



The Hidden Cost of Bright Colors

Read the passage and answer the questions. (CEFR B1–B2)

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1 For centuries, the powders thrown at Holi were made from plants that grew around villages: orange from palash flowers, yellow from turmeric, and green from henna leaves. Traditional Ayurvedic doctors are said to have recommended these natural ingredients. As the festival grew larger and more commercial, cheap industrial dyes replaced many natural colors.



2 A 2007 study in Delhi linked a synthetic dye called malachite green to eye irritation, and a 2009 study found that some commercial colors contained metal-based dyes that caused skin problems. Researchers also reported that pigments containing heavy metals can cause short-term water pollution after the festival. In response, many people now try to choose herbal colors made from flowers and plants.

3 At the same time, Holi has traveled far beyond South Asia. Holi-inspired music festivals and five-kilometer color runs are now held in many countries, and many runners have never heard of Holika or Prahlad. Some Hindus welcome this as a way to share their culture, while others worry that the bonfire, the prayers, and the idea of forgiveness are being forgotten. Both debates show a common challenge for traditional festivals: how to keep their joy and meaning while adapting to modern products and a global audience.

Comprehension

1. What is the main idea of the passage?

- (A) Holi faces the challenge of keeping its joy and meaning while it changes with modern products and global popularity.
- (B) Natural colors are always cheaper than industrial dyes.
- (C) Color runs are the most popular sport in the world.
- (D) Holi should be held only in India.

2. What did the 2007 study in Delhi find?

- (A) Most people in Delhi stopped celebrating Holi.
- (B) Herbal colors caused skin problems.
- (C) Turmeric polluted the rivers after Holi.
- (D) A synthetic dye called malachite green was linked to eye irritation.

3. According to the passage, which plant was used to make yellow powder?

- (A) Palash flowers.
- (B) Henna leaves.
- (C) Turmeric.
- (D) Indigo.

4. What can we infer from the fact that "many runners have never heard of Holika or Prahlad"?

- (A) The runners are all from India.
- (B) Many color runs focus on fun and do not teach the story behind Holi.
- (C) Holika and Prahlad are characters from a new movie.
- (D) The runners refuse to use colored powder.

5. In paragraph 1, the word "replaced" in "cheap industrial dyes replaced many natural colors" is closest in meaning to

- (A) protected
- (B) improved
- (C) took the place of
- (D) were mixed with

6. Why does the writer put the debate about dyes and the debate about global festivals together at the end?

- (A) To show that both are examples of the same challenge for traditional festivals.
- (B) To argue that color runs use the most dangerous dyes.
- (C) To recommend that people stop celebrating Holi.
- (D) To prove that Ayurvedic doctors invented color runs.



Vocabulary, Paraphrase & Summary

Match the words with the definitions. Then rewrite and summarize.

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|---------------|--|
| 1. commercial | a. damage to air, water, or land caused by harmful things |
| 2. industrial | b. (as in Holi-inspired) given its main idea by something else |
| 3. ingredient | c. to change in order to fit a new situation |
| 4. synthetic | d. connected with buying and selling things to make money |
| 5. irritation | e. made or used in factories, often in large amounts |
| 6. pollution | f. one of the things that are used to make something, such as food or medicine |
| 7. inspired | g. made by people using chemicals, not taken from nature |
| 8. adapt | h. a painful, red, or itchy feeling on a part of the body |

Paraphrase — say it in your own words

1. “As the festival grew larger and more commercial, cheap industrial dyes replaced many natural colors.”

Hint: Start with "When Holi became bigger" and use "people started to use".

2. “In response, many people now try to choose herbal colors made from flowers and plants.”

Hint: Start with "Because of these problems" and use "prefer".

3. “Some Hindus welcome this as a way to share their culture, while others worry that the bonfire, the prayers, and the idea of forgiveness are being forgotten.”

Hint: Split it into two sentences. Begin the second one with "But".

Summary

Summarize the passage in about 50 words.



Debate & Opinion Essay

Prepare for a debate. Then write your opinion (100–150 words).

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Motion: Holi-inspired events like color runs are good for Hindu culture.

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- Color runs and music festivals let people in many countries experience the joy of Holi, which can make them curious about its culture.
- Some Hindus welcome these events as a way to share their culture with the world.
- A festival that people around the world know and love is more likely to survive in the future.

Add your own reason:

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- Many runners have never heard of Holika or Prahlad, so the events can turn a religious festival into just a party.
- The bonfire, the prayers, and the idea of forgiveness may be forgotten when only the colors are copied.
- Companies can make money from a culture without giving anything back to the community it came from.

Add your own reason:

Opinion	<i>I believe / I think that ...</i>
Reason 1	<i>First, ... For example, ...</i>
Reason 2	<i>Second, ... In fact, ...</i>
Counter	<i>Some people say ... However, ...</i>
Conclusion	<i>In conclusion, ...</i>