

# Asian Cultures: Lanterns

## Time Needed

- 15- 30 minutes depending on skill level and lantern choice

## Skill/Grade Level

- The intention of this lesson is to be utilized for any grade level with modifications based on the needs of the audience.

## Core Area

- Leadership & Citizenship
- Communication & Expressive Arts

## Life Skills

- Giving  
Responsible Citizens
- Working  
Marketable Skills
- Being  
Self- Responsibility
- Relating  
Accepting Differences  
Social Skills
- Caring  
Sharing  
Empathy  
Concern for Others

## Educational Standards

- National 4-H Mission Mandates

## Core Curriculum

- Kentucky 4-H Leadership & International Programs

## Objectives

Through the Kentucky 4-H International Program participants will:

- **Experience** different cultures through geography, history, symbols, language, government, economy, agriculture, customs, religion, arts, food, and fun facts.
- **Share** about their culture while exploring different cultures.
- **Process** connections between different cultures.
- **Generalize** interdependencies of different cultures.
- **Apply** knowledge to work cooperatively with others from different cultures.

## Introduction to Content

According to the U.S. Department of Education International Strategy Report (2012-2016), in order for youth to succeed in the 21st century workplace, they must develop knowledge and understanding of other countries, cultures, languages and perspectives. The overall mission of 4-H is to provide opportunities for youth and adults to work together to create sustainable community change. This is accomplished within the use of three primary content areas, or mission mandates, - citizenship, healthy living, and science. The 4-H Citizenship Mandate places emphasis on young people being engaged and active members of their community, country, and world. Citizenship is the foundation needed to help youth gain a broader understanding of life.

## Curriculum

4-Hers will increase their global competencies by:

- Identifying their role in the global society,
- Investigating the interdependences of cultures,
- Appreciating the accomplishments of other cultures,
- Cooperatively work with others from varying cultures.

## Materials Needed

- Materials for Thai Lantern: cork sheet, ruler, ice cream cones (your choice on amount), natural flowers (your choice on amount), scissors, non-toxic/washable glue, small candle (optional)
- Materials for Taiwanese Lantern: eight popsicle sticks, piece of string about 12 inches long, a marker, tissue paper (any color), scissors, worksheet

Learn more at [www.kentucky4h.org](http://www.kentucky4h.org) or contact your county extension office.



# Asian Cultures: Lanterns



## Introduction

- What cultures can you find lanterns?
  - Lanterns are found in several cultures and symbolize different things.

## Background Information

- **Lanterns in Taiwan:**
  - Each year Taiwan hosts a world-renowned Lantern Festival. The Lantern Festival is celebrated annually on the 15th day of the first lunar month to mark the grand finale of the Chinese New Year celebrations. It is also the very first full moon day of the New Year, symbolizing the coming of the spring. People usually celebrate this festival by enjoying family dinner together, eating Yuanxiao (glutinous rice dumpling), carrying paper lanterns, and solving the riddles on the lanterns (travelking.com, 2020).
  - Pingxi Sky Lantern Festival is held every year during the Lantern Festival in Pingxi of New Taipei City. Sky Lanterns, also known as Kongming Lanterns are flying paper lanterns traditionally found in some Asian cultures. It was invented during the three kingdoms period by Zhu Ke-Liang in order to pass military information (travelking.com, 2020).
  - Smaller lanterns that are released into the sky carry colorful images of animals, birds, and important religious or historical figures. Often, children are allowed to handle and release such small lanterns associating the ceremony with the innocence and purity of children (Sen Nag, 2017).
  - The Pingxi Sky Lantern Festival is one of the most colorful activities of the Lantern Festival. Pingxi is a remote hillside town. In the past, those who worked or farmed in the mountains faced the risk of being robbed or killed, and they used lanterns to inform their families they were safe. The lanterns do not function as signals anymore but are now used as symbols of peace and good fortune (Taiwan.net, 2019).
  - There is a ritual to letting the lantern fly, the releasing of the lanterns is a wish. The color of the lanterns have different meanings: red (good fortune), pink (romance), peach-red (decisions and opportunities), orange (money), yellow (success in job/school), white (health), light green (growth), light blue (hoping something comes true), light purple (idealism) (TypingtoTaipei.com, 2015).
- **Lanterns in Thailand:**
  - There are two types of lanterns made in Thailand both used during Thailand's Lantern Festivals. The first is a khom loi made of rice paper and is released into the sky. The second a krathong, which is made from banana stock and leaves, created in a lotus shape and decorated with flowers, candles and incense. The krathong is cast down a body of water (Buder, 2020) loy means float, krathong is a special Thai floating. You may see "loi" or "loy" they mean the same.
  - The krathong lantern is used during Loi Krathong which was adapted from the Hindu festival, Deepavali, which celebrates the spiritual triumph of good over evil. Some mark the festival as a chance to pay homage to the Goddess of Water after a fruitful harvest season. It's also a festival for Thai Buddhists to give respect and thanks to the Buddha, as well as being the time to release past ill and welcome in future fortune for the new year ahead. Loi Krathong takes place on the day of the November full moon (lonelyplanet.com, 2019).
  - The khom loi lantern is made during the Yi Peng Festival. The idea behind this traditional festival stems from the belief that by sending the Buddha an offering into the sky, a person's spirit can be cleansed, and their misfortune can be healed. During the event, which occurs on the "full moon day" during the second month of the Lanna lunar calendar (the 12th month of the Thai lunar calendar) (Buder, 2020).

# Asian Cultures: Lanterns



## Instructions for the Thai Loy Krathong Lantern:

- 1) Traditionally, the krathong lantern is made from natural products because they are cast into a body of water. If you don't have the materials listed in the supplies section think of other natural items that would float, but also not harm the environment. There are several ways to create a krathong you can find photos online: <http://learnthaiwithmod.com/2015/11/10-different-types-of-krathongs-for-the-loi-krathong-festival/> You will need a sheet of cork, ice cream cones, cut flowers, and washable/non-toxic glue, scissors, a ruler and a small candle (optional). The number of cones and flowers is up to you! Remember it has to float! Look at page 5 of this lesson for ideas!
- 2) Take the cork sheet and cut a circle with a diameter of 7 inches.
- 3) Take the cork circle and ice cream cones. You will arrange the cones on the cork circle in whatever design you would like. You can make as many layers as you want of the ice cream cones. Think of it like a tiered cake!
- 4) Use washable, non-toxic glue to glue ice cream cones on the cork mat and to one another.
- 5) Next, take the fresh flowers and decorate your krathong. Think creatively. In Thai culture the krathong typically resembles a lotus flower which is a symbol of purity, faithfulness and spiritual awakening. This is because the lotus itself emerges from the mud and keeps growing toward the light and warmth, representing the act of rising above the sea of defilement while aspiring for enlightenment (learningthaistyle.com, 2018).
- 6) If you have the help of an adult, you can take a small candle and place in your krathong. Before you set your krathong to sail you will light the candle.
- 7) Cast your krathong down the body of water of your choice releasing past ills and thinking of the future with hope. You can also learn and sing the Loy Krathong song: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UP1N2kYZ-Gc>

## Instructions for the Taiwanese Kongming Lantern:

- 1) Gather the materials for this activity. You will need popsicle sticks, scissors, craft glue, tissue paper and string. To ensure safety, you will not send this lantern into the sky as they traditionally do in Taiwan. We will be creating one you can hang. Refer to the worksheet to assist in laying out the structure of the lantern.
- 2) Gather eight popsicle sticks of the same size.
- 3) You can use the worksheet to lay out a hexagon with six of the popsicle sticks. Do not glue the sticks to the worksheet, this is just a guide. Glue together by laying the ends on top of one another. Make sure the hexagon is symmetrical and keeps its shape!
- 4) Next, take the final two popsicle sticks. Following the worksheet, take the two remaining popsicle sticks and connect them across the center of the hexagon. This will now look like you have two parallelograms put together. Glue the two ends of the sticks together in the center of the hexagon and to the sides of the hexagon. This creates the frame of your lantern.
- 5) Following the diagram on the worksheet, tie the string in the corner where the two popsicle sticks meet. Diagram shows circles where string should be.

## Extended Learning

- Research other cultures where lanterns are used for celebrations or ceremonies.

## Civic Engagement

- Research more about relationships between the US, Thailand, and Taiwan governments.
- Learn about Thailand and Taiwan's history. Find them on a map!

## Communications

- Organize a pen pal program with the help of the 4-H International Program.
- Give a demonstration on how to make a lantern in the 4-H Communications Program.

## Future Readiness

- Join the Kentucky 4-H International Program to expand your understanding of your role in the global marketplace.

## Volunteering

- Ask your family to host an international delegate through Kentucky 4-H.

## Junior Mentor/Teen

- Plan and conduct a workshop with members where you show them how to make a lantern.

# Asian Cultures: Lanterns



## Instructions for the Taiwanese Kongming Lantern Continued:

- 6) Now take the tissue paper, color is your choice. Remember from the lesson that different colors mean different things! Cover both sides of your frame with the tissue paper and glue to popsicle sticks. You can choose to cut the tissue paper and have multiple colors if you'd like.
- 7) You can now decorate your lantern with images or words. You can put wishes on them or create riddles for others to solve.
- 8) Keep the lantern for good luck or give it as a gift to someone!

## Reflect and Apply

- 1) Think about your own culture, what are some festivals that you have and what do they mean to the people of your culture?
- 2) What is something you learned about the Taiwanese culture through this activity?
- 3) What is something you learned about the Thai culture through this activity?
- 4) What does this lesson make you wonder about other cultural celebrations and festivals?

## Supporting Projects/Events

Kentucky 4-H International Programs provide various experience for youth and families to open their home to the world:

- International Summer Short Term Program (Inbound to USA)
- International Summer Short Term Program (Outbound from USA)
- Academic Year Program (Inbound to USA)
- Kentucky 4-H International Service-Learning Program

## Expand Your Experience

- Learn more about Thailand: [https://youtu.be/OfOMEP\\_7AJM](https://youtu.be/OfOMEP_7AJM)
- Learn more about Taiwan: <https://youtu.be/KQTtwh2GRME>

## Authors

Rachel E. Noble, EdD, University of Kentucky, Extension Specialist for 4-H Youth Development  
Colin Wang, 4-H Coordinator, International 4-H Club Association of R.O.C. (Taiwan)  
Courtney Brock, MA, Lincoln County, Kentucky Extension Agent for 4-H Youth Development  
Shelley Meyer, MS, Pendleton County, Kentucky Extension Agent for 4-H Youth Development  
Kelsey Chadwick, MSSW, Graves County, Kentucky Extension Agent for 4-H Youth Development  
Paul Adkins, BA, Bullitt County, Kentucky Extension Agent for 4-H Youth Development  
Alexandria B. Popham, MS, Breckinridge County, Kentucky Extension Agent for 4-H Youth Development

# Asian Cultures: Lanterns



## References

Asia Highlights. (2020). Thailand lantern festival 2020 loy krathong yi peng. Retrieved: <https://www.asiahighlights.com/thailand/light-festivals.htm>

Buder, S. (2020). 6 lantern festivals that'll brighten your life. Retrieved: <https://www.afar.com/magazine/6-lantern-festivals-thatll-brighten-your-life>

Liu, M. (2018). A Taiwan village where wishes light up the night sky. Retrieved: <https://www.cnn.com/travel/article/taiwan-pingxi-lanterns/index.html>

McEaney, C. (2018). A brief history of the Taiwan lantern festival. Retrieved: <https://theculturetrip.com/asia/taiwan/articles/a-brief-history-of-the-taiwan-lantern-festival/>

Mod. (2015). 10 different types of krathongs for the loi kathrong festival. Retrieved: <http://learnthaiwithmod.com/2015/11/10-different-types-of-krathongs-for-the-loi-krathong-festival/>

Morgan, A. (2019). Krathong in Chiang Mai. Retrieved: <https://www.lonelyplanet.com/articles/celebrate-loi-krathong-chiang-mai>

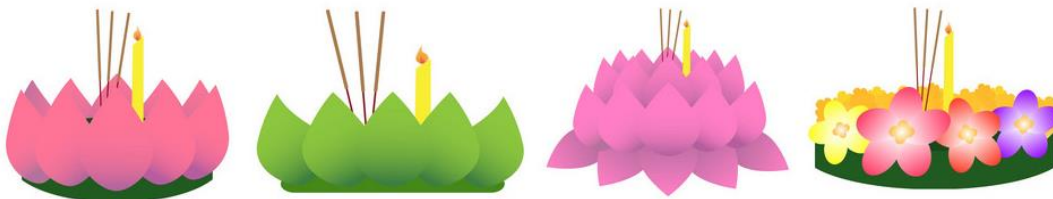
Sen, Nag. (2017). The Taiwan lantern festival- Taiwan Denghui. Retrieved: <https://www.worldatlas.com/articles/the-taiwan-lantern-festival-taiw-n-d-nghui.html>

Taiwan Festivals. (2020). Retrieved: <https://www.travelking.com.tw/eng/tourguide/taiwanfestivals/lantern.asp>

Taiwan Traditional Festivals. (2019). Retrieved: <https://eng.taiwan.net.tw/m1.aspx?sNo=0002020>

Thai Style. (2018). The lotus flower in Thailand. Retrieved: <https://learnthai.com/the-lotus-flower-in-thailand/>

Typing to Taipei. (2015). Pingxai lantern festival, Taiwan. Retrieved: <https://typingtotaipei.com/2015/04/18/pingxi-lantern-festival-epic-fail/>



Source: Vector Stock Image 27414897 and 10954765



## Kentucky 4-H International Program Taiwanese Kongming Lantern

Use this template to help guide you as you assemble your popsicle sticks to create a model of a lantern. Remember! This is not the exact lantern made during the Taiwan Lanter Festival, but made in honor of this Taiwanese tradition.

There is a ritual to letting the lantern fly, the releasing of the lanterns is a wish. The color of the lanterns have different meanings: **red (good fortune), pink (romance), peach-red (decisions and opportunities), orange (money), yellow (success in job/school), white (health), light green (growth), light blue (hoping something comes true), light purple (idealism)** (TypingtoTaipei.com, 2015).

