

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Describe the different ways water is used in rituals during Songkran.**



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Write a description of **Songkran** festival. Try to answer the questions below in your description.

**What time of year is the festival held?**

**What sort of activities and rituals do Buddhists do during Songkran?**

**Why is water such an important part of the festival?**

**What does water remind Buddhists of?**




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Making merit is an important ritual for Buddhists during Songkran. As well as making merit during temple visits, statues of the Buddha are brought out onto the streets, where tourists and people passing by can stop to pay their respects.



### You will need:

A statue of the Buddha. If you do not have one, you can make a Stupa using pebbles. Stupas like this represent the Buddha in the seated position, meditating.



A large bowl of water and a smaller bowl or jug for pouring water over the statue of the Buddha.

### Optional:

Flowers, petals, perfume. Children could choose items to add to their small bowl of water before making merit by 'washing' the Buddha.

Candles and incense. With supervision, children could place these by the Buddha statue and light them.

Books or printouts of Buddhist stories for children to sit and read. There are a number of freely available children's versions of the *Jataka Tales* available online.





Traditionally, boat races are held on rivers across Thailand during Songkran. If you have space available, children could make boats as directed below, or using whatever materials you have available.

## You will need:

Sheets of A4 paper (preferably in a range of colours).  
Some water to float the boats in.  
That's it!



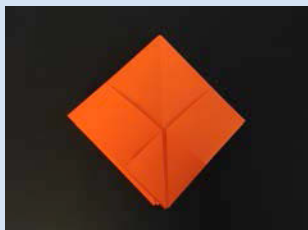
Fold the paper in half horizontally. Unfold it, make a vertical fold then unfold it and fold it back in half horizontally again.



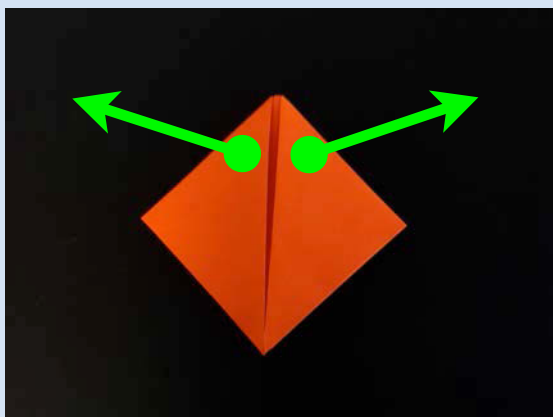
Fold the top corners down to the crease in the middle of the paper. Fold the bottom flap up over the triangles. Turn the paper over and repeat, so that it looks like a paper hat.



Fold down the little corners sticking out on each side. Open up your triangle by pulling the bottom folds apart. It will open up fully, making a diamond shape.



Fold up the bottom corners of the diamond to make a triangle shape. Open up the triangle again by pulling the bottom folds apart. This will make a smaller diamond shape.



Here's the tricky bit! Gently pinch the top folds of the diamond shape and pull them apart. You will need to pull it about a bit to make it look more like a boat!





As part of the celebrations during Songkran, thousands of people take part in water fights! Here are some ideas for fun, water-based activities. Don't worry - they don't all involve getting soaking wet!

### Team Fortresses

**Split children into 2-4 groups. Mark out a 'no-go' area that separates each group. Provide children with playground equipment or PE equipment such as cones and skipping ropes as well as some old sheets. Give children a few minutes to work in their teams to build a barrier or 'fortress' which they can hide behind.**

**When the allotted time is up, start the water fight! Children must not enter the no-go area or another team's area. We recommend including a rule that if a child raises their hand, you are not allowed to squirt them!**

N.B. Be sure to check any relevant school policies and undertake a risk assessment when planning this sort of activity.

### Shooting Gallery

**Set up a shooting gallery using cones and other lightweight targets on raised areas such as PE benches or a low wall.**

**Children could use water pistols or recycled squirty drinks bottles/washing up liquid bottles to try and knock down the targets.**

### Water Balloon Catch

**Give each pair of children a water balloon to play catch with. Gradually increase the distance.**

### Water Battleships

**Give pairs of children a bucket of water each and one sponge.**

**Partners should stand still at marked positions on opposite sides of a high net or rope strung between two posts.**

**Partners are to take turns soaking the sponge with water, then throwing it over the net. Points are scored for a direct hit, where the soaking sponge lands directly on their partner!**

### Water Balloon Volleyball

**Split children into two teams. Give each team an old sheet.**

**Teams must work together to throw a water balloon over a high net so that it bursts on the floor on the opposing team's side of the playing area.**

**If the opposing team catch the water balloon using their sheet, it is their turn to serve, and play continues.**

**Increase the difficulty by using smaller sheets or more full water balloons!**

## Buddhist Festivals: Songkran

Describe your favourite Songkran activity:

How does it relate to the teachings of Buddha?

What's stuck with you? Write two things you have learned about Buddhism and Buddhist festivals.

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