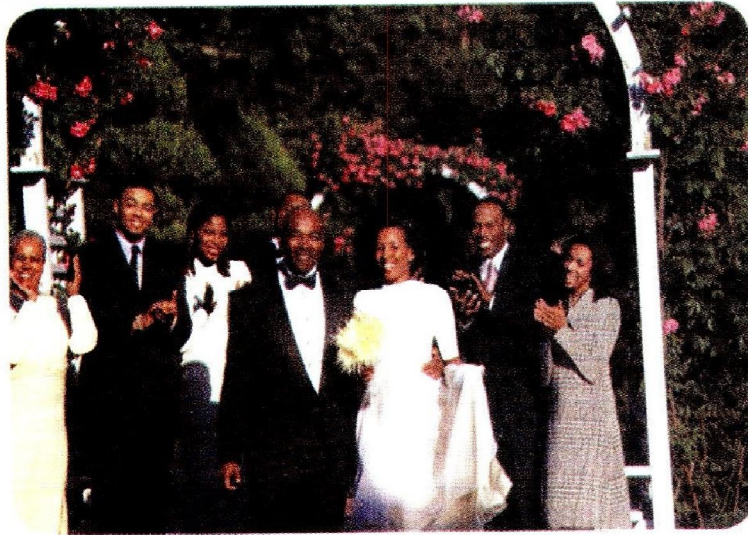


Celebrations Around the World

UNIT
5



Getting Ready

Discuss the following questions with a partner.

- 1 What is happening in the pictures above? What events are they celebrating?
- 2 How do people in your country or culture celebrate these events?
- 3 What is your favorite cultural celebration? Explain your answer.

Before You Read

Wedding Quiz

A Answer the following questions about weddings.

- 1 The word *bride* comes from the Old English word for _____.
 a wife b love c cook
- 2 In European cultures, the man traditionally proposes to the woman _____.
 a on both knees b on one knee c standing up
- 3 The custom of having a best man began in Germany. He originally helped the groom _____.
 a buy the wedding ring and get dressed
 b choose a bride from women in the village
 c capture his bride from another village
- 4 Which metal is traditionally very important in Indian weddings?
 a gold b silver c bronze
- 5 Which of these expressions means "to get married"?
 a tie the knot b kick the bucket c buy the farm

B Discuss your answers with a partner. Then check your answers at the bottom of page 81.

Reading Skill

Using Subheadings to
Predict Content

Sometimes reading passages are divided into paragraphs or sections that have subheadings. We can use our existing knowledge of the topic and these subheadings to predict some of the ideas that may be in the reading.

A Look at the article on the next page. Read only the title and the four subheadings. Fill in the chart below with your predictions on what will be in each paragraph.

Subheading	Ideas
The Wedding Dress	
The Rings	
Flowers	
Gifts	

B Skim each of the four main paragraphs. Are any of your ideas in the chart the same as the ideas in the article?

C Now read the entire passage carefully. Then answer the questions on page 83.

Wedding Customs

Marriage is a part of nearly every culture in the world, but marriage traditions vary greatly from place to place.

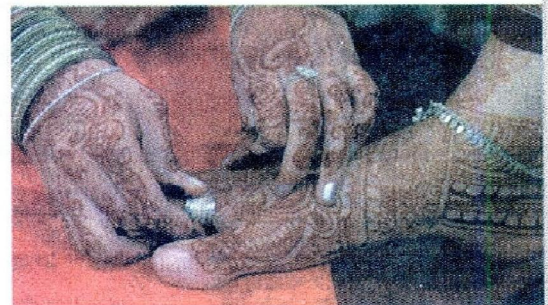
The Wedding Dress

- 5 In many countries, it is **customary** for the bride to wear a white dress as a symbol of her innocence. The tradition of wearing a special white dress for the wedding ceremony started over 150 years ago in 1840, when Queen Victoria married in white. Before that, brides wore all sorts of colors (even black!) and most could not **afford** to buy a dress that they would only wear once. Modern brides are more fortunate: dresses are still white but are now available in a variety of styles and **fabrics**. Many women even have their dresses specially designed and tailored. Not all cultures celebrate with white, however. In certain Asian countries and in the Middle East, red and orange are considered symbols of joy and happiness. In Asia it is not uncommon for the bride and groom to change clothes several times as the ceremony progresses.



The Rings

- In many cultures, couples exchange rings, usually made of gold or silver, during the marriage ceremony. The circular shape of the ring is symbolic of the couple's **eternal** union. In Brazil, it is traditional to have the rings **engraved** with the bride's name on the groom's ring and **vice versa**. In the United States, England, Canada, and France, the wedding ring is usually worn on the third finger of the left hand because it was once believed that a vein ran directly from this finger to the heart. But wedding and engagement rings aren't always jewelry for the fingers. In traditional Hindu relationships, the man gives the woman a *bichiya*—a ring worn on the toe—as a symbol of their engagement.



The groom puts a *bichiya* on the bride's foot, which is decorated with henna (a natural and temporary dye).

Flowers

Flowers play an important role in most weddings. Roses are said to be the flowers of love, and because roses usually bloom in June (in the Northern Hemisphere¹), this has become the most popular month for weddings in many countries. Ivy is also used in wedding bouquets because in early Greek times it was thought to be a sign of everlasting love. The flower bouquets of some Middle Eastern brides contain Artemisia—a bitter herb—to symbolize that the marriage will survive both good times and bad. In Thai weddings, the mothers of the bride and groom lay flowers on the shoulders of the couple to bring happiness and luck to their marriage. Flower garlands² are also exchanged in addition to rings to represent the beauty of marriage and life. After the wedding ceremony, it is customary in many countries for the bride to throw her bouquet into a crowd of well-wishers, usually her single female friends. It is said that the person who catches the bouquet will be the next one to marry.



A bride prepares to toss her wedding bouquet to the waiting crowd.

Gifts

In Chinese cultures, wedding guests give gifts of money to the newlyweds in small red envelopes. Money is also an **appropriate** gift at Korean and Japanese weddings. Not all cultures, however, give money. In many Western countries such as the United Kingdom, wedding guests give the bride and groom household items that they may need for their new home. In Russia, rather than receiving gifts, the bride and groom provide gifts to their guests instead. In Scotland, a week before the wedding ceremony, the bride's mother may invite the guests to her house and show off all the wedding gifts received, unwrapped, each with a card that has the giver's name on it.

Today, many couples choose to **integrate** wedding traditions from different cultures around the world. With so many interesting practices to choose from, people can create the perfect occasion on their most special day.

¹ The **Northern Hemisphere** refers to the half of Earth that is north of the equator. North America and Europe are in this area.

² A **garland** is a string of flowers and leaves usually worn on the head or hung as decoration.

A Choose the correct answer for the following questions.

- 1 What changed soon after Queen Victoria's wedding?
 - a Women could buy wedding dresses in different fabrics.
 - b Women started wearing white wedding dresses.
 - c Women had their wedding dresses specially designed.
- 2 In most cultures, what does the wedding ring usually symbolize?
 - a joy and happiness
 - b wealth and luck
 - c everlasting love
- 3 In which culture do the bride and groom wear flowers on their shoulders?
 - a Greek
 - b Thai
 - c Middle Eastern
- 4 According to the passage, how are wedding traditions practiced nowadays?
 - a People pick and choose which traditions to use.
 - b People don't follow traditions anymore.
 - c People only follow the traditions of their own culture.

B Answer the following questions with information from the passage.

- 1 Why is the wedding ring worn on the third finger in some cultures?

- 2 Why is June a popular month for weddings to be held?

- 3 According to the passage, what happens to the single person who catches the bride's bouquet?

- 4 What is the difference between Asian and Western cultures when it comes to giving wedding gifts?

C Discuss the following questions with a partner.

- 1 What are some popular wedding customs in your country? What is the significance of these customs?
- 2 Do you think society places a lot of importance on marriage? How do younger generations view marriage, compared to older generations?

**Reading
Comprehension**
Check Your Understanding

Vocabulary Comprehension

Odd Word Out

A Circle the word or phrase that does not belong in each group.
The words in blue are from the passage.

- | | | | |
|---------------|-------------|-----------|-------------|
| 1 integrate | encounter | meet | bump into |
| 2 written | engraved | printed | conducted |
| 3 everlasting | extreme | eternal | unending |
| 4 shorts | jacket | skirt | fabric |
| 5 customary | normal | crazy | traditional |
| 6 afford | drive | spend | buy |
| 7 vice versa | opposite | different | regular |
| 8 impressive | appropriate | dramatic | powerful |

B Complete the following sentences with the words in blue from A.
You might have to change the form of the word.

- 1 I really like that handbag but I can't _____ it.
- 2 Many religions have a concept of _____ life after death.
- 3 You have to dress _____ when attending a formal event like a wedding.
- 4 People used to believe that the sun went around the Earth, instead of _____.
- 5 The government encourages immigrants to _____ with local people.
- 6 This necklace has my name _____ on it.
- 7 It's _____ in many Asian cultures to greet the oldest or most senior person first.
- 8 When you buy sportswear, be sure to get clothes with light and comfortable _____.

Motivational Tip: What do others say about reading? Have you seen anything recently in a newspaper or a magazine about the importance of good English? Who made the statement? Try to be aware of what leaders in your country say about the importance of English skills, which include reading. Part of many countries' development goals is to improve the reading skills of their population. How can you support those goals?

- A** Complete the chart with the noun, verb, and adjective forms of words you've seen in this chapter. Not every word will have all three. Look again at the reading to find related words, or use a dictionary to help you.

	Noun	Verb	Adjective
1	symbol		
2			decorative
3	custom		
4		progress	
5	choice		
6			integrated
7			popular

Vocabulary Skill

Word Families

When you learn a new word in English, it is helpful to learn words that are related to it. Learning the different parts of speech that form the word family can help you expand your vocabulary.

- B** Complete the following paragraph using the correct words from the chart in **A**. You might have to change the form of the word.

Wedding Symbols and Superstitions



What will bring good luck to the bride and groom on their wedding day? Different cultures have different beliefs, but nearly all do something to wish the couple a long and happy marriage. In Italy, it's (1) _____ for the wedding guests to tie a ribbon in front of the building where the couple will marry. This is a (2) _____ of the couple's bond of marriage. There is another tradition in which the bride gives guests "confetti," which can be in the form of rice, paper, nuts, or candy covered almonds. This represents fertility or the ability to have children. In Korea, ducks and geese are seen as faithful animals because they stay together for life, so people try to (3) _____ them into celebrations in some way. Many years ago, the groom would often give the bride's family a pair of geese; a modern Korean wedding ceremony may include (4) _____ such as hand-painted ducks. These are a (5) _____ of the couple's promise to stay together. In Japan, an old tradition is for the bride to be completely painted white, wearing a white kimono and heavy headpiece. However, many young couples (6) _____ not to continue this practice, so the (7) _____ of such traditions has declined.

UNIT 5

CHAPTER 2 Travel Diary: Yanshuei Fireworks Festival

Before You Read

Holiday Traditions

A Match the festivals in the box to the correct tradition. Write a–d.

a Cinco de Mayo b Ramadan c Diwali d Chinese New Year

- 1 _____ Mariachi bands play folk music at big celebrations.
- 2 _____ People give red envelopes with money in them.
- 3 _____ People fast (don't eat) from morning until night for one month.
- 4 _____ Little oil lamps are lit and placed around the house for up to five days.

B Discuss your answers in **A** with a partner, then answer the following questions.

- 1 Which countries celebrate the festivals above? Do you celebrate any of them?
- 2 What traditions are unique to celebrations in your country?

Reading Skill

Recognizing Sequence of Events

In reading passages which feature a personal account or story, events are usually organized sequentially, in the order that they happened, or as the writer experienced it. It is very important for us to understand which events come first, second, etc. Words like *when*, *later*, *now* can help you recognize the sequence of events.

A Read the following sentences from the passage on the next page. Without reading the passage, put the events in order from 1–6. Discuss your ideas with a partner.

	I suddenly realized that I needed the extra clothes, gloves and helmet to protect myself from the fireworks!
	Moments later, rockets were screaming, booming and popping in all directions.
	When we got home we left our clothes outside because they smelled of smoke.
1	Last night my old roommate Lin invited me to a fireworks festival in the city of Yanshuei.
	When we arrived in Yanshuei we saw many preparations being made for the festival.
	I was surprised when Lin gave me an old sweatshirt, gloves, a towel, and a motorcycle helmet.

B Circle the words in the sentences that helped you choose the order. Then skim the passage to check whether your answers in **A** are correct.

C Read the entire passage carefully. Then answer the questions on page 89.



Travel Diary: Yanshuei Fireworks Festival

By Michael Liu

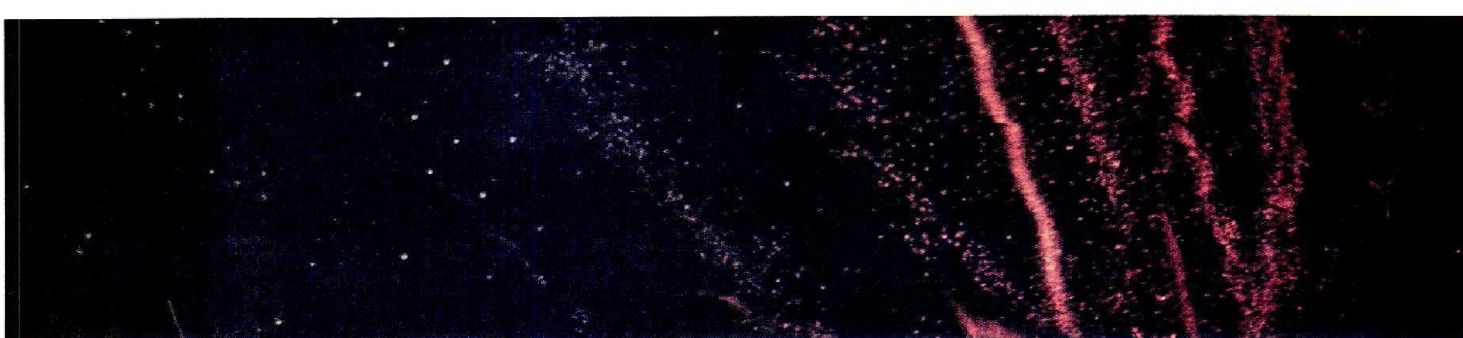
I just returned from the most amazing experience of my life at the Yanshuei Fireworks Festival!

After spending some time with family in Taipei celebrating Chinese New Year, I'm staying the weekend with friends in Tainan, in the south of Taiwan. Last night my old
5 roommate Lin invited me to a fireworks festival in the city of Yanshuei. Since we were going to a fireworks festival, I assumed that I should pack a blanket and maybe some snacks for a picnic while we watched the fireworks. Naturally, I was surprised when Lin gave me an old sweatshirt, gloves, a towel, and a motorcycle helmet. When I asked why I needed these old clothes he smiled and said, "You'll see."

10 According to **legend**, in the 17th century a terrible plague¹ had been making the people of Yanshuei ill for years and no one could find a cure. When some citizens suggested that perhaps there were evil spirits in the town, the people decided to ask the war god, Guan Yu, to come and **drive away** the evil spirits. The people impressed Guan Yu with a huge fireworks display and **in return**, he drove out the spirits that had been plaguing
15 the town. Today the fireworks festival is an annual event to honor and thank Guan Yu.

When we arrived in Yanshuei, we saw many preparations being made for the festival, which starts after sunset and goes on all night. Near the center of town, we were greeted by the sight of large walls with many holes and open boxes facing in all directions. Lin told me that the local word for these walls means "beehive," and that they would be filled with
20 fireworks for the celebration. I suddenly realized that I needed the extra clothes, gloves and helmet to protect myself from the fireworks! I looked around and noticed workers **stuffing** the beehives with fireworks of all kinds. Lin could see what I was thinking and he said that many people are injured by fireworks at this festival every year. I soon saw that

¹ A **plague** is a serious disease that spreads easily.



a few participants wear very little protection from the fireworks and receive many burns to the skin. 25

Nevertheless, we went to main site where the fireworks would be lit. A group of people were **worshipping** a statue of Guan Yu in front of a small beehive. After they sang a prayer, they took the statue away and the crowd pushed forward. Lin said, "Put on your helmet and hop up and down a little when it starts." His advice was confusing, but when a man started to light the beehive everyone started hopping, so I joined in. 35

Moments later, rockets were screaming, booming and popping in all directions. Fireworks **collided** with my helmet and bounced off my body. I closed my eyes and all I could smell was smoke from the **explosions**. It was over in a few seconds, but it felt much longer. I realized that the hopping was to shake off any fireworks that might get stuck and burn

40 you. My heart was racing² and I could feel a big smile on my face as I caught my breath and brushed myself off. That beehive was the first of many and each one seemed more amazing than the last.
45 Now I understood the name "beehive"—the sound of the fireworks became a constant buzzing in my ears.

When we got home we changed and left our clothes outside because they
50 smelled of smoke. Each of us had small burns and cuts from being hit with so many fireworks, but as we sat around the table eating a late dinner, we all felt we'd just had a great adventure.



² When your heart **races**, it beats very fast.

- A** Read the following sentences. Check (✓) whether they are true (T) or false (F).

	T	F
1 Michael and Lin are old friends.		
2 Michael was expecting a pleasant time watching fireworks.		
3 Guan Yu was an evil spirit that plagued Yanshuei.		
4 People say prayers before the fireworks are lit.		
5 People hop up and down to avoid the fireworks on the ground.		
6 People are not allowed to attend the festival if they don't wear protective clothing.		
7 The explosions from the beehive only lasted a few seconds.		
8 Michael and Lin were not injured at all by the fireworks.		

- B** Answer the following questions with information from the passage.

- 1 How did Michael's idea of a fireworks festival differ from Lin's?

- 2 According to the legend, why did the people of Yanshuei need Guan Yu's help?

- 3 What are two reasons that the locals call the walls "beehives"?

- 4 Did Michael enjoy the festival? Why do you think so?

- C** Discuss the following questions with a partner.

- 1 Fireworks are an important part of many Chinese rituals and events. What do you think these fireworks symbolize?
- 2 Have you ever participated in a celebration or tradition that might be unsafe? Would you? Why, or why not?

Reading Comprehension

Check Your Understanding

Critical Thinking

Vocabulary Comprehension

Definitions

A Match the words in the box to the correct definitions. Write a-h. The words are from the passage.

a legend	b drive away	c in return	d stuff (v.)
e nevertheless	f worship	g collide	h explosion

- _____ in exchange for
- _____ to smash together
- _____ to force to leave
- _____ a violent burst of energy
- _____ in contrast to
- _____ an old and traditional story
- _____ to put something inside something else
- _____ to show respect to a god, for example, by praying

B Complete the following sentences using the words from A. You might have to change the form of the word.

- I was in a hurry so I _____ my books in my bag.
- The _____ of Atlantis involves a wealthy city that sank to the bottom of the ocean.
- There was a small _____ when the student mixed the wrong chemicals together.
- My boss gave me two extra days off _____ for my working overtime.
- Even though the food at that restaurant is good, the service is bad enough to _____ customers.
- People are required to be quiet in places of _____ as a sign of respect.
- The driver lost control of the car and it _____ with a motorcycle.
- It rained all morning. _____, we went ahead with our football match.

Motivational Moment: More than the definition. After completing this vocabulary comprehension exercise, think about what it means to truly know a word. You need to know more than the definition to really know and understand a word. You know the contexts in which this word will appear, and you know what other words will be used near this word. The challenge is to think about more than just the definition of a word in order to improve your vocabulary skills.

- A** Match the words on the left with their definitions. You may use a dictionary to help you.

Homophones

- 1 _____ hire
- 2 _____ higher
- 3 _____ isle
- 4 _____ aisle
- 5 _____ overdue
- 6 _____ overdo
- 7 _____ band
- 8 _____ banned
- 9 _____ sore
- 10 _____ soar

Definitions

- a forbidden; prohibited
- b to do too much of something
- c a small island
- d further up than before
- e to give someone a job
- f to fly or rise high in the air
- g past an agreed certain date or time
- h a music group
- i painful
- j a space or passage between seats or shelves

Vocabulary Skill

Homophones

In this unit you read the words *sight* and *site*. These words sound exactly the same but have different meaning and spelling. These types of words are called *homophones*, and there are many in the English language.

- B** Complete the following sentences using the homophones from A.

- 1 Birds with the largest wingspan are normally able to _____ in the air for much longer.
- 2 When my dad got too busy with work, he had to _____ an assistant.
- 3 I forgot to pay the rent and now it's _____.
- 4 My legs are _____ from running in a marathon yesterday.
- 5 When I travel by air, I like to sit by the _____ and not the window.
- 6 My childhood dream was to play guitar in a pop _____.
- 7 I never work out at the gym for more than one hour. I don't want to _____ it.
- 8 From the ship, we could see a small _____ covered with trees.
- 9 Even though wages are rising, the cost of living is much _____ than before.
- 10 He's been _____ from entering the hotel as he caused so much trouble there last time.

- C** Write a homophone for each word in the chart below. Discuss your answers with a partner, then add one more to the chart.

Word	Homophone
night	
whether	
bare	
piece	

Real Life Skill

Accepting and Declining Invitations

People often send invitations to events by post, or nowadays by email. It is useful to know some of the words and phrases typically found in such invitations, especially when it refers to what you should be wearing or what time you should arrive. Certain expressions are also used to accept or decline invitations.

A Read the invitation below and answer the following questions.

You're invited to Tom and Amy's engagement party!

The Blue Moon

1453 South Mission Boulevard

Saturday, May 17, 7:00 P.M. – late

Cocktails and hors d'oeuvres will be served.

Dress code: Smart casual

RSVP: No later than May 1



- 1 Where is the party being held?
- 2 When should you arrive?
- 3 What will the food be like?
- 4 What kind of clothes should you wear? Give some examples.
- 5 Do you have to reply to let them know that you will attend the party?

B Read the two replies below. Who is going to the party? Who isn't? Underline the words and phrases that helped you decide.

May 1
Dear Tom and Amy,
Thanks for the invitation; the party sounds like a lot of fun. I'm afraid I won't be able to make it, though, as I'm going to be out of town that weekend. Congratulations on the wedding plans!
Toshi

April 25
Tom and Amy,
Thanks for inviting us to your party. Mark and I will definitely be there to celebrate with you. Looking forward to seeing both of you!
Rita

C Using the expressions you've learned and others that you know, write a reply accepting or declining Tom and Amy's invitation.

What do you think?

- 1 Describe your ideal wedding. What would it be like? Who would you invite? Where would it be held?
- 2 Have there been any interesting celebrity weddings lately? Which ones caught your attention?
- 3 Many cultures celebrate events based on myths and legends. Can you think of any? Why would people celebrate something that might not be true or real?