

FESTIVALS

Learn
BRIGHT

TSUKIMI

High-Interest Reading Comprehension



GRADE 3-5

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Classroom Procedure:

1. Introduce the lesson with the following: Did you know that during the Tsukimi, or Autumn Moon Festival, people in Japan believe they can see rabbits on the moon making rice cakes? It's true! Legend says that if you look closely, you can spot the Moon Rabbit hard at work! Today, we will learn about Tsukimi, a celebration filled with delicious treats, glowing lanterns, and fun moon stories.
2. Distribute the *Tsukimi* Content Pages. Read and review with students. Point out the text features like numbered paragraphs, images, **bold** printed words, and insets. Explain to students that authors add text features to help readers comprehend and find information in the text more easily. Have your students annotate, take notes, or highlight information as they read as an additional comprehension practice.
3. Distribute the Activity Page. Have students share their symbols and wishes on their lanterns with the whole class or in small groups. Students can also write a wish or something they are grateful for on paper and place it inside their lanterns.
4. Distribute the Practice Pages. The Practice Pages may be a summative assessment or an independent class assignment. It reinforces the comprehension skills in this lesson.
5. In closing, ask students what they learned about Tsukimi or ask a reading comprehension question. Do you celebrate the Autumn Moon Festival, or do you think it is something you might do in the future? How do text features help readers to understand what the author is saying? What did you learn new about Tsukimi? Are there festivals and celebrations where you live? Are they like the Tsukimi Autumn Moon Festival?

Lesson Title: Tsukimi

Subject: High-Interest Informational Reading

Approximate Grade Level: 3 – 5

Objectives: Students will practice various close reading and comprehension skills. In addition, they will determine the central idea or theme of the article and understand more about various celebrations surrounding the Autumn Moon Festival.

State Educational Standards*:

LB.ELA-LITERACY.RL.4.1

LB.ELA-LITERACY.RL.4.3

LB.ELA-LITERACY.RL.4.6

Approximate Lexile Reading

Comprehension Level: 810L to 1000L

Class Sessions (45 minutes):

1 to 1½ class sessions

Teaching Materials/Worksheets:

Content Pages (2), Activity Page (1), Practice Pages (4)

Student Supplies:

Construction paper, scissors, glue or tape, markers, crayons, stickers, sequins, string or ribbon, battery-operated tea lights (optional)

Prepare Ahead of Time:

Copies of worksheets

*Lessons are aligned to meet the education objectives and goals of most states. For more information on your state objectives, contact your local Board of Education or Department of Education in your state.



Teacher Notes

The lesson allows teachers to teach and students to practice grade-appropriate reading comprehension, foundational reading, and reading fluency skills. These lessons are designed to be completed in one or two class settings. Each lesson is a high-interest content lesson that students want to read, which teachers will want to incorporate into their instruction. The lesson is appropriate as a whole-class, stand-alone lesson or as an independent small-group activity. Be sure to check out other Learn Bright lessons and videos!

Tsukimi



¹The Autumn Moon Festival is a unique event that celebrates the beauty of the full moon in the fall. It is inspired by the traditional Japanese holiday called Tsukimi, which means "moon viewing." People have celebrated Tsukimi in Japan for hundreds of years, taking time to appreciate the bright full moon that shines in the sky during autumn. The festival is held during the eighth month of the lunar calendar, usually around September or October.

²The history of the festival dates back to Japan's Heian period (794–1185 CE). During this time, nobles and royal court members would gather to admire the full moon. They would hold grand banquets, recite poetry, and reflect on the moon's beauty while sitting on boats floating on lakes or near water. The people believed that the moon's **reflection** on the water had special significance, bringing peace and happiness to those who saw it.

³In the past, people also made offerings to the moon. These offerings were special rice dumplings called dango that the people made to honor the moon and give thanks for a good harvest. People also decorated their homes with pampas grass, a tall grass with feathery tops, to protect against evil spirits.

⁴Today, Tsukimi keeps many of these traditions alive. Many still gather with friends and family to view the full moon. The festival has become a larger celebration with more activities. In cities and towns, there are often street festivals where you can find food stalls selling traditional treats like dango, sweet potatoes, and chestnuts. Performances like traditional Japanese music, dance, and storytelling are typical at these festivals.



⁵One of the key highlights of the modern Tsukimi festival is the floating lantern event. People release paper lanterns into the air or onto water, symbolizing wishes for happiness and good fortune. Watching the lanterns rise into the sky or float on rivers while the full moon shines above creates a magical scene many people look forward to each year. Some of the lanterns float so high they almost touch the stars!

⁶The Autumn Moon Festival is mainly celebrated in Japan. Still, it has also become popular in other parts of the world. The festival occurs in Japan in various locations, from big cities like Tokyo and Kyoto to smaller **rural** towns. The exact date of the festival changes each year depending on when the full moon appears, usually in late September or early October.

⁷The moon holds special meaning during the festival. In Japanese culture, there is a belief that rabbits live on the moon and make rice cakes called mochi. People often tell the story during the festival, and many of their decorations and treats feature images of rabbits.

⁸An interesting fact about the Tsukimi Autumn Moon Festival is that it also marks the time to give thanks for the year's harvest. Farmers celebrate the festival in the countryside by offering fruits, vegetables, and rice to the moon in **gratitude** for a good crop. It's a way that they can show their appreciation for nature's abundance.

⁹Tsukimi has become a way for people to connect with nature, family, and friends. Through watching the moon, releasing lanterns, or enjoying delicious food, the festival brings joy and wonder to everyone who participates. It's a reminder to slow down, appreciate the beauty of the world around us, and give thanks for all we have.





PAPER LANTERNS

Instructions: Follow these steps to create your own paper lantern, just like the ones used during Tsukimi.

Step 1: DECORATE

- Use markers, crayons, stickers, or other decorations to decorate your construction paper and make it unique!
- Draw pictures or symbols that remind you of the moon or something you're thankful for, just like people do for Tsukimi.

*** For steps 2 to 4, see diagram ***

Step 2: FOLD

- Take your decorated construction paper and fold it half lengthwise, like a long rectangle.

Step 3: CUT

- While the paper is still folded, use scissors to cut slits along the folded edge.
- Make the slits evenly spaced, but don't cut all the way across the paper. Stop about one inch from the open sides.

Step 4: UNFOLD AND ROLL

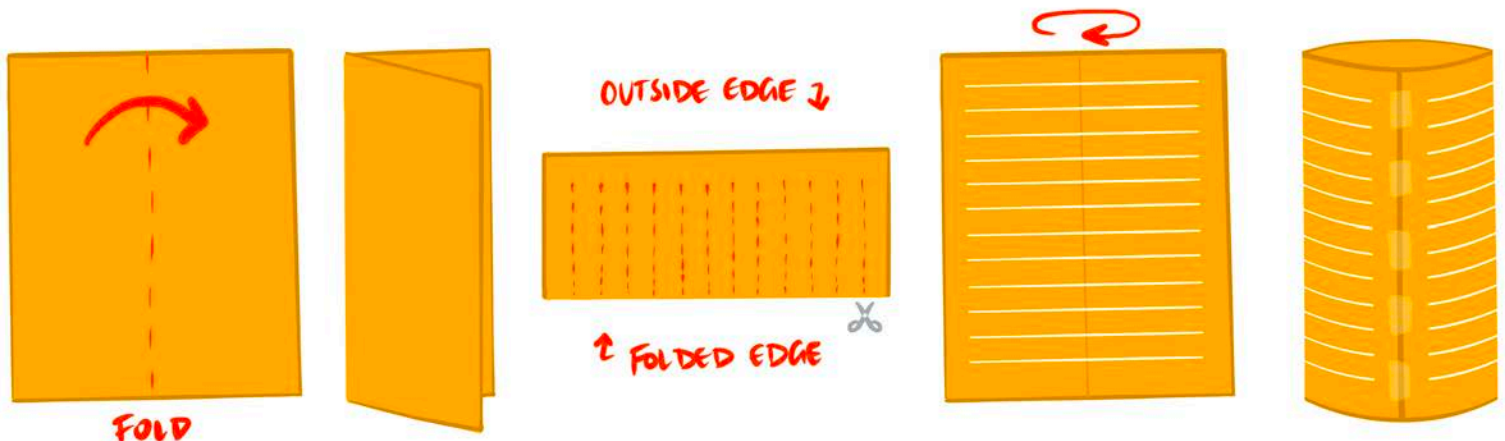
- Unfold your paper so it lies flat again.
- Roll the paper lengthwise into a cylinder shape. The slits will now create the lantern's cool design!
- Use tape or glue to attach the edges of the paper together and hold the shape.

Step 5: ADD HANDLE

- Cut a thin strip of paper (about one inch wide) for the handle.
- Glue or tape the handle to the top of your lantern.

Step 6: ADD LIGHT (optional)

- If you have a battery-operated tea light, place it inside your lantern to make it glow.
 - Tape strips to the bottom of the lantern in a star-like fashion to fasten the tea light to.
 - Tape the tea light to the bottom of the lantern.
- You can also punch holes at the top and add a string to hang your lantern if you want!





Practice

Name _____ Date _____



Instructions: Show what you know!

1) What person is the article written in? Do you think the author has attended an Autumn Moon Festival celebration? Explain. (Point of view)

2) How do the images help explain the content? (Text feature)

3) In paragraph 2, the author uses the word *reflection*. What is the meaning of reflection? (Vocabulary)

4) Which traditional foods are made during Tsukimi? Where did you find the information? (Comprehension)

5) How can people connect to one another during the festival? (Comprehension)



Practice

Name _____ Date _____



6) Why do people float lanterns on the water or send them in the air during the festival? (Inference)

7) What does *Tsukimi* mean in Japanese? (Close reading)

8) Choose the word the author would say **least** describes the Autumn Moon Festival. (Point of view)

- a. happiness b. reflections c. togetherness d. gratitude e. solitary

9) The author uses hyperbole in paragraph 5. What is it? (Figurative language)

10) What is the theme or central idea of this article? (Theme or central idea)



Practice

Name Answer Key Date _____



Instructions: Show what you know!

1) What person is the article written in? Do you think the author has attended an Autumn Moon Festival celebration? Explain. (Point of view)

The text is written in the third-person point of view. (Answers will vary.) Yes, because the author uses language that indicates the author has attended and enjoyed the festival (magical scene). [OR] No, the information could easily have been found on the internet.

2) How do the images help explain the content? (Text feature)

Images provide the reader with a visual that reinforces the text in the content. Most people who read the article probably have not attended the festival, and the images help them understand its uniqueness.

3) In paragraph 2, the author uses the word *reflection*. What is the meaning of reflection? (Vocabulary)

Reflection means when light bounces off a surface, like seeing yourself in a mirror. In this context, the moon has a reflection in the water.

4) Which traditional foods are made during Tsukimi? Where did you find the information? (Comprehension)

Some of the traditional foods people make during the festival include dango, sweet potatoes, and chestnuts. The information is in paragraph 4.

5) How can people connect to one another during the festival? (Comprehension)

They can watch the moon, release lanterns, and enjoy delicious food.



Practice

Name Answer Key Date _____



6) Why do people float lanterns on the water or send them in the air during the festival? (Inference)

People float lanterns on the water or send them into the air during the festival because they are symbols of hope and good wishes. People believe the lanterns carry their messages of gratitude or dreams to the moon or send them gently away, spreading light and happiness.

7) What does *Tsukimi* mean in Japanese? (Close reading)

Tsukimi means moon viewing.

8) Choose the word the author would say **least** describes the Autumn Moon Festival. (Point of view)

- a. happiness b. reflections c. togetherness d. gratitude e. **solitary**

9) The author uses hyperbole in paragraph 5. What is it? (Figurative language)

Some of the lanterns float so high, they almost touch the stars! Hyperbole involves exaggerated statements or claims not meant to be taken literally. In this case, saying the lanterns float so high they "almost touch the stars" is an exaggeration to emphasize how high the lanterns seem to go.

10) What is the theme or central idea of this article? (Theme or central idea)

The article's central theme is gratitude and togetherness. Tsukimi is a time for appreciating the beauty of nature, giving thanks for the harvest, and spending time with loved ones while celebrating cultural traditions that connect past and present.