Practice to read the following minimal pairs.



sip	zip
seal	zeal
sit	zit
sag	zag

b. Listen and circle the correct word you heard.

1. A. sip B. zip
2. A. zeal B. seal
3. A. sit B. zit



c. "Tongue twister" practice.

(Use the phonetics symbols learned above and practice speaking the sentences below.

Try to be as fluent and accurate as possible.)

/s/

- 1) A skunk sat on a stump. The skunk thought the stump stunk, and the stump thought the skunk stunk.
- 2) Six slippery snails, slid slowly seaward.

/z/

- 1) Zizzi's zippy zipper zip.
- 2) Fuzzy woozy was a bear. Fuzzy woozy had no hair. Fuzzy woozy wasn't fuzzy. Was he?



Listening

- a. Look at the picture: Which festival are the children talking about? Guess and Circle the correct answer.

How did your family celebrate last night?

We played the firecrackers and ate dumplings...



- A. Spring Festival
- B. Dragon Boat Festival
- C. Qing Ming Festival
- D. Mid-Autumn Festival

- b. Listen to the conversation and circle the correct answers.

- 1) What did Susan's family do to celebrate Spring Festival Eve?
 - a. Watched spring festival Gala b. played the firecrackers
 - c. Ate family reunion dinner d. got red envelopes
- 2) Is the Spring Festival Gala a Chinese tradition on New Year?
 - a. Yes, it is. b. No, it isn't c. Not mention
- 3) What's the implied meaning of "getting red envelopes" on Chinese New Year?
 - a. Receiving bad luck b. Sleeping well at night
 - c. Being lucky for the whole year d. Becoming rich

Listening Strategy

Circle the key words before you listen to the recording. Determine the range of answers based on the keywords you draw.

Speaking I

- a. **Dice Game.** Roll the dice and make sentences with subject clauses orally with your classmates according to the pictures correspond to the pips of the dice.

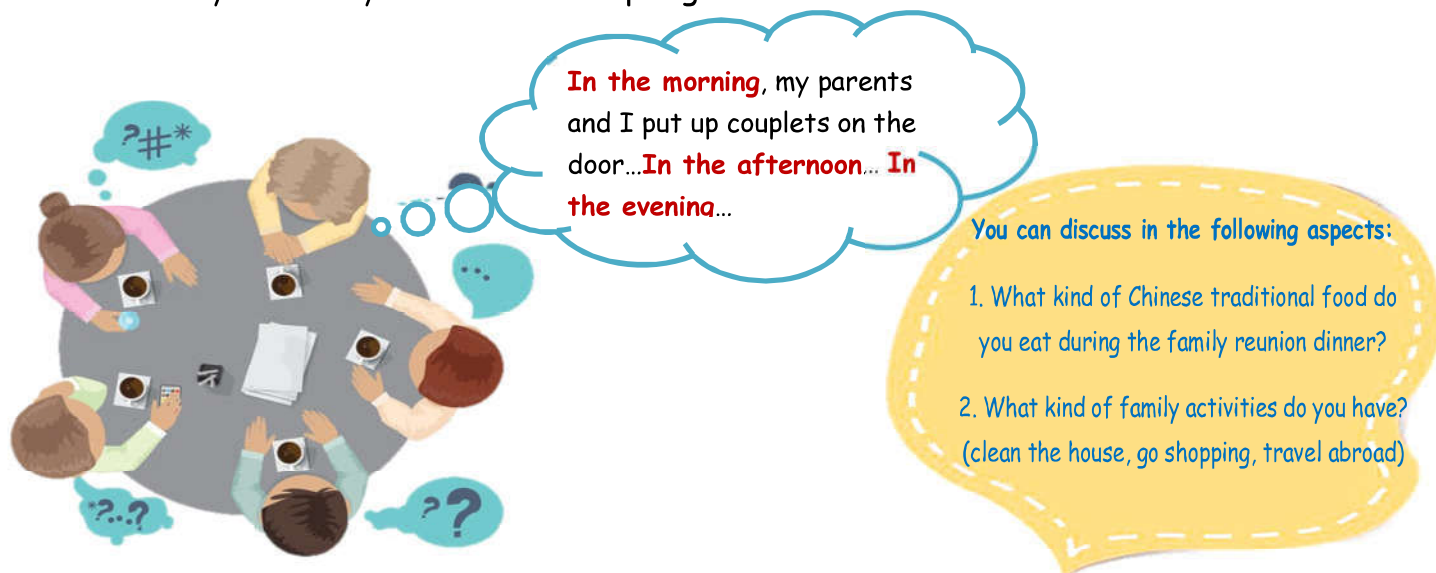
Find the planar graph in the appendix, make the dice, and play the game in pairs.



b. **Discussion:** Discuss in pairs and then organize your words in the order of the timeline

1. Do you like the Spring Festival? Why or why not?

2. How does your family celebrate the Spring Festival?



Reading II

a. **Building Vocabulary.** Find the words in the reading passage. Read the words around them and try to guess their meanings. Then write the correct word or phrases from the box to complete each sentences (1-10).

legend swallow extremely be covered with
run off good fortune pray for good crops
scare deafening noise generations by generations

1. If the story is handed down _____, it means the story has circulated among people for a long time.
2. If we say the task is _____ difficult, which means it is almost an impossible task.
3. The _____ is a story from ancient times about people and events, which may or may not be true.
4. To _____ means to make food; drink, etc. go down your throat into your stomach.
5. Farmers often worshiped the Earth God to _____ when they sewed the seeds in spring.
6. The mountain _____ trees, so trees are everywhere.
7. When she started to tell silly stories, I _____, that means I left suddenly, as if in a hurry.
8. If we are _____, that means we have lost our courage.
9. The firecrackers make a _____ which really scared me.
10. He had the _____ to be promoted, that is to say, he is very lucky.

b. **Predicting.** Read the title of the reading text.

What do you think the reading is about?

- A. Scheduling a happy Chinese New Year's day's activities
- B. An introduction of the Chinese Spring Festival
- C. Legend and relevant customs in Chinese New Year

Reading strategy

Read titles and subtitles to predict what a passage is about. This will help you know what to expect as you read.

How much do you know about Chinese Spring Festival?

----Origin, Legend, Traditional Customs, and Date.

A. Do you know the Chinese Spring Festival? It is a long-standing tradition that ancient Chinese people held the New Year festival to give thanks for the harvest and to pray for good crops in the coming year. But there is a legend behind all the celebration about how the Chinese New Year began:

B. It is said that once there was a man-eating wild monster called "Nian" that appeared in a country village. Nian had an extremely large mouth and could swallow several people with a single bite. Usually in winter there was nothing to eat in the mountains. So, the monster would visit the village and eat whatever it saw. Therefore, the villagers always lived in fear during winter.

One day, a wise man passed through the village and told the villagers, "I know how to scare the monster Nian away." That evening when

Nian arrived at the village, all the houses were lit up. Suddenly, the deafening noise of firecrackers sounded endlessly. The monster was startled by the noises. It realized that all the houses were covered with red paper. This scared it even more so it ran off into the mountains. Later, it is said that Nian never returned to the village anymore.



Since then, it is well known that people in the past would post red paper and light a fire in front of the door, as well as play with firecrackers in order to make noise towards the end of winter.

C. This legend eventually became a rich tradition for Chinese New Year and was passed down generation by generation in order to pray for the safety of the coming year. Nowadays, people usually do some Spring Festival shopping and clean the house before the New Year's day arrives. It is necessary that people sweep away the bad luck of the past year and avoid dusting on New Year's Day in case good fortune would be swept away. On that special day, Chinese people put up spring couplets in the morning. During the Spring Festival Eve, they will have the family reunion dinner and children will get red envelopes with lucky money from their parents. After that, the whole family will get together and watch Spring Festival's Gala as well as play with firecrackers on the ground outside. They do this until midnight, when they finally fall asleep full of happiness and smile.

Word Link

To increase your vocabulary, use a dictionary to find other forms of a word, e.g., (n.) tradition; (adj.) traditional.

While reading

c. **Identify Key details.** Read the follow sentences and circle T (true) or F (false).

- | | |
|--|-------|
| 1. Chinese New Year has a short history. | T / F |
| 2. The monster visited the village all year round. | T / F |
| 3. Villagers were afraid of the monster "Nian". | T / F |
| 4. Nian was not scared by the noises that the villagers made. | T / F |
| 5. People have to clean their house on New Year's day. | T / F |
| 6. Children get lucky money after watching the Spring Festival's Gala. | T / F |

d. **Identify Main idea.** Circle the most appropriate main idea of the legend story.

1. The monster was finally defeated by the villagers.
2. A wise man saved all the villagers after fighting with the monster.
3. People scared the monster away and brought peace back to village.

e. **Discussion.** Work in pairs and discuss about other relevant activities held in your hometown to celebrate the Chinese New Year. (Try to use at least 1-2 subjective clauses in your discussion)

1. What do you usually do for that specific activity?
2. Do you know how the origin of this activity comes from?

Writing

Goal: In this section, you are going to think, plan, design, and revise a post.

Your topic is: **How do you spend your favorite festival?**

a. **Brainstorming.** Think of the things and elements including in your favorite Chinese tradition festival with the following mind map.



Brainstorming tips

When you **brainstorm**, think of as many ideas as possible related to your topic and write down all the ideas you can think of.

b. **Planning.** Fill in the blank with the information you think above.

General introduction

Your favorite Chinese Festival: _____

Introduce the date of this Festival: _____

Explain the symbol and origins of this festival: _____


Introduce the tradition customs of this Festival: _____

Your own experience

Explain the things you would like to do during this Festival: _____

Explain who you spend this Festival with: _____

c. **Design a post for your favorite festivals.**




Title: _____

Introduction:

(Picture)

My own Experience:

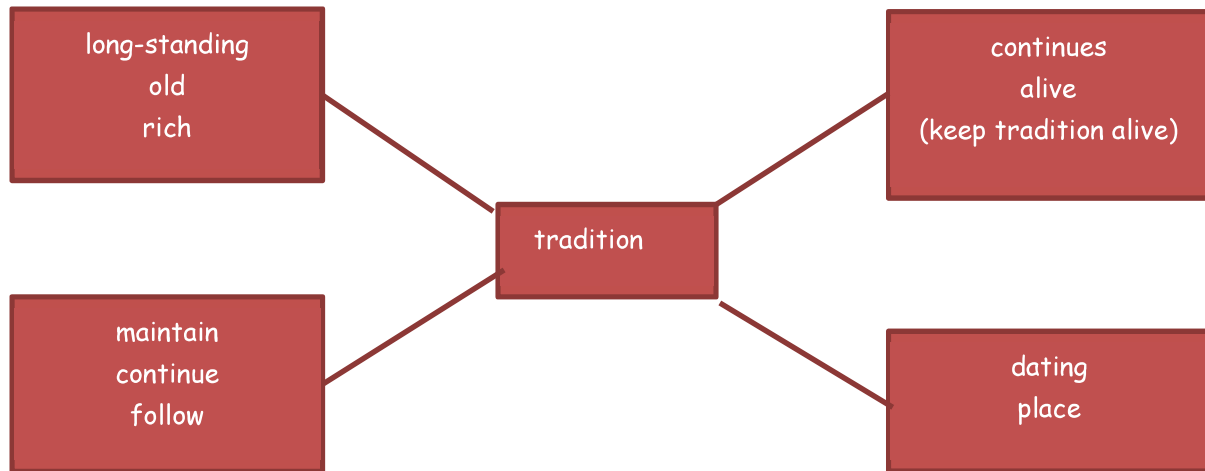


d. **Editing.** Self check your own writing using the checklist below.

Editing Checklist	Yes	No
1. Are there any transition words used to connect sentences?		
2. Are there at least two subject clauses in your writing?		
3. Is all the required information included in your writing?		
4. Did you use the collocations of "tradition" in your writing?		

Word Awareness

The top left box shows how *tradition* is modified by adjectives in front. The bottom left box shows the verbs that collocate commonly with *tradition*. The top right box shows some adjectives that commonly used after *tradition*. The bottom right box shows how *tradition* combines with noun.



Examples:

Eating dumpling during Spring Festival is a **long-standing tradition** in China

Playing with firecrackers is an **old tradition** during Chinese New Year.

The legend **maintains the traditions** of the Chinese Spring Festival.

Young people **follow the traditions** passed to them from the older generation.

It is important for younger generations to **keep traditions alive**.

New technology has transformed the ways of dating different from **traditional dating**.

The **tradition continues** with the arrival of two talented upcoming Chinese players.



Words you need to know

celebration (n.) /ˌselɪˈbreɪʃn/ or /ˌselɪˈbreɪʃn/ a party; religious ceremony; a notable occasion with festivities. 庆祝, 庆典。A wedding is a joyful celebration of love.

couplet (n.) /ˈkʌplət/ or /ˈkʌplət/ Two successive lines of verse forming a unit marked usually by rhythmic correspondence. 对联。This couplet is my father's handwriting.

crop (n.) /krop/ or /kra:p/ a plant product that can be grown and harvested extensively for profit or subsistence. 庄稼, 作物。The crop represents a tiny fraction of US production.

deafening (adj.) /ˈdefnɪŋ/ or /ˈdefnɪŋ/ a sound that is extremely loud; something that is very noticeable like a very loud sound would be. 震耳欲聋的。This silence of local politicians generally has been deafening.

festival (n.) /ˈfestɪvəl/ or /ˈfestɪvəl/ a time of celebration marked by special observances; an often periodic celebration or program of events or entertainment having a specified focus. 节日。Was there a festival or a holiday today?

firecracker (n.) /ˈfaɪəkrækə(r)/ or /ˈfaɪəkrækər/ a paper cylinder containing explosive powder and a fuse people can set off and make noise. 烟花。The firecracker spattered sparks the moment it was lit.

fortune (n.) /ˈfɔ:tju:n/ or /ˈfɔ:rtʃən/ An unknown and unpredictable phenomenon that leads to a favorable outcome; Great wealth. 机会, 运气。She built up her fortune by cannily playing the stock market.

gala (n.) /ˈgɑ:lə/ or /ˈgeɪlə/ a festive occasion; celebration; special entertainment. 演出, 盛会。The gala evening was attended by royalty and politicians.

generation (n.) /ˌdʒenəˈreɪʃn/ or /ˌdʒenəˈreɪʃn/ a group of individuals, most of whom are the same approximate age, having similar ideas, problems, attitudes. 一代人。A new generation of scientists became fascinated by dinosaurs.

harvest (n.) /ˈhɑ:vɪst/ or /ˈhɑ:rvɪst/ an accumulated store or productive result of gathering in agricultural crops. 丰收, 收获。He will offer the first harvest of rice to the sun goddess.

legend (n.) /ˈledʒənd/ or /ˈledʒənd/ a story coming down from the past; a story popularly regarded as historical without verification. 传说。His pitching was a legend among major league hitters.

pray (v.) /preɪ/ or /preɪ/ address a deity, a prophet, a saint or an object of worship. 祈祷。We pray for a bright future under his leadership.

reunion (n.) /ˌriːˈjuːniən/ or /ˌriːˈjuːniən/ a gathering of relatives, friends, or associates at regular intervals or after separation. 团圆。These two members of Yale's class never miss a reunion.

scare away /skeə(r); əˈweɪ/ or /sker; əˈweɪ/ Use specific techniques to cause somebody to feel afraid and drive them away. 把...吓跑。People keep a dog to scare away thieves.