



# Why Celebrate Surviving Childhood?

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

Class \_\_\_\_\_ No. \_\_\_\_\_ Name \_\_\_\_\_



- 1 Many rites of passage for young children around the world share a quiet background: for most of human history, a large share of children did not survive their early years. In Korea, the first birthday became a major event partly because reaching it was a real achievement. In Japan, the ages of three, five, and seven marked steps on a dangerous road, and families thanked the local gods at each one.
- 2 Today, child mortality in Japan is among the lowest in the world, yet Shichi-Go-San has not faded away. Instead, its meaning has shifted. For many families, the highlight is no longer the prayer but the photo session, the rented kimono, and a meal with grandparents. Some critics say the festival has become too commercial, while others argue that commercial support is exactly what spread it nationwide in the first place.
- 3 Perhaps the real question is not whether the custom is traditional enough, but what each generation chooses to be grateful for. A ritual can survive for centuries precisely because people keep reinventing it.

## Comprehension

### 1. What is the main idea of the passage?

- (A) Shichi-Go-San should go back to being only a prayer at a shrine.
- (B) Rituals for young children began because many children died young, and Shichi-Go-San survives today by changing its meaning.
- (C) Japan has the highest child mortality in the world.
- (D) Korean first-birthday parties are older than Shichi-Go-San.

### 2. According to the passage, why did the first birthday become a major event in Korea?

- (A) Because babies chose their future jobs on that day.
- (B) Because it was a national holiday.
- (C) Because reaching that age was a real achievement.
- (D) Because grandparents wanted to take photos.

### 3. For many families today, what is the highlight of Shichi-Go-San?

- (A) The prayer to the local gods
- (B) Learning to count in the old way
- (C) Buying a new house for the child
- (D) The photo session, the rented kimono, and a meal with grandparents

### 4. What can be inferred about the writer's view of commercial support?

- (A) The writer does not simply reject it, because changes like these can help a ritual survive.
- (B) The writer thinks photo studios have destroyed the festival.
- (C) The writer believes only rich families should celebrate.
- (D) The writer wants the government to ban rented kimono.

### 5. In paragraph 2, the phrase "faded away" is closest in meaning to

- (A) become more colorful
- (B) slowly disappeared
- (C) moved to another country
- (D) become more expensive

### 6. Why does the writer begin the passage by talking about how many children did not survive?

- (A) To make readers feel sad about the past.
- (B) To prove that Korea's custom is better than Japan's.
- (C) To explain the original reason why families held these celebrations.
- (D) To argue that modern medicine is not important.



# Vocabulary, Paraphrase & Summary

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

Class \_\_\_\_\_ No. \_\_\_\_\_ Name \_\_\_\_\_

- |                    |                                                                    |
|--------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. rite of passage | a. connected with buying and selling things to make money          |
| 2. survive         | b. feeling or showing thanks for something                         |
| 3. achievement     | c. to change something so much that it seems new                   |
| 4. mortality       | d. a ceremony that marks an important change in a person's life    |
| 5. shift           | e. to continue to live or exist, especially after a difficult time |
| 6. commercial      | f. something good that you succeed in doing, usually with effort   |
| 7. grateful        | g. the number of deaths in a group of people in a certain period   |
| 8. reinvent        | h. to change from one position, idea, or situation to another      |

## Paraphrase — say it in your own words

1. “Today, child mortality in Japan is among the lowest in the world, yet Shichi-Go-San has not faded away.”

Hint: Start with "Although" and use "very few children die" and "is still celebrated".

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2. “For many families, the highlight is no longer the prayer but the photo session, the rented kimono, and a meal with grandparents.”

Hint: Use "the most important part" and "instead of".

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3. “A ritual can survive for centuries precisely because people keep reinventing it.”

Hint: Start with "The reason" and use "continue to change".

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## Summary

Summarize the passage in about 50 words.

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# Debate & Opinion Essay

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

Class \_\_\_\_\_ No. \_\_\_\_\_ Name \_\_\_\_\_

**Motion: Shichi-Go-San has become too commercial.**

## FOR 賛成

- For many families, the highlight is no longer the prayer but the photo session, so the original meaning of thanking the gods is getting weaker.
- Studio photos and rented kimono can cost a lot, and families may feel pressure to spend money to keep up with others.
- When companies advertise the event, they decide what a proper Shichi-Go-San looks like, and local customs disappear.

**Add your own reason:**

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## AGAINST 反対

- Commercial support is exactly what spread the festival nationwide, so business helped the tradition survive.
- Rented kimono let families who cannot buy expensive clothes join in, which makes the festival fairer.
- The heart of the festival is still the same: families are grateful that their children are growing up.

**Add your own reason:**

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