

Springboard^{into} Comprehension

Identifying Detail Maui and the Fishhook

Main Idea I Need You and You Need Me

Sequencing The Fantastic Flying Machine

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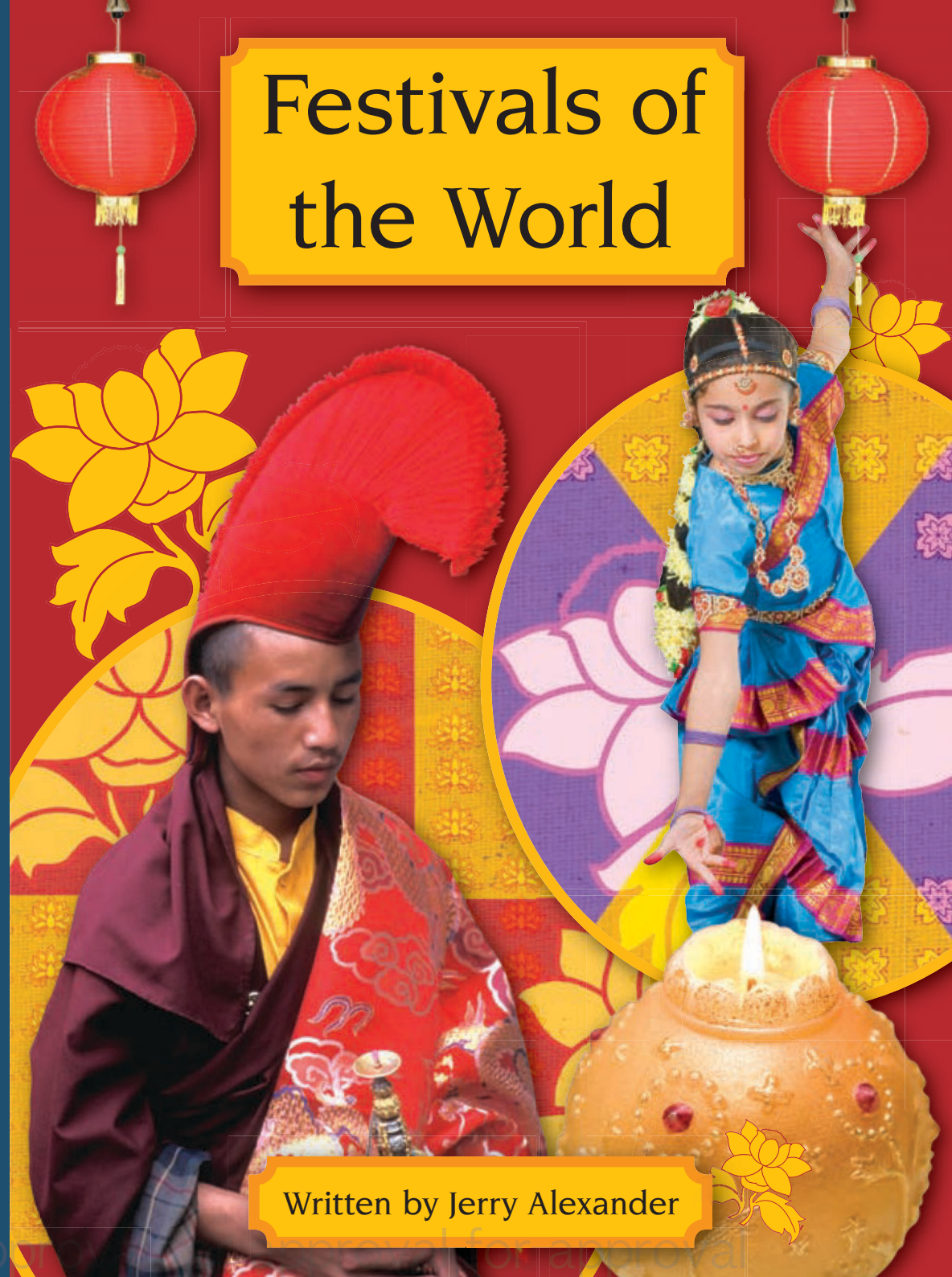
Compare and Contrast Festivals of the World

Fact and Opinion Great Explorations

Cause and Effect A Bad Day at Cherry Farm



Festivals of the World



Written by Jerry Alexander

Festivals of the World

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Introduction

Around the world, people have different festivals. One of these festivals is called *Diwali*. Another is called *Vesak*. In some ways, Diwali and Vesak are similar. They both take place on special days. They both have things that groups of people always do the same way, or **customs**. However, Diwali and Vesak do not have the same customs. The meaning of the two festivals is also different.

This man is cleaning a statue to prepare for Vesak.



This woman is lighting oil lamps to prepare for Diwali.

Different Places, Different Names

People celebrate Diwali and Vesak in different places, but both festivals began in India. They both began a long time ago. Now, however, they have spread to other countries as well.

Both festivals have different names in different places. In Singapore, Diwali is called *Deepavali*. In Nepal, it is called *Tihar*. Vesak is the name used in Sri Lanka and Malaysia. In India and Nepal, Vesak is called *Buddha Purnima*. In Indonesia, it is called *Waisak*. In China, it is called *Fo Dan*.

In some places, there are more people who celebrate Diwali than Vesak. In other places, there are more people who celebrate Vesak than Diwali.

Names for Diwali and Vesak



Diwali

Diwali comes from people's beliefs in their gods. It is a **religious festival**. Diwali is part of the Hindu religion. Hindu people hope that good things will happen to them in the year that follows the festival. Therefore, they pray to the Hindu goddess Lakshmi. Lakshmi is the goddess of wealth. Hindu people hope she will help them become wealthy.

Diwali has another meaning for Hindu people. As well as hoping for good things for themselves, they hope to be good people. They hope that people will be good, instead of bad. This is the meaning of Diwali.

Diwali is not just for Hindu people. Sikh and Jain people also have Diwali.



Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth, shown sitting on a lotus flower