

Short Story Activity with Color Idioms

The Holi festival is a two-day spring festival, originally celebrated in India, which has become so popular that is now celebrated across the world! It is celebrated over the course of two days with a bonfire at night, and a festival of colors the next day. Hundreds of people gather in the street and celebrate by throwing brightly colored powder at one another. For Hindus, each color has a religious meaning. Read the following story about a girl experiencing her first Holi Festival and replace each bolded word/ phrase with a color idiom that you learned. (Note all idioms are included in the book [With Flying Colors: Color Idioms](#))

“Farida’s First Holi Festival”

Farida had been **delighted** _____ when her parents told her that they were visiting India for the Holi Festival! The exciting news had been so **unexpected** _____.! Even though she had always heard stories from her parents about their childhoods’ in India, she had never been there herself. The Holi Festival was **an excellent chance** _____ to learn about her heritage and meet relatives. Their plane had just landed at the Indira Gandhi International Airport in New Delhi, India, and her mother had finally **given her permission** _____ to unbuckle her seatbelt. She was officially in India!

In her Uncle Yatan’s car on the way home from the airport, she took in the beautiful scenery of New Delhi: the colorful temples, the green hills, and the ocean in the distance. Uncle Yatan, who had a **knack for growing plants** _____, pointed out the different flowers, shrubs, and trees, as they passed them.

When they finally arrived at her cousins’ home, her Aunt Bhavani **greeted them with great hospitality** _____. Over a delicious supper of *masala dosa*, served with different chutneys, the family discussed the upcoming festival.



Masala Dosa is popular in South India. It is made from rice, lentils, potato, and curry leaves and is served with chutneys--spicy condiments made from fruits, vegetables, and vinegars--on the side.

Farida only got to see her Aunt and Uncle **rarely** _____, and she wanted to make the most out of every moment!

On the eve of Holi, the family went to a traditional *Holika Dahan*, a large bonfire that symbolized the triumph of good over evil. There was a lot of singing and dancing around the fire, and at first Farida was too shy to join in, even though it looked like a lot of fun. **“Show your true character** _____, Farida,” said her Aunt Bhavni encouragingly, so Farida happily joined in.

Finally, the morning of the festival arrived. As Farida wandered into the kitchen, she **caught** her father **in the act** _____ eating the *coconut milk murukku*¹ that Uncle Yatan had prepared specially for the festival. “Don’t worry, your secret is safe with me,” she told him. When the whole family was ready, they marched into the busy streets of New Delhi and were immediately greeted by the bright colors of the Holi festival. People threw paint and colored powder all over each other as they danced through the city. Farida couldn’t wait to join the celebration, and eagerly took some paint in her hand to splatter her family.

“How am I doing?” she asked her Aunt and Uncle as she splashed the paint on to them.

“I would say you’re celebrating **very well** _____,” said Aunt Bhavni. “And I mean that literally,” she added, as she playfully threw some colored yellow powder right back at Farida.



This picture was taken at the Holi Festival in 2013

¹ A delicious Indian dessert made from sweet fried dough.

Answer Key:

1. Tickled pink
2. Out of the blue
3. A golden opportunity
4. Given the green light
5. Green thumb
6. Rolled out the red carpet
7. Once in a blue moon
8. Show your true colors
9. Caught (her father) red handed
10. With flying colors