

PAINTING PAPER LANTERNS

Introduction: The Red Lantern is a story about a girl named Annie who spends the day helping Gung Gung, her grandfather, at his shop in Chinatown. Unwittingly, she meets the Jade Emperor's daughter who tells Annie all about the origins of the lantern festival, a celebration that is part of modern Chinese New Year. The Jade Emperor's daughter needs help solving three lantern riddles. Will Annie live up to the challenge and find the answers before the sun sets and fireworks light up the night sky? Or will the Jade Emperor's daughter be barred from going home for another year?

Interesting Facts about the Lantern Festival

1. There are three types of lanterns: hanging (Chinese New Year Festival), flying (Autumn Festival) or floating (Dragon Boat Festival)
2. Began over 2000 years ago
3. It is part of Chinese New Year celebrations / Spring Festival which lasts 2 weeks
4. Occasion for big family reunions, like Thanksgiving in America
5. The Lantern Festival is celebrated on the last day of the Spring Festival = Chinese New Year, during the first FULL MOON of the New Year.
6. Solving lantern riddles is one of the most popular activities of the Lantern Festival
7. Favorite dessert to eat is Tang-yuan, also called Yuan Xiao, consisting of sweet, round, glutinous rice balls: symbolizing the full moon and family unity
8. There are street performances like lion and dragon dances, stilt walkers, and acrobats
9. Red lanterns are hung in the streets, malls, and homes, symbolizing hope and good luck

Supplies: white 8"-10" white paper lanterns (available on Amazon or at Michael's); black watercolor paint; bamboo paint brushes; pink, red, purple, white finger paint / non-toxic acrylic paint; q-tips; paper plates; paper towels; water buckets

Preparation: hand out all materials to students

Project:

1. Using the bamboo brushes and black watercolor paint, paint plum blossom branches on your white paper lantern – *both sides*
2. Using your fingers or q-tips, dab plum blossoms onto your branches; in red, pink, purple and white
3. When dry, unfold lantern

OPTIONAL - Write a lantern riddle and hang it from your lantern

