Children’s Celebrations

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When a word is printed in bold, click on it to find its meaning.
Celebrations

Celebrations are events that are held on special occasions. Some are events from the past that are still celebrated. Others celebrate important times in our lives, or activities such as music. Some celebrations involve only a few people. Others involve whole cities or countries. Large celebrations take place across the world.

Birthdays are special events that many people celebrate.

New Year’s Eve is celebrated all around the world with fireworks.
**What are children’s celebrations?**

Children’s celebrations are events especially for children. They can be small, such as birthday parties. There are also children’s festivals, which are big celebrations.

Large children’s celebrations often involve music, books or movies. Organising a big celebration involves many people and a lot of planning.

Children’s festivals are celebrations for big groups of children.

Children’s festivals have activities and performances especially for children, such as clown acts.
Universal Children’s Day

Universal Children’s Day celebrates friendship among children from different cultures. It was first started by an organisation called the United Nations in 1954. The celebration looks at children’s rights.

Universal Children’s Day is celebrated on 20 November each year. It looks at ways to improve the health and education of children.

Fun events, such as performances by unicyclists, are part of Universal Children’s Day.

On Universal Children’s Day, many teachers tell students about children’s rights.
Birthdays are celebrated by children from many religions and cultures. They have been celebrated for thousands of years. Many children like birthdays because they are a day just for them.

Birthdays celebrate the day a person was born. Birthdays are celebrated in many countries. However, not all religions or cultures celebrate birthdays. Some religions celebrate name days instead of birthdays.

Children often celebrate their birthday with their friends.

Birthdays are celebrated by children from many religions and cultures.
Birthdays are often celebrated with a party. A birthday cake and presents are part of the celebrations. Children’s birthday parties often include games.

Birthday celebrations are not just for children. People often have a big party when they turn 21 or 50 years old.

Pass the parcel is a popular game at children’s birthday parties.

Turning 100 is a very special birthday.
Music festivals

The Rhapsody music festival is held in Europe each year. Children’s *choirs* from around the world perform at concerts. Sometimes the choirs sing with an *orchestra*.

The Pacific Rim Children’s Chorus Festival is held for young people from the Pacific region. At the festival they learn about singing, playing instruments, storytelling and dance from the Pacific.

A highlight of the Rhapsody music festival is when the choirs sing together.

At the festival, children perform dances from the Pacific region.
Book Week

Book Week is a celebration that encourages children to read books. It is celebrated in many places around the world. Schools and libraries hold events such as competitions and storytelling.

In Australia, Book Week has a different theme every year. Past themes have included ‘celebrate with stories’ and ‘reading rocks!’ It is one of the oldest children’s festivals in Australia.

Storytelling is held in libraries during Book Week.

Book Week activities include dressing up as characters from books.
The Mid-Autumn Children’s Festival is held in Vietnam when the autumn moon is full. It is very old, and is called Tet Trung Thu (say \textit{tet-troong-thoo}).

During the festival, children gather together, wear masks and bang drums. They also eat \textit{mooncakes}, listen to fairytales and watch dragon dances.

Colourful lanterns are part of the Mid-Autumn Children’s Festival.

Children parade through the streets and sing loudly during the Mid-Autumn Children’s Festival.
Children’s Day, Turkey

Children’s Day is held in Turkey on 23 April each year. On Children’s Day, children rule the country. The day celebrates the importance of children.

Children’s Day also involves dancing and giving presents. Many children come from other countries to stay with Turkish families. Children’s Day is known as Egemenlik Bayrami (say *eh-ge-men-lik by-rah-muh*).
Children’s Day, Japan

Children’s Day, known as Kodomo no hi, is held in Japan on 5 May. It celebrates children and their mothers. Rice cakes and other sweets are eaten on Children’s Day.

Families with sons hang kites outside their homes. The kites are shaped like carp, a strong fish. Parents hope their sons will grow up to be strong like carp.

Ceremonies held on Children’s Day celebrate children and their happiness.

Parents fly one kite for every son in the family on Children’s Day.
Lola Kenya Screen, Africa

Lola Kenya Screen is a film festival for children. It celebrates films that are written and made by children. Lola Kenya Screen is held every year in Kenya in Africa.

At the festival, films are made by children at workshops. Children also help select the films shown at the festival. They vote for the ones they think are the best.
Children’s Fair, Argentina

The Children’s Fair (La Feria de los Chicos) takes place every year in Argentina. It means ‘the fair of the boys’, but this celebration is for all children.

There are many different activities at the fair. These include theatre, circus acts and puppet shows. There are also cooking classes and a storytelling corner.

Thousands of visitors enjoy performances and stalls at the Children’s Fair.

Music performances are popular events at the Children’s Fair.
International Children’s Festival, Canada

The International Children’s Festival is held in Canada. It takes place in June each year and runs for five days. The festival has many events.

Many school groups attend performances at the International Children’s Festival. The children learn about music, art and drama from other countries.

Circus acts are popular at the International Children's Festival.

Some music performances include children from the audience.
Try this!

Try this quiz

Find the answers to these questions in the book. (You can check your answers on page 31.)

1. Where is the Mid-Autumn Children’s Festival celebrated?
2. Who takes part in the Rhapsody music festival?
3. Where do children rule the country for a day?
4. What does Universal Children’s Day aim to do?
5. What do some religions celebrate instead of birthdays?

Try this activity

Next time you celebrate a special occasion with your friends or family, ask yourself:

• Why are you celebrating?
• How long have people been celebrating this event?
• Are there other places in the world where people celebrate the event?
choirs: groups of people singing together, often without any instruments

cultures: ways of living

mooncakes: sweet cakes

name days: days when people celebrate the saint who shares their name

orchestra: a group of musicians playing instruments

rights: things people should be allowed to have or do

theme: main idea

United Nations: an organisation that most countries belong to

workshops: classes where people are taught skills

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**Answers to the quiz on page 30**

1. Vietnam
2. Children’s choirs from around the world
3. Turkey
4. Celebrate friendship among children from different cultures, and improve the health and education of all children
5. Name days
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