



CELEBRATIONS

A. READING

Before you read

● *Work in pairs. Look at the picture and discuss the questions.*

1. What time of the year is it?
2. What are the people in the picture doing?
3. What else do you see in the picture?



● **Work in pairs.** Tell your partner which of these activities you enjoy doing most at Tet. Are there any other things you like doing?

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| a. making <i>banh chung</i> | b. decorating the house |
| c. eating special Tet foods | d. going to the flower market |
| e. going to the pagoda | f. watching fireworks |
| g. receiving “lucky money” | h. visiting relatives and friends |

While you read


Read the text about Tet in Vietnam, and then do the tasks that follow.

Lunar New Year, or Tet, is Vietnam’s main holiday. It is the grandest and most important occasion in the year which falls sometime between 19th January and 20th February on the Western calendar. Tet marks the beginning of spring and, for agrarian people, the start of a new year.


Tet’s preparations and celebrations used to be spread over months, but nowadays the holiday is much shorter. A great deal of excitement still builds up well before Tet, however. Streets are decorated with coloured lights and red banners. Shops are full of goods. People are busy buying gifts, cleaning and decorating their houses and cooking traditional foods.

Homes are often decorated with plants and flowers at this time. Peach blossom is traditional at Tet in the North while apricot blossom is traditional in the South. The kumquat tree with its ripe deep orange fruits is popular throughout the country. One of Tet’s most special foods is *banh chung*, which is made from sticky rice, green beans and fatty pork. *Mut*, which is candied fruit such as sugared apples, plums or tomatoes, is also popular.


On the days of Tet everyone tries to be nice and polite to each other. People believe that what they do on the first day of the year will influence their luck during the whole year. Thus, only positive comments should be made. People visit other family members or friends, and they exchange New Year’s wishes. Children receive their “lucky money” inside red envelopes. Many people go to pagoda to pray for a happy year for themselves and their family. Both children and adults take part in games and various forms of entertainment. Tet is really a time of fun and festivals throughout the country.

 **Task 1.** Find what the following words mean in the text. (Use a dictionary when necessary.)

- | | |
|--------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. grand: _____ | 2. agrarian: _____ |
| 3. banner: _____ | 4. pray: _____ |
| 5. sugared apples: _____ | 6. excitement: _____ |

 **Task 2.** Decide whether the statements are true (T) or false (F).

- | | T | F |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Tet is always on 20 th February on the Western calendar. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. According to the text, for people anywhere in the world the beginning of spring is the start of a new year. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. <i>Tet</i> used to be longer than it is nowadays. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. According to the text, “lucky money” is given to everyone at Tet. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. Kumquat trees are popular both in the North and in the South of Vietnam. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. People try to be nice and polite to each other because they want to have good luck on New Year’s Day. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

 **Task 3.** Answer the following questions.


1. When is Tet holiday in Vietnam?
2. How long did Tet preparations and celebrations last in the past?
3. What do streets look like before Tet?
4. What do people often do to prepare for Tet?
5. What is *banh chung* made from?
6. What is *mut*?
7. What are some popular activities at Tet?

After you read

Work in groups. Tell each other about your last Tet holiday, focusing on the following main points:

- how you prepared for Tet
- how you decorated your house
- who you visited
- what special foods you ate
- what activities you enjoyed doing most during Tet

B. SPEAKING

 **Task 1.** Mai is talking with Anna, her new English friend, about *Tet* holiday in Vietnam. *Work in pairs.* Practise reading the dialogue.

Mai : Do you know that Tet holiday is next month?

Anna : What is Tet?

Mai : It's the time when Vietnamese people celebrate the beginning of spring. It's also the start of the lunar new year.


Anna : When is it exactly?

Mai : Well, this year it's on the 9th of February.

Anna : What do you usually do at Tet?


Mai : Well, we eat a lot of special foods, we dress up and visit friends and relatives, and we also play some traditional games.

Ann : Oh, that sounds really interesting.

 **Task 2.** Below are some popular holidays and celebrations in Vietnam and in the world. *Work in pairs.* Match the holidays with their main purpose and activities.



Holiday/Celebration	Its main purpose	Its activities
1. <i>Thanksgiving</i> (third Thursday in November)	a. People express their love to each other.	A. They give chocolates, flowers or gifts to the people they love.
2. <i>Valentine's Day</i> (14 th February)	b. People celebrate the largest full moon in the year.	B. Children wear masks, parade in the street, have parties with special cakes and lots of fruits, etc.
3. <i>Mid-Autumn Festival</i> (15 th day of the 8 th lunar month)	c. People celebrate the harvest.	C. Family members get together. They prepare a large meal with roast turkey.

 **Task 3. Work in pairs.** Ask and answer about the holidays above, using the dialogue in Task 1 as the model.

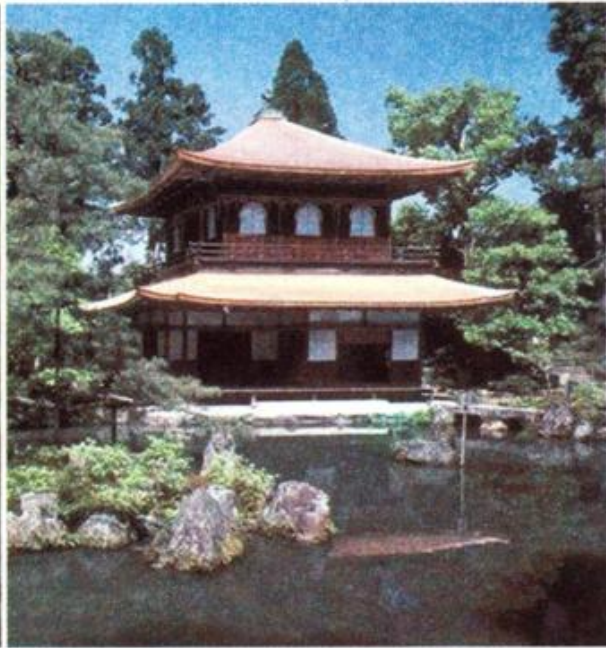
C. LISTENING

Before you listen

● **Work in pairs.** Guess which of the following activities the Japanese often do on their New Year's Days.

- exchanging gifts and cards
- giving/receiving lucky money
- decorating the house with peach flowers
- going to the pagoda
- wearing kimonos or special dress
- visiting friends

What other things do you think the Japanese also do at the New Year?



• *Listen and repeat.*

similarities

housewives

longevity

constancy


kimono

shrine


pine trees

represent

While you listen

 **Task 1.** You will hear two people talking about how the New Year is celebrated in Japan. Listen and tick (✓) the things you hear.

- ☐ 1. They put on special clothes.
- ☐ 2. Everyone cleans the house.
- ☐ 3. Bells ring 108 times.
- ☐ 4. Housewives prepare special foods.
- ☐ 5. They decorate their houses with kumquat trees.
- ☐ 6. They go to a shrine.
- ☐ 7. They give each other “lucky money”.
- ☐ 8. They drink rice wine.
- ☐ 9. They play cards.
- ☐ 10. They watch television.
- ☐ 11. They eat a special meal.

 **Task 2.** Listen again and answer the following questions.

1. Why do the Japanese do a big clean up before the New Year comes?
2. Where do the Japanese hear the bells from?
3. What do the Japanese often wear when they go to visit their shrines?
4. Do the Japanese often celebrate the New Year with their friends?

After you listen

Work in pairs. Compare the following aspects of the Vietnamese New Year with those of the Japanese one.

- | | |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------|
| ● preparations | ● foods and clothes |
| ● activities on New Year's Eve | ● people to celebrate with |

D. WRITING

Describing a celebration

Write a description of one of the popular celebrations in Vietnam (e.g. Mid-Autumn Festival, National Independence Day, Teachers' Day, Women's Day, etc.). Your description should include the following main points:

- name of the festival
- time of the festival
- purpose of the festival
- main activities of the festival
- your feeling about the festival (whether you like it or not and the reason(s))



E. LANGUAGE FOCUS

● **Pronunciation:** / fl / – / fr / – / θr /

● **Grammar and vocabulary:**

1. Pronouns *one(s)*, *someone*, *no one*, *anyone*, *everyone*

2. Vocabulary about holidays and celebrations

Pronunciation

● *Listen and repeat.*

/ fl /	/ fr /	/ θr /
fly	fry	thrive
flower	frozen	threaten
flu	fruit	through
overflow	afraid	overthrow

● *Practise reading aloud this dialogue.*

A: Don't throw these little flags onto the floor, Fred.

B: Oh, I'm sorry, Florrie. I'll pick them up.

A: That's all right, Fred. And are you hungry? Dinner's ready.

B: Oh, good! What shall we have for dinner today, Florrie?

A: We'll have three dishes: French fries, fried fish and cauliflower.

B: Good! I like all three of them. What about dessert?

A: I've made a fruit cake. But first, have some fruit juice.

It's good for your throat and keeps away the flu.

B: Thanks, Florrie.

Grammar and vocabulary

Exercise 1. Complete the sentences, using *someone*, *anyone*, *no one*, or *everyone*. Use each word twice.

Example:

_____ likes snakes, do they?

No one likes snakes, do they?

1. I don't think _____ likes the film. It's so boring.
2. _____ phoned while you were out, but they didn't leave a message.
3. Does _____ mind if I eat first?
4. There's _____ at the door. Can you go and see who it is?
5. He didn't come to class for three days, and _____ knows where he is.
6. Can we start now? Has _____ arrived?
7. Everyone said they would attend the party, but _____ turned up.

Exercise 2. Rewrite the sentences, using the pronoun **one(s)**.

Example:

The Tet tree (cây nêu) is there to attract good spirits and ward off evil spirits.

– *The Tet tree (cây nêu) is there to attract good spirits and ward off evil ones.*

1. Of the three bags I like the blue bag.
2. Mai is making a fruit cake. Huong is making a fruit cake, too.
3. I like reading books, especially the books about the natural world.
4. I don't have a computer, and my father doesn't want me to have a computer.
5. They let me choose a pencil, and I took the red pencil.
6. There are several national celebrations in Vietnam, but perhaps the most meaningful celebration is Tet holiday.
7. We told each other both happy stories and sad stories about our lives.

Exercise 3. Use the words from the box to complete the following sentences.

traditional	excitement	polite	good luck
celebrating	grand	agrarian	gifts

Example:

_____ people, who live by farming, depend on the lunar calendar to manage their crops.

– ***Agrarian** people, who live by farming, depend on the lunar calendar to manage their crops.*

1. Before Tet, housewives are always busy cooking _____ foods.
2. The Prince's wedding was a very _____ occasion.
3. Christmas is also the time for people to give and receive _____.
4. Each nation has its own way of _____ the New Year.
5. On the first day of the New Year, people often try to be nice and _____.
6. People go to pagoda to pray for _____.
7. If you walk on the street before Tet, you'll find great _____ everywhere.