

FESTIVALS & CELEBRATIONS · K-GRADE 4

Festivals Calendar

A year of celebrations

Why teach festivals?

Children grow up in a world where their classmates may celebrate festivals they've never heard of. Learning about each other's celebrations is one of the simplest, kindest forms of inclusion. It also makes school richer — there's always something to look forward to.

Festivals through the year

When (varies year to year)	Festival	Tradition
January / February	Lunar New Year	Chinese, Vietnamese, Korean families celebrate. Red envelopes, dragon dances.
February	Pancake Day	Christian — last day before Lent. Pancakes used up rich foods.
February / March	Holi	Hindu festival of colours. Throwing coloured powder.
March / April	Easter	Christian. Eggs, lambs, hot cross buns, family meals.
March / April	Passover (Pesach)	Jewish. Eight days remembering the Exodus from Egypt.
Varies (lunar)	Ramadan + Eid	Muslim. Month of fasting, ending with feast of Eid al-Fitr.
May	Vesak (Wesak)	Buddhist. Celebrates Buddha's birth. Lanterns, generous giving.



When (varies year to year)	Festival	Tradition
August / September	Janmashtami	Hindu. Lord Krishna's birthday. Songs, decorating cradles.
September / October	Rosh Hashanah	Jewish New Year. Apples and honey for a sweet year.
October / November	Diwali	Hindu, Sikh, Jain festival of lights. Candles, sweets, fireworks.
October	Halloween	Originally Christian/pagan. Costumes, pumpkins, trick-or-treat.
November	Bonfire Night (UK)	Remembering 1605 Gunpowder Plot. Fireworks, sparklers.
November	Thanksgiving (USA)	Family gathering, big meal, gratitude.
December	Hanukkah	Jewish festival of lights. Eight days of candles, latkes, dreidels.
December	Christmas	Christian. Decorating trees, exchanging gifts, family meals.
December	Kwanzaa	African-American celebration of culture and community.

How to use this calendar

Print and put on the staff room wall. Use it to plan the year — which festivals are big in your school's community? Which would be enriching for everyone to learn about? Even acknowledging festivals briefly ('It's Eid this weekend — anyone celebrating?') makes children whose families celebrate feel seen. You don't need to do a full topic on every festival. A 5-minute morning assembly recognising it goes a long way.

Important note

Festival dates often follow lunar calendars, so they shift each year. Always check current dates before planning. Resources like the BBC Religion calendar update annually.

