



Rosary school

Study sheet (13) grade 8

Reading comprehension

China Between Now and Then

The culture of China is quite unique and special. It contains wonderful and delightful arts and customs as well as very interesting ways of life. Yet, there is one aspect of Chinese Culture that truly sets it apart from other cultures and countries: the connected spirit between Old and New.

Chinese living and values have attracted much attention from all over the world in all aspects.

Western societies may find the Chinese living style of the East quite peculiar and difficult to understand, but that hasn't stopped anyone from trying to experience and live this fascinating lifestyle. In study and pursuit to find out why the Chinese are the way they are, Chinese traditional clothing could always be examined. An outstanding characteristic of traditional Chinese clothing was not only the external expression of elegance, but also an internal symbolism. Each and every piece of traditional clothing communicated a vitality of its own. Variety and consistency in clothing were roughly established by the era of the Yellow Emperor and the Emperors Yao and Shun (about 4,500 years ago). Remains of woven silk and ancient ceramic figures further demonstrate the sophistication and refinement of clothing in the Shang Dynasty.



The Chang-pao costume is a one-piece garment extending from the shoulders all the way to the heels. Typical of this type of clothing were the wide and voluminous sleeves and a very loose fit. Tunic and trousers or tunic and skirt utilized a very minimum number of stitches for the amount of cloth used. Darker colors were favored over lighter ones in traditional formal Chinese clothing, while lighter colored clothing was worn more frequently by the common people for everyday and around the house use. The Chinese associated certain colors with specific seasons: green represented spring, red symbolized summer, white represented autumn, and black symbolized winter. The Chinese

are said to have a fully developed system of matching, coordinating, and contrasting colors and shades of light and dark in apparel.

Festivals

The Lantern Festival ends the Chinese New Year season. The Lantern Festival was first celebrated during the Han Dynasty. During this festival, everyone carries colorful lanterns and gathers in a public place to have a lantern fair. It is also a time to eat rice dumplings which symbolize family unity.

Today

Today, fashion designers use a mixture of traditional and modern ideas to create new fashions. The lifestyles of the Chinese people changed, but the importance of traditional festivals in their lives has not faded. Along with these major festivals, many other traditional festivals are observed in modern China. They demonstrate the importance of the place and show how the tradition and longing for past times occupy the life of the Chinese people. Besides the ethnic, geographic, historic, and linguistic ties that unite the Chinese, traditional festivals are one of the strongest bonds reinforcing the cultural identity of the Chinese.

Word	Meaning
Culture	The ideas, customs, skills, arts, and way of life of a certain people or group.
Unique	Being the only one of its kind; unlike anything else.
Special	Better, greater, or otherwise different from what is usual.
Contain	To have or hold something inside.
Wonderful	Very good, excellent, or inspiring delight.
Delightful	Causing great pleasure; charming.
Arts	The various creative activities, such as painting, music, and dance.
Customs	The traditional and widely accepted ways of behaving or doing things in a particular society.
Ways	The customs, habits, or behaviors of a person or group.
Aspect	A particular part, feature, or quality of something.
Truly	In a truthful, sincere, or genuine way.
Set apart	To make someone or something different from or better than others.
Outstanding	Exceptionally good; clearly noticeable.
Characteristic	A typical quality or feature that helps to identify, describe, or distinguish something.
Traditional	Following customs and beliefs that have been used for a long time.
External	Belonging to, located on, or coming from the outside.
Internal	Belonging to, located on, or coming from the inside.
Expression	The act of making your thoughts, feelings, etc., known by words, actions, or art.
Established	To set up something (e.g., a system, organization, rule) on a firm or permanent basis.
Tie	A connection or relationship that links people or things.
Values	A person's or group's principles or standards of behavior; what is important in life.
Attracted	Past tense of "attract": to cause someone to have interest or attention.
Attention	Notice, thought, or interest directed toward something.
Western societies	The nations and cultures of Europe and the Americas (the "West"), often characterized by specific historical and political influences.
Living style	The way a person or group lives, including their habits, possessions, and activities. (More commonly: Lifestyle)

East	The nations and cultures of East Asia (e.g., China, Japan, Korea), often characterized by specific historical and philosophical influences.
Peculiar	Strange or unusual; different from what is normal or expected.
Experience	Knowledge or skill gained from being involved in an event or activity over time; an event that affects you.
Fascinating	Extremely interesting and attractive.
Pursuit	The act of trying to achieve something, like a goal, hobby, or activity.
Examined	Past tense of "examine": to look at something closely and carefully to learn more about it.
Elegance	The quality of being graceful, stylish, and pleasing in appearance or manner.
Symbolism	The use of symbols (an object, action, etc.) to represent ideas or qualities.
Vitality	Physical or mental strength and energy; the state of being strong and active.
Variety	The quality of being different or diverse; a number of different kinds of things.
Consistency	The quality of always behaving or performing in the same way; uniformity.
Roughly	Approximately; not exactly.
Remains	To continue to exist or be left over after other parts have been removed or used.

Main Ideas:

1. Chinese lifestyle is a very difficult one.
2. Chinese culture kept the ties between now and then.
3. Chinese culture contains wonderful customs.
4. Western societies found that Chinese lifestyle is difficult.
5. Chinese traditional clothing has two characteristics: external (elegance) / internal (symbolism).

1. an (adj):

2. a word which means "include":

3. a verb in past simple:

4. a common noun:

5. a subjective pronoun:

6. an antonym:

7. a synonym:

8. a conjunction of contrast:

9. a proper noun:

10. a phrasal verb:

Find out from the text:

1. **An (adj):** abstract, outstanding, external, internal, traditional, modern

2. **A word which means "include":** contains

3. **A verb in past simple:** attracted, found, stopped, communicated, established, demonstrated, ended, celebrated, carried, gathered, changed, occupied, united
4. **A common noun:** culture, arts, customs, life, attention, lifestyle, clothing, sleeves, skirt, colors, people, seasons, festival, lanterns, designers, ideas, fashions, bonds
5. **A subjective pronoun:** It, That, They
6. **An antonym:** old / new, dark / light, traditional / modern
7. **A synonym:** unique / special, wonderful / delightful, peculiar / difficult, elegance / refinement, unity / bonds
8. **A conjunction of contrast:** but, yet
9. **A proper noun:** China, Yellow Emperor, Yao, Shun, Shang Dynasty, Han Dynasty, Chinese
10. **A phrasal verb:** sets apart

◆ **1. Antonyms (Opposite Words)**

Word	Antonym
Traditional	Modern
Darker	Lighter
Old	New
Internal	External

Unique	Common / Ordinary
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◆ 2. Synonyms (*Similar Meaning*)

Word	Synonym
Peculiar	Unusual / Strange
Elegant	Graceful / Refined
Vitality	Energy / Liveliness
Demonstrate	Show / Display
Sophistication	Refinement / Elegance
Apparel	Clothing / Attire
Symbolise	Represent / Stand for
Delightful	Pleasant / Charming

3. Past Tense Verbs

Verb (Base)	Past Tense
Contain	Contained
Attract	Attracted
Find	Found
Establish	Established
Celebrate	Celebrated
Carry	Carried
Gather	Gathered
Show	Showed

◆ 5. Adjectives

- | | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• unique• special• delightful• wonderful• colourful | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• historic• ethnic• geographic• linguistic• external | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• internal• ancient• traditional• major• public |
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◆ 6. *Adverbs*

- quite
- very
- fully
- roughly
- frequently
- easily
- traditionally

◆ 7. *Common Nouns*

- time
- society
- system
- people
- style
- lifestyle
- year
- festival
- clothing
- colour
- culture

◆ 8. *Proper Nouns*

- China
- Han Dynasty
- Shang Dynasty
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- Yellow Emperor
- Emperor Yao
- Emperor Shun

◆ 9. *Prepositions*

- between
- from
- over
- with
- in
- around
- by
- for
- during
- beside

◆ 10. *Conjunctions*

- and
- but
- or
- yet
- while
- although

◆ 11. Irregular verbs

- find / found
- is / was
- are / were
- have / had
- wear / wore / worn
- begin / began / begun
- eat / ate / eaten
- sing / sang / sung
- show / showed / shown

12. Find the meaning of the following...

- **Peculiar** - Strange, unusual, or difficult to understand.
- **Elegance** - Stylish in appearance or manner.
- **Era** - A long and distinct period of history.
- **Fade** – disappearing slowly
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Question 2

1. Why is the Chinese culture special?

The Chinese culture is special because it contains wonderful arts, delightful customs, and interesting ways of life. It has a unique connected spirit between its old traditions and new, modern life.

2. What distinguishes the Chinese culture?

The one aspect that truly distinguishes Chinese culture is the connected spirit between the Old and the New. Additionally, its traditional clothing, with its external elegance and internal symbolism, is an outstanding characteristic.

3. Why do the Chinese celebrate the Lantern festival?

The Chinese celebrate the Lantern Festival to mark the end of the Chinese New Year season. It is a time to carry colorful lanterns, gather in public for a lantern fair, and eat rice dumplings which symbolize family unity.

