

TITLE: Make a Chinese New Year Lantern

Grades: Elementary

TIME REQUIRED: 10- 15 Minutes

CONCEPT STATEMENT:

Decorating with paper lanterns is a cultural tradition in China.

OBJECTIVES:

1. Students will decorate a lantern with paint.
2. Students will understand that the use of lanterns is a cultural tradition in China.

STANDARDS OF LEARNING CORRELATIONS:

Foundation Blocks: Similarities and Differences

- a) Recognize ways in which people are alike and different.
- e) Participate in activities and traditions associated with different cultural heritages.

Visual Arts

Foundation Blocks: Visual Communication and Production

- b) Understand that the visual arts take many forms
- c) Use a variety of materials, textures, and tools for producing visual art.
- d) Develop and use fine motor skills necessary to produce two- and three- dimensional works of art.

Art History and Cultural Context

- a) Understand that all cultures have art that reflects their experiences and identity.
- c) Develop an appreciation for the various forms of visual arts.

Virginia Standards of Learning

3.11 The student will identify how works of art and craft reflect times, places, and cultures.

MATERIALS:

1. Rack for drying lanterns
2. Blank lanterns
3. Paint
4. Brushes
5. Water

6. Fish Decorations
7. Tulle (cut to size)
8. Staples
9. Staplers
10. Markers for names and riddles

#### VOCABULARY:

Lantern- a lamp with a transparent case protecting the flame or electric bulb, and typically having a handle by which it can be carried or hung.

Lunar New Year- refers to the first day of a secular, sacred or other year whose months are coordinated with the cycles of the moon.

Festival- a day or period of celebration, typically a religious commemoration.

Buddhist Monk- The definition of monk is a man in a religious order who lives a life of poverty, chastity and obedience. An example of a monk is a Buddhist man living with other Buddhists and following strict life rules.

#### OVERVIEW:

The Shangyuan Festival, or Lantern Festival is an event celebrated on the fifteenth day of the first month in the lunar calendar. Corresponding with the first full moon of the New Year, it marks the end of the Chinese Lunar New Year celebrations. During the festival, paper lanterns are hung and illuminated after dark, creating a beautiful nighttime scene. Among the many traditions associated with the Lantern Festival is the practice of writing riddles on paper strips and pasting them to lanterns. These riddles puzzle and delight festival participants.

Originally, Buddhist monks used lanterns in their worship of the Buddha. During the Eastern Han Dynasty (25-220), the Emperor Liu Zhuang ordered the citizens to light lanterns to worship the Buddha. This custom eventually became a big festival among all people.

Sources: Virginia Museum of Fine Arts Educator's Resource Guide Forbidden City: Imperial Treasures from the Palace Museum, Beijing.

Download a VMFA gallery map here:

[http://www.vmfa.state.va.us/Visit/Gallery\\_Maps/Gallery\\_Maps.aspx](http://www.vmfa.state.va.us/Visit/Gallery_Maps/Gallery_Maps.aspx)

Find these related works in the VMFA collection:

## ACTIVITY DIRECTIONS:

1. Select a lucky fish decoration and write your favorite riddle on the back (the side with no glitter).  
See examples for riddle ideas.
2. Tie the fish to the metal frame of a lantern. This will be the top.
3. Tie on a piece of red tulle to hang from the bottom.
4. Paint the lantern with designs in warm colors (red, yellow, and orange).
5. If you choose, you may write your name on the fish and leave it on the rack to dry.