



India: Raksha Bandhan/ Rakhi

Pre-visit Activity: Background Reading

Raksha Bandhan, or simply Rakhi, is a tradition that began in the country of India. India, located on the continent of Asia, is the second most populated country in the world. It is also home to one of the oldest civilizations and oldest religions in the world. For these reasons, India has an interesting and diverse culture. Culture is the way of life shared by a group of people.

Rakhi is a celebration of the love between brothers and sisters. It is based on a Hindu legend that describes a woman tying a thread (rakhi) around her brother or husband's wrist to protect him from harm. The legend tells of Lord Indra prevailing in battle after he was empowered the thread with sacred words. Based on the legend, a day is now set aside in which siblings or friends express the lasting affection and loyalty for each other.

The Rakhi festival occurs on the full moon day of the Hindu month of Shraavan (usually August). However, the sister spends the days before Rakhi shopping to find the perfect threads for creating the bracelet. On the day of the festival, the siblings come together and the sister first makes a tilak mark on her brother's forehead, then ties the special bracelet around his wrist. In return, the brother promises to take care of his sister and gives her a Rakhi gift as a token of his love for her. Both then say prayers for the well-being of each other. Afterwards, they share food and enjoy a day of fun.

The rituals performed on Raksha Bandhan may differ from place to place, but they carry the same significance and importance throughout the world. The tradition can extend beyond the brother/sister relationship to include anyone that is important to the female.

Source: <http://www.globalroadwarrior.com/#mode=country®ionId=66&uri=country-content&nid=20.38&key=facts-holidays>



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Pre-visit Activity: Background Reading

Name: _____ Date: _____

Answer the questions based on the reading about Raksha Bandan.

1. The Rakhi festival was originally part of which religion?

2. What does the Rakhi bracelet symbolize for a sister and brother?

3. What does a brother promise his sister in exchange for the bracelet?

4. What month is the Rakhi festival celebrated?

5. Do you think it would be fun to celebrate Rakhi in America? Explain.





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Pre-visit Activity: Background Reading **KEY**

Answer the questions based on the reading about Raksha Bandan.

1. The Rakhi festival was originally part of which religion?

Hindu

2. What does the Rakhi bracelet symbolize for a sister and brother?

Affection, love, loyalty, protection

3. What does a brother promise his sister in exchange for the bracelet?

To take care of her

4. What month is the Rakhi festival celebrated?

August

5. Do you think it would be fun to celebrate Rakhi in America? Explain.

Answers will vary