

# Faces™

## Celebrate Spring

American actor Robin Williams once said, “Spring is nature’s way of saying, ‘Let’s Party!’” A season of rebirth and renewal, spring is a time for change and new beginnings. This issue of FACES magazine shares spring celebrations from across the globe.

### CONVERSATION QUESTION

How is spring celebrated around the world?

### TEACHING OBJECTIVES

- Students will learn how the vernal equinox is celebrated in Teotihuacan.
- Students will learn about the celebration of Thailand’s New Year, Songkran.
- Students will learn how Easter is celebrated around the world.
- Students will analyze the influence of places on events.
- Students will examine values through cultural celebrations.
- Students will compare cultural traditions.
- Students will make and utilize paper plate sundials.
- Students will create a list of holiday etiquette rules.
- Students will conduct research on one of the 17 marsupials on the endangered species list.



In addition to supplemental materials focused on core Social Studies skills, this flexible teaching tool offers vocabulary-building activities, questions for discussion, and cross-curricular activities.

### SELECTIONS

- **Welcoming the Sun at Teotihuacan**  
Expository Nonfiction, ~1090L
- **Songkran**  
Expository Nonfiction, ~1040L
- **Kites, Carpets & Chocolate Bilbies: Easter Traditions Around the World**  
Expository Nonfiction, ~1100L

## Welcoming the Sun at Teotihuacan

pp. 8–11, Expository Nonfiction

Travel to the celebration in Teotihuacan and join in the festivities as the sun rises from behind the Apan Mountains. Readers will discover why the Aztec pyramids in Mexico are an amazing location for welcoming in spring.



### RESOURCES

- Influence of Location: Here Comes the Sun

### OBJECTIVES

- Students will learn how the vernal equinox is celebrated in Teotihuacan.
- Students will evaluate the influence of places on events.
- Students will make and utilize paper plate sundials.

### KEY VOCABULARY

- **equinox** (p. 10) a day of the year when day and night are the same length; there are two equinoxes in a year: spring equinox and autumn equinox
- **hemisphere** (p. 10) a half of the earth: the northern or southern half divided by the equator, the eastern or western half divided by the imaginary line of the meridian

### ENGAGE

**Conversation Question:** How is spring celebrated around the world?

Display the title of the article: “Welcoming the Sun at Teotihuacan.” Tell students that Teotihuacan is a partially ruined ancient city in the Valley of Mexico, about 25 miles from Mexico City. Have students locate Mexico City on a map. Explain that the name *Teotihuacan* comes from Aztec culture and means “birthplace of the gods.” Using all of this information, have students predict the content of the article. Remind students to revisit their predictions after they read the article.

### INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Post the key vocabulary words and definitions. Guide students to notice the prefixes in the two words: *equi-*, *hemi-*. Ask students which prefix means “half” (*hemi-*). Then ask them to infer the meaning of the prefix *equi-* (“equal”). Discuss how the meaning of prefixes can help students figure out the meaning to unfamiliar words. Then have students work in pairs to choose one of the prefixes and list five to ten words that begin with it. Have students consult a dictionary if necessary.

### READ & DISCUSS

Reinforce comprehension of the concepts presented in the article by using the following questions to direct discussion.

1. Why do people climb to the top of the Pyramid of the Sun on the first day of spring?
2. How do the observers celebrate the rising sun?
3. What beliefs do people hold regarding the spring equinox?
4. Explain why day and night are almost equal on the vernal equinox.
5. What negative effects are created by the huge crowds that gather at Teotihuacan to celebrate?

### CONCEPT/SKILL FOCUS: Influence of Location

**INSTRUCT:** The article presents readers with detailed information about the ancient structures that are the focal point for the region’s celebration of the vernal equinox. Distribute the *Influence of Location: Here Comes the Sun* graphic organizer and tell students they will analyze how places and structures of long ago influence today’s celebrations.

**ASSESS:** Circulate as students are working. Encourage peer discussion when students are completing Part B.

### EXTEND

**Science** Help students make a sundial using simple materials: a paper plate, a marker, a pencil. *Procedure:* 1. Turn plate upside down and write the number 12 at the top. Then proceed with all of the numbers on a clock face. Even spacing is important. 2. Punch a hole in the center of the plate and insert the pencil. This will create the shadow and anchor the plate to the ground. 3. Take sundial outside at noon and place it on the ground so that the pencil’s shadow points to the 12. As the position of the sun changes, the shadow will reveal the hour.

## Here Comes the Sun

**Influence of Location** All of the locations listed below are mentioned in the article. Use details from the article to explain the significance of the places in Part A. -For Part B, make an educated guess about the importance of each place. Then use resources to discover why each place is meaningful.

**Part A:** Complete independently.

Pyramid of the Sun	
Palace of Quetzalcoatl	
Palace of Butterflies	

**Part B:** Complete with a partner.

Location	Hypothesis	Actual Significance
Temple of the Seven Dolls		
Avenue of the Dead		
Pyramid of the Moon		

## Songkran

pp. 12–15, Expository Nonfiction

Marking the beginning of the Buddhist New Year, Songkran is one of Thailand's oldest celebrations. Readers will discover why water is the central element of this traditional three-day celebration.



## RESOURCES

- Examine Values: Clean Slate

## OBJECTIVES

- Students will learn about the celebration of Thailand's New Year, Songkran.
- Students will examine values through cultural celebrations.
- Students will create a list of holiday etiquette rules.

## KEY VOCABULARY

- **purification** (p. 14) the act of making something or someone pure or ceremonially clean
- **reverent** (p. 14) expressing deep respect
- **etiquette** (p. 15) the set of rules for proper and polite behavior in society

## ENGAGE

**Conversation Question:** How is spring celebrated around the world?

Ask students what a new year represents and why it is often boisterously celebrated. Pose this question: What is the value in having a “clean slate” at the beginning of a new year? Then introduce the article and explain that they will be reading about how the Songkran celebration in Thailand uses the element of water in different ways in order to honor the beginning of the solar new year.

## INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Post and discuss the key vocabulary words and definitions. Then display the cloze sentences below and have students supply the correct word.

1. The \_\_\_\_\_ worshipers bowed their heads before the statue.
2. Writing thank-you notes is one of my family's rules of \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Some \_\_\_\_\_ rituals involve the washing of hands or feet.

## READ & DISCUSS

Read the article aloud with the class. Have students reread the text in small groups to answer the questions below. Discuss responses.

1. How does Thailand mark the beginning of the Buddhist New Year?
2. Why is Songkran celebrated in April?
3. What does the water used in the celebration symbolize?
4. What etiquette should be followed on Songkran day?
5. Why has Songkran become so appealing to the general public?

## CONCEPT/SKILL FOCUS: Examine Values

**INSTRUCT:** This article teaches readers that a region's celebrations and traditions reflect its values. Distribute the *Examine Values: Clean Slate* graphic organizer. Instruct students to refer to the article to help them explain how each value listed in the organizer is shown during Songkran, Thailand's New Year celebration.

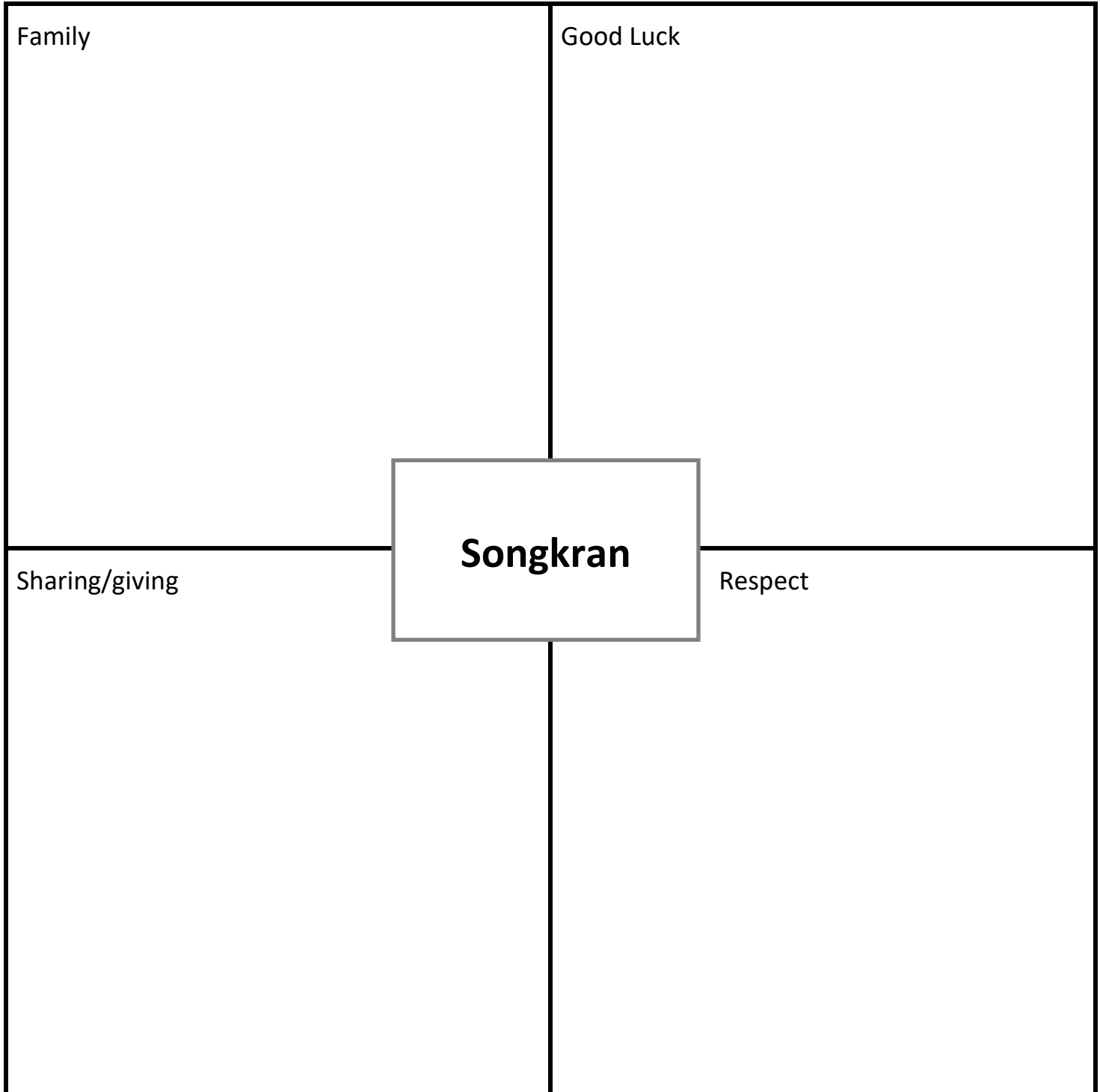
**ASSESS:** Review the worksheet as a class. Then instruct students to write about a celebration they participate in and describe the value(s) it expresses.

## EXTEND

**Sociology** Have students review the six suggestions for enjoying Songkran safely on page 15 of the article, under the subhead “The Seven Dangerous Days of Songkran.” Instruct students to choose a holiday they celebrate (Independence Day, New Year's, etc.) and create a list of six suggestions that would make the celebration more enjoyable and possibly safer. Rules for etiquette may be included. Have students consider what might happen if their rules are ignored.

## Clean Slate

**Examine Values** Review the article and highlight passages that indicate a celebration of the values listed in the chart below. Use article details to help you explain how each value is expressed during Songkran.



**Think Tank:** Choose at least one of the values/traditions listed above and explain how it is represented in one of your own celebrations. Use the back of this paper for your writing.



## Kites, Carpets & Chocolate Bilbies: Easter Traditions Around the World

pp. 18–21, Expository Nonfiction

Easter is celebrated across the globe as both a secular and religious holiday. Readers will examine the traditions and symbols that are part of this spring holiday of rebirth.



### RESOURCES

- Comparing Culture: What to Eggspect

### OBJECTIVES

- Students will learn how Easter is celebrated around the world.
- Students will compare cultural traditions.
- Students will conduct research on one of the 17 marsupials on the endangered species list.

### KEY VOCABULARY

- **secular** (p. 18) not spiritual: of or relating to the physical world and not the spiritual world
- **ascend** (p. 19) to go up or rise toward the sky
- **invasive species** (p. 20) any kind of living organism that is not native to an ecosystem and often causes harm

### ENGAGE

**Conversation Question:** How is spring celebrated around the world?

Motivate students to learn more about Easter traditions by arranging a simple egg hunt. Write facts about global Easter traditions on slips of paper and place them inside plastic eggs—one for each student. (Ex: In France, children receive sweet treats from flying bells. In Sweden, children dress up as Easter witches.) If plastic eggs aren't available, fold the slips of paper and hide those. After you hide the eggs or paper slips, give students five minutes to hunt for them...one egg/slip each! When all have been recovered, have students read their facts aloud.

### INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Post the key words and discuss the definitions. Then display the following prompts and have students work in pairs to respond to them.

- List a synonym for each word: *secular, ascend, invasive*.
- List an antonym for each word: *secular, ascend, invasive*.
- Discuss an invasive species in your area. (plant or animal)

### READ & DISCUSS

Preview the questions below. Then read the article aloud, pausing for discussion when answers to the questions are revealed.

1. How is Easter celebrated in the United States?
2. How are patterned pathways created for Holy Week in Guatemala?
3. Explain the goal and results of the 1991 Rabbit-Free Australia campaign.
4. How did the tradition of rolling Easter Eggs on the South Lawn of the White House begin?
5. Why were lambs considered good luck in ancient times?

### CONCEPT/SKILL FOCUS: Comparing Culture

**INSTRUCT:** Have students discuss how traditions differ across cultures. Students will utilize the *Comparing Culture: What to Eggspect* graphic organizer to record how different countries celebrate Easter.

**ASSESS:** Collect and review worksheets to check for accurate details.

### EXTEND

**Research** Remind students that the article describes an endangered marsupial native to Australia called a bilby. Explain that there are 17 marsupials on the brink of extinction. Have students work in pairs to choose an endangered marsupial to learn about. First, have pairs conduct research to collect facts about their marsupial's behavior, diet, habitat, appearance, and extinction status. Then have pairs write their facts on strips of paper and hide the strips for others to find and share, mimicking the introductory activity.

## What to Eggspect

**Cultural Traditions** Use information from the article to compare Easter traditions in different countries.

Country	Easter Traditions	Origin of Traditions
Finland		
Australia		
Bermuda		

**Think Tank:** How does your family celebrate spring holidays? Discuss with a partner.