



One Story, Many Calendars

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

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1 Tanabata offers a vivid example of how a calendar reform can reshape a tradition. For centuries, the festival fell on the seventh day of the seventh lunar month, a summer night when the rainy season was usually over and a nearly half moon set before midnight. When Japan adopted the solar calendar in 1873, however, the date July 7 suddenly landed in the middle of the rainy season.



2 Communities responded in different ways. Some kept the new date, others moved the celebration one month later, and a few continued to follow the old lunar calendar. Since 2001, the National Astronomical Observatory of Japan has even published a traditional Tanabata date each year to encourage stargazing. Each choice reflects a balance between modern daily life and the sky that inspired the legend.

3 Meanwhile, the same legend lives on in China and Korea, where it is still observed by the lunar calendar. In China it has become a festival for couples, while in Korea rain on that day is welcomed as tears of joy. One story, in other words, can produce many different holidays.

Comprehension

1. What is the main idea of the passage?

- (A) Tanabata is the oldest festival in Asia.
- (B) Changes in the calendar and different cultures have turned one story into many different holidays.
- (C) Japan should go back to the lunar calendar.
- (D) It always rains on Tanabata in China.

2. Why did July 7 become a problem after 1873?

- (A) It fell in the middle of the rainy season.
- (B) It was too close to the New Year.
- (C) The government banned the festival.
- (D) The moon became too bright on that night.

3. Since 2001, what has the National Astronomical Observatory of Japan done?

- (A) It has moved Tanabata to August 7.
- (B) It has made Tanabata a national holiday.
- (C) It has published a traditional Tanabata date each year to encourage stargazing.
- (D) It has asked people to stop hanging wishes on bamboo.

4. What can we infer about Tanabata nights before 1873?

- (A) People could not see the stars because of the bright moon.
- (B) It was usually easier to see the stars than on July 7 today.
- (C) The festival was held in winter.
- (D) It always rained on that night.

5. In paragraph 1, the word "vivid" in "a vivid example" is closest in meaning to

- (A) dark
- (B) boring
- (C) very clear and easy to imagine
- (D) secret

6. Why does the writer mention China and Korea in the last paragraph?

- (A) To show that Japan copied its calendar from Korea.
- (B) To argue that Chinese couples should celebrate in Japan.
- (C) To explain why it rains in July.
- (D) To show that the same legend became different holidays in different countries.



Vocabulary, Paraphrase & Summary

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

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|--------------|--|
| 1. vivid | a. connected with the Moon |
| 2. reform | b. to start to use a new method, idea, or system |
| 3. lunar | c. the people who live in one area, such as a town or a neighborhood |
| 4. adopt | d. to make someone more likely to do something |
| 5. community | e. to give someone the idea for something |
| 6. encourage | f. to celebrate a holiday or follow a custom |
| 7. inspire | g. very clear and easy to see or imagine |
| 8. observe | h. a change made to improve a system or a rule |

Paraphrase — say it in your own words

1. “When Japan adopted the solar calendar in 1873, however, the date July 7 suddenly landed in the middle of the rainy season.”

Hint: Start with "After Japan started using" and use "came during".

2. “Each choice reflects a balance between modern daily life and the sky that inspired the legend.”

Hint: Use "When people choose a date, they think about both".

3. “One story, in other words, can produce many different holidays.”

Hint: Use "So" and "become".

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: Traditional festivals like Tanabata should follow the old lunar calendar.

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- On the old lunar date, the rainy season is usually over and the moon sets before midnight, so people can actually see the stars of the legend.
- China and Korea still observe the festival by the lunar calendar, which keeps it close to its original meaning.
- The National Astronomical Observatory already publishes a traditional Tanabata date each year, so it is easy to know the right day.

Add your own reason:

AGAINST 反対

- July 7 is easy to remember and fits school and work calendars, so more children can take part.
- The lunar date changes every year, which makes planning events and decorations harder for schools and shopping streets.
- Many towns, such as Sendai, have built famous festivals on new dates, and these are now traditions of their own.

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>