

Hello parents! This is a summary of the materials we have introduced today. We wish you to keep this because you are the most important source of information for your children. So we want to equip you with a substantial amount of knowledge on the Chinese Culture, and become a reliable source for your children.

Moon Festival Brief Description:

Mid-Autumn Festival 中秋节 (a.k.a. Moon Festival, "Reunion Festival" 团圆节) is the second most important festival in the Chinese culture after Chinese New Year. It takes place around the end of the Fall harvest. This is an occasion where families gather to eat plenty of fruits and food, and celebrate the abundance of the harvest. Popular traditional activities include eating mooncakes and taking strolls at nighttime to gaze at the fullness and beauty of the moon.

Legend:

Long ago, there were ten suns in the sky, and they were burning all the plants on Earth. With nothing to eat, the people were dying from hunger. Seeing this, Houyi (后羿), who was an excellent archery master, shot down nine of the ten suns, and everyone was saved; the Queen of Heaven rewarded Houyi with an elixir for immortality. However, Houyi loved his beautiful wife, Chang'E (嫦娥), too much and would not drink the elixir. He told his wife to keep the elixir from him.

One day, when Houyi was away, one of his students went to Chang'E to steal the elixir. Knowing that she was no match against the student, Chang'E drank the elixir instead. As a result, she became light as a feather and floated to the moon. When the people knew that Chang'E had become immortal, they started praying to her for good fortune and safety by offering plenty of fruits and foods to her.

Traditional Activities:

- *Moon Gazing:* it is said that the moon is closest to the Earth every year on Lunar 8th month and 15th day, and it is always round on this date every year. The roundness of the moon symbolizes completeness, implying the completeness of a family. Thus, it is very common to have family reunion on this occasion, hence having the nickname "Reunion Festival".
- *Mooncake:* mooncakes are a type of pastry especially made for the Mid-Autumn Festival. Its round shape imitates the fullness of the moon, and symbolizes completeness. Common

ingredients include lotus seed paste, sweet bean paste (often red bean paste), jujube paste, and five kernel (walnuts, pumpkin seeds, watermelon seeds, peanuts, sesame seeds, or almonds).

- *Lantern*: children often carry a lantern with them when strolling at night with their parents for moon gazing. Lanterns are also hung on trees or on walls as decorations.

Chinese Words:

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| Mid-Autumn Festival | 中秋节 | Zhōngqiū Jié |
| Reunion Festival | 团圆节 | Tuányuán Jié |
| Moon | 月 | Yuè |
| Mooncake | 月饼 | yuèbǐng |
| Moon Gazing | 赏月 | Shǎng yuè |
| Lantern | 灯笼 | Dēnglóng |
| Chang'E | 嫦娥 | <i>Cháng'é</i> |
| Lotus Seed Paste | 莲蓉 | <i>lián róng</i> |
| Sweet Bean Paste | 豆沙 | <i>dòu shā</i> |
| Jujube Paste | 枣泥 | <i>zǎo ní</i> |
| Five Kernel | 五仁 | <i>wǔ rén</i> |

Sources:

China Highlights [<http://www.chinahighlights.com/travelguide/culture/mid-autumn-festival-story.htm>]

Wikipedia [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mid-Autumn_Festival]