

Culture of Waste



INTRODUCTION

The increasing commercialization of traditional festivals is pushing consumption to an unprecedented levels and is generating large amounts of waste in short time. The corporations through the power of advertising has made us big consumers by creating mindset of celebrations in a certain way. New festival days are been created and celebrated by the power of advertising in newer markets. The essence of having fun and appreciating the day for what it symbolizes is being lost.

Some of the impacts like air quality deterioration and noise pollution during the festival of Diwali is a well documented case study due to the use of firecrackers. The city of Bengaluru in India reported increase of 700 tonnes of excess garbage over the two days during festivals. In UK during Christmas of 2017, it is estimated that people will generate the equivalent of 108 million rolls of wrapping paper, 54 million platefuls of food waste and use 189 million batteries.

The lesson plans engages children on how the festivals are changing around the world and ways to make them sustainable.

Objective:

Students will be able to

- identify the growing commercialisation and pollution associated with festivities globally.
- analyze the problems associated with commercialisation and festivities.
- research and communicate finding of impacts of local festivities and positive action which has been taken to mitigate some of these impacts.
- take some of the actions to mitigate the negative impacts.
- share their articles with a YRE school located in another country.

YRE steps: Investigate, Research Solution, Report, Disseminate

Curriculum Linkage: Global citizenship

Time required/ Duration:

- **Classroom Session 1:** 45 minutes to introduce the concept of through class based reading, films and an interaction.
- **Group Assignment 1:** One week provided for home based assignments to undertake internet based search/ visits to organisations.
- **Classroom Session 2:** 45 minutes classroom based interaction and analysis time.
- **Group Assignment 2:** Five to six hours over a week for home based assignments for compiling and disseminating student articles.

Resources Required:

- Resource 1 (Environmental Impacts of festivities)
- Resource 2 (Green Festivities-ideas on how festivities could be made eco-friendly). This resource also has 2 video links which should be screened for students.



Activity

Classroom session 1

Recommended classroom setup is groups of 3-4 students, seated preferably in a circle to facilitate better interaction

- Initiate a background discussion to set the context for growing commercialisation associated with festivities.
- Divide the class into groups of 3-4 members.
- Guide students to read Resource 1 and 2 and watch the relevant videos listed in these resources. (20 minutes should be set aside for groups to read these resources).

Group Assignment 1

- Provide each group a maximum of 1 week to research on initiatives which have been taken in their city/ country/ region to mitigate the negative impacts of some of the festivities/celebrations.
- Guide students to collect appropriate information
 - largely through an internet based research
 - or by visits to organisations which run specific campaigns to address the problem of consumerism and festivities.

Classroom session 2

- Provide students 45 minutes of classroom interaction to discuss and analyse their finding prior to getting into the reporting process.

Group Assignment 2

As part of this groups take up the assignment of reporting in the form an article (7 working days should be provided to student groups to accomplish this task):

- Students should continue to work in groups and report 1 article per group.
 - The articles should be based on the analysis of their findings as a result of classroom interaction and internet search.
 - Students articles should present the problem and suggest solutions (laws, personal tips and others) for people to observe environment friendly celebrations.
 - Teachers should get student groups to share their articles to create awareness through a local newspaper, or share the same on the school social media page or share the same during an assembly in the school, etc.
 - The article developed should be shared with a YRE school in another country to get a their feedback and insight.
- For article: Refer Lesson Plan 1 from chapter “Learning to be an Environmental Journalist”

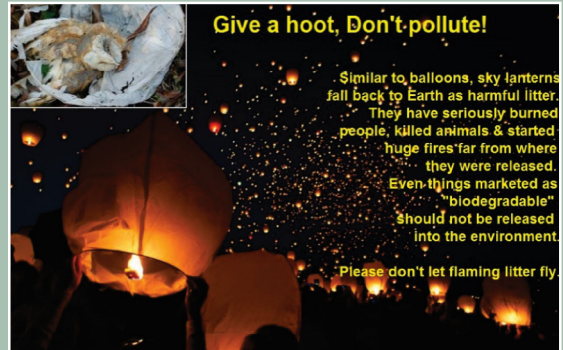
Resource 3

Environmental Impact of Festivities

Balloons and sky lanterns must be banned, says environmental group

Source: (<https://news.sky.com/story/balloons-and-sky-lanterns-must-be-banned-says-environmental-group-10811247>), Sky News, UK

Coastal and marine life is at risk from debris created by latex balloons, which takes years to break down and can harm wildlife.
09:06, UK, Thursday 23 March 2017



Source: <https://balloonsblow.org/flaming-litter/>

The MCS is hoping public support will help persuade further councils to back its drive to see all intentional balloon releases stopped, saying more than 80% remain intact when they fall to the ground.

Emma Cunningham, MCS pollution campaigns officer, said: "There's an awful lot of confusion over balloons, especially what they're made of and how they break down. "Some people believe that because latex is natural, balloons made of it are harmless once let go. This just isn't the case. Latex can last for up to four years in a marine environment."



Image: Khom Loy (lanterns) mass release at Yi Peng Festival in Chiang Mai, Thailand



Image: Balloons are considered an environmental hazard by campaigners

By Russell Hope, News Reporter

Campaigners are urging councils to ban the release of balloons and sky lanterns on their land after volunteers noticed a dramatic increase in litter on beaches.

The Marine Conservation Society's (MCS) annual Great British Beach Clean found the amount of latex or foil balloons and strings rose by 53% from 2015 to 2016.

The debris from balloons and sky lanterns can cause long-lasting harm to wildlife on land and in the water as animals can become entangled. More than 50 local authorities have joined the MCS's 'Don't Let Go' campaign, banning the release of both balloons and sky lanterns on land including parks, sports facilities and schools.

Some additional references

<https://www.theguardian.com/sustainable-business/2014/nov/13/religious-festivals-sustainable-kumbh-mela-hajj-christmas>

Sew Spooky at UCL - Halloween costumes that won't spook the planet

Source:

<http://www.ucl.ac.uk/greenucl/greenucl-events/sew-spooky>

Start: Oct 27, 2017 10:00 AM

End: Oct 27, 2017 04:00 PM

Location: North Cloisters

Bring your costumes back from the dead this Halloween. Drop in, take part in the Halloween costume swap and pick up some crafting tips. You can also book yourself onto a workshop: Bring your clothes back from the dead at:

- 11 - 12 noon
<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/bring-your-clothes-back-from-the-dead-sew-spooky-repair-and-sewing-skills-workshop-tickets-38663765363>
- 2 - 3pm
<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/bring-your-clothes-back-from-the-dead-sew-spooky-repair-and-sewing-skills-workshop-tickets-38663750318> Sew Spooky Costume Making Workshop:
- 12:30 - 1:30pm
<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/halloween-costume-making-workshop-sew-spooky-at-ucl-tickets-38663397262>

Why it's time for a #SewSpooky Halloween Millions of Halloween costumes end up in the bin every year. Scary, right! This event is part of the #SewSpooky campaign by Hubbub UK and North London Waste Authority to reduce textiles waste at Halloween. If you'd like to hear more about #SewSpooky and similar initiatives, visit www.hubbub.org.uk.

HALLOWEEN COSTUMES THAT SPOOK THE PLANET

In 2016, **33 million people** dressed up for Halloween...

On average Halloween costumes only get worn twice and **2 in 5 are only worn once**

...this year, **39 million people** plan to dress up for Halloween!

7 million costumes were thrown in the bin in 2016!

71% of us buy costumes from Supermarkets, online and fancy dress shops...

only 14% are home-made!

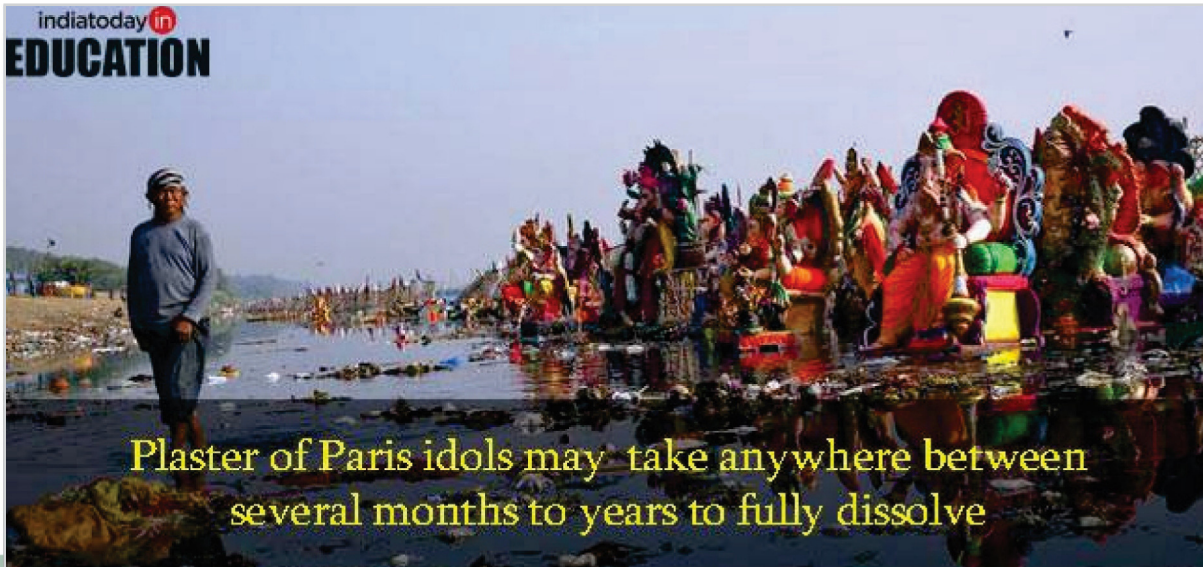
73% are happy to wear a loaned costume from a friend or relative

New costumes are costly! In the UK the average cost is £15.56, adding up to **£510m** a year spent on Halloween costumes

GET #SEWSPOOKY MAKE A DIY COSTUME

Logos for partners: Amazon, Camden, Hackney, Islington, nlwa, Hubbub.

Halloween Image source
<https://www.hubbub.org.uk/Event/get-sewspooky-make-a-diy-halloween-costume>



Plaster of Paris idols may take anywhere between several months to years to fully dissolve

Ganesh immersion and its impact on environment

Ganesh Chaturthi was celebrated all over India on September 5. The festival started and will now end with great pomp and fun as India is now gearing up for Ganesh Visarjan. The festival was celebrated for a period of 10 days and today, on the 10th and the last day, Ganesh idols will be immersed into rivers or lakes.

With the passion of celebrating this festival, we generally forget the hazardous impact of the immersion of idols on environment. The idol of Ganesh is generally made up of clay, Plaster of Paris (POP), plastic and cement. Toxic paints are also used in decorating the idol. After the immersion, the ingredients of the statue does not completely dissolve in water which then leads to environmental pollution.



It also reduces the oxygen level in the water, killing the fish and other aquatic organisms

Source: <http://indiatoday.intoday.in/education/story/ganesh-chaturthi/1/751364.html> IndiaToday.in
New Delhi, September 15, 2016 | UPDATED 13:13 IST

Resource 4

Green Festivities

(ideas on how festivities could be made eco-friendly)

Reproducing here a few line from a publication by Alliance of Religions and Conservation (ARC), September 2011, titled “ Green Guide for Hajj). Source http://www.arcworld.org/downloads/Green_Guide_for_Hajj.pdf

“The brief guide explains the values and principles of Islam to conserve the environment, before, during and after pilgrimage. The guide will enable you as a pilgrim (muh'rem) and 'steward of the earth' to prepare for and implement a “Green Hajj and Umraah” by

- Asking you to purchase environmentally-friendly products and services
- Encouraging you to reduce waste and consumption
- Advising you to live environmentally-friendly lifestyles after the pilgrimage”