

# Traditions and Celebrations

## LEARNING TARGETS

Investigate family traditions and national celebrations that heighten the sense of identity.  
Develop further awareness of the Korean family and culture.

## PREPARATION

Display the quotes about names (pp. 73-83).

Have available some large photos of ceremonies and celebrations such as baptisms, weddings, Kwanzaa, etc.

*Hangul* worksheet

## GETTING STARTED

Refer to the quotes. Ask students to choose the two quotes that convey the strongest messages to them. Discuss the choices and reasons for the choices.

## DEVELOPING UNDERSTANDING

Explain that many societies have special ceremonies or celebrations when a child is born and named. Some religious groups have special dedication ceremonies. Families have parties to celebrate. Family celebrations and traditions develop the child's identity. Some celebrations involve entire communities or countries.

Ask the students about celebrations for naming that they have attended. What other traditions or celebrations do their families celebrate? Are there community or country celebrations that their families enjoy? Listing the examples on the board sparks extended participation.

Tell the students about the Korean tradition of celebrating the baby's first birthday. The celebration is called *Toi*. Special foods are served: white steamed rice cake for the child to have a pure and clean spirit, red bean cakes to ward off evil spirits, and stuffed rice cakes in half moon shapes for good things to eat through life, jujubes and fruits so that there will be many descendants and much prosperity, and noodles and thread for long life. During the celebration, a collection of things is placed on the table. The gifts include money, calligraphy brush and ink stone, and bow and arrow. It is thought that if the baby reaches for the brush and ink stone, he will be a scholar. If he reaches for the money, he will be rich. If he reaches for the bow and arrow, he will be courageous. Girl babies usually have colored paper, ruler and thread to symbolize the highly valued sewing skills.

## ACTIVELY ENGAGING THE LEARNER

Remind the students that Independence Day, July 4th, is the national holiday of the United States, marking our identity, from 1776, as a country independent of England. Tell the students that Koreans have a unique national holiday. It is Alphabet Day, celebrated on October 9th each year. *Hangul*, the Korean alphabet, is a unifying and defining element in Korean identity.

Explain that Korea's alphabet was created at the direction of one of their kings many years ago. The alphabet is called *Hangul*. (Show the *Hangul* alphabet.) During the Japanese occupation of Korea from 1910-1945, the use of *Hangul* was outlawed. The people were forbidden to speak Korean. In December, 1921, a small group of teachers in private schools organized the Korean Language Society. They stated their mission as "contributing to the education of our next generation by studying the principles of the Korean language." Today, Hangul Day celebrates the unique identity of the Korean people.

"Koreans all speak and write the same language, which has been a crucial factor in their strong national identity. Modern Korea has several different dialects, but they are similar enough that speakers do not have trouble understanding each other." ([Facts about Korea](#) published by Korean Information Services)

The Korean alphabet, called *Hangul*, was invented in 1446 by a group of scholars under the direction of King Sejong the Great (1418-50). Before the invention of *Hangul*, the Korean language was written in Chinese symbols. "Learning Chinese literature was so time-consuming that only a handful of privileged aristocrats were able to master it." (ibid.) King Sejong wanted an alphabet for people to write their language in their own way, and to educate people on Confucian ideals and advancements in agriculture and medicine. The Koreans celebrate their unique alphabet on Alphabet Day, October 9th.

*Hangul* is considered a very scientific writing system. It consists of 10 vowels and 14 consonants. "It is simple, but systematic and comprehensive at the same time. *Hangul* is easy to learn and print, which has greatly contributed to Korea's high literacy rate and advanced publication industry. It is also easily applicable to computer systems." (ibid.)

Demonstrate how to write names in *Hangul*. Distribute the *Hangul* worksheet and allow time for the students to practice writing their names in *Hangul*.

Conclude the lesson by having students choose one of the prompts for a journal entry.

Prompts:

Which quote makes the strongest statement about the importance of names?

Which quote is most meaningful to you and why?

How does the meaning of your name relate to who you are?

## ASSESSMENT

Evaluate the level of interest that the learner exhibited in the various topics of the lesson. Offer assistance or extension as needed.

## Map of East Asia



# HANGUL Worksheet

Vowels	ㅏ	ㅑ	ㅓ	ㅕ	ㅗ	ㅛ	ㅜ	ㅠ	ㅡ	ㅣ
	a	ya	ö	yö	o	yo	u	yu	ü	i
Consonants	ㄱ	ㄴ	ㄷ	ㄹ	ㅁ	ㅂ	ㅅ	ㅇ	ㅈ	ㅊ
	k,g	n	t,d	r,l	m	p,b	s	ng	ch,j	ch'
	ㅋ	ㅌ	ㅍ	ㅎ						
	k'	t'	p'	h						

Melissa: 메리사

Amanda: 아멘다

Sarah: 새라

Nick: 니크 or 닉

Mike: 마이크

Chris: 크리스

Marie: 머리

Maria: 마리아

Paul: 폴

David: 데이비드

Helen: 헬렌

Judy J. Harris: 쥬디 제이 해리스

Melissa M. Kaiser: 메리사 엠 카이저

Theresa K. Olson: 테레사 케이 올손