

FESTIVALS & CELEBRATIONS · GRADES 2–4

Holi

The Festival of Colors

Quick facts

What	A Hindu festival celebrating spring, love, and the triumph of good over evil.
When	Late February or March — based on the Hindu lunar calendar.
How long	2 days, but related celebrations last longer.
Where	India, Nepal, and worldwide where Hindu communities live.

Holi traditions

<p>Throwing colored powder</p> <p>The most famous Holi tradition — people throw bright colored powder (called 'gula') at each other. By the end, everyone is covered in pink, blue, yellow, green. Strangers and friends, all together.</p>	<p>Bonfires</p> <p>On the night before, families light bonfires (called 'Holika Dahan') to symbolize burning away bad things and starting fresh.</p>
<p>Sweets and food</p> <p>Special foods include 'gujiya' (sweet dumplings) and 'thandai' (a cool spiced milk drink).</p>	<p>Music and dancing</p> <p>Holi music plays in streets and homes. People dance and sing — formal celebrations are rare. Joy is the point.</p>

The story

There are several stories. One favorite: a king demanded everyone worship him. His son Prahlad refused, worshipping the god Vishnu instead. The king tried to harm Prahlad — even sending him into a fire — but Prahlad was protected. Holika, the king's evil sister who started the fire, was destroyed. Hence the bonfires — burning away evil.



Discuss

1. What's a tradition you'd love to take part in if you could?
2. Why might people enjoy festivals where everyone is equally messy?
3. Many cultures have spring festivals. Why might that be?

