# 屋顶上的鱼，街上的三王

中国的儿童节在六月一日。可全世界的儿童节并不都在同一天，过法更是五花八门：有的满天空飘着鱼，有的男孩女孩轮流过节，还有的三位国王骑着骆驼上街撒糖。

日本有两个儿童节。三月三是桃花节，也叫女儿节，家里摆出人偶台，最上层是天皇和皇后，下面一层层排着宫女和乐师，女孩子请朋友来看人偶，吃菱形的彩色米糕。五月五是男孩节，家里有男孩的在院里竖起高竿，挂起鲤鱼旗，让鱼在风里游。最大的黑色鲤鱼代表爸爸，红色的代表妈妈，小一号的代表孩子。为什么是鲤鱼？老传说里鲤鱼会逆流而上，跳得过龙门，大人盼男孩像鲤鱼一样不怕急流，勇敢又坚持。这一天屋里还会摆武士人偶和小铠甲，祝孩子结实健康。

瑞典的儿童节很特别：男孩女孩分开过。十月七日是男孩日，男孩子这天可以戴王冠、吃糖果、收小礼物，商店也会给男孩办特别活动。十二月十九日是女孩日，女孩子当主角，头上戴插着小蜡烛的王冠——这来自圣露西亚的老传说，家里最大的女儿清早起来，穿白袍、戴王冠，给全家人端咖啡和藏红花面包。瑞典人说，节日分成两半才公平，男孩女孩各有一个完全属于自己的日子。

西班牙孩子最看重的日子是一月六日的三王节。一月五日夜里游行最热闹：三位国王骑着骆驼上街，向人群挥手，随从在后面一筐一筐往街两边撒糖果，孩子们抢着帽子、口袋接糖，街上挤得水泄不通。孩子把鞋子摆在窗台上，传说一年里表现乖，国王就会在鞋里放礼物。所以西班牙孩子过三王节的兴奋劲儿，不比圣诞节小。

你看，日本屋顶上飞着鱼，瑞典的男孩女孩轮流戴王冠，西班牙的三王在街上撒糖。日期不同，玩法不同，心意却一样：在那一天，全世界的孩子都是最要紧的人。

# Fish Flying on Roofs, Three Kings on the Street

Children's Day in China is June 1st. But around the world, Children's Day does not fall on the same day, and the ways of celebrating differ even more: some are full of fish flying in the sky, some are holidays that boys and girls take turns celebrating, and some have three kings riding camels down the street scattering candy.

Japan actually has two Children's Days. March 3rd is the Doll's Festival, also called Girls' Day. Families set up tiered doll stands, with the emperor and empress on the topmost tier and court ladies and musicians below, and girls invite friends to admire the dolls and eat diamond-shaped rice cakes. May 5th is Boys' Day. Families with boys raise tall poles in their yards and string up carp streamers to flutter in the wind. The big black one stands for father, the red one for mother, and the smaller ones for the children. Why carp? An old legend says carp swim upstream and can even leap over the Dragon Gate, so grown-ups hope boys will be brave and

persistent, like carp unafraid of rapids. Samurai dolls and little suits of armor are displayed in the house that day too, wishing the child strength and health.

Sweden's Children's Day is quite special: boys and girls celebrate on separate days. October 7th is Boy's Day, when boys get to wear crowns, eat candy, and receive small gifts, and some shops hold special events for boys. December 19th is Girl's Day, when girls become the protagonists and wear candle crowns - a tradition from the old legend of Saint Lucia, in which the eldest daughter of a household rose early, put on a white gown and a crown, and served coffee and saffron buns to her family. Swedes say splitting the holiday in two is fair: boys and girls each get a day that is entirely their own.

In Spain, the most important day for children is actually Three Kings' Day on January 6th. The night of January 5th brings the liveliest parade: three kings ride camels down the street waving to the crowd, and attendants behind them throw basketfuls of candy to the children on both sides. Kids rush out with hats and pockets to catch candy, and the streets are packed. Children place their shoes on the windowsill, and legend says the kings leave gifts in the shoes of those who have behaved well all year. So for Spanish children, the excitement of Three Kings' Day is no less than Christmas.

Look: fish fly above Japanese rooftops, boys and girls in Sweden take turns wearing crowns, and three kings scatter candy down Spanish streets. The dates differ, the customs differ, but the feeling is the same - on that day, every child in the world is the most important person.

# 我家过过三个儿童节

我念过三个学校的儿童节，一个在中国，两个在国外。同学老问我国外的儿童节什么样，我掰着手指给他们讲。

最先说的是日本。我们在东京住过一年，那年五月，隔壁佐藤家院里的竿子一天比一天高，竿顶挂一条大鱼，鼓着嘴往前游，风一吹，鱼肚子一鼓一鼓。佐藤告诉我，黑色的那条是他爸爸，红色的是他妈妈，最小的是他。他说鲤鱼会跳过龙门，他爸爸希望他像鲤鱼一样有勇气。那天他们家客厅里还摆了一套武士盔甲，佐藤戴上头盔照镜子，笑得停不下来。日本的男孩节在五月五日，女孩节在三月三日，家里摆一层层的人偶，佐藤的妹妹宝贝那些人偶宝贝得不行，谁碰跟谁急。

后来我们搬到瑞典。十月初，学校忽然热闹起来，那天是男孩日，男孩子都戴纸做的王冠，老师给每人发一小袋糖果，连食堂都加了布丁。女生呢，安安稳稳上课——她们的主角日子在十二月十九日，女孩日。那天全校最大的活动是六年级的姐姐们戴蜡烛王冠唱歌，白袍子，绿叶子

编的彩带，从早唱到晚。我同桌是女孩，她跟我说，十二月十九日早上她在家也要戴王冠给爸妈端面包。她说这话时一脸骄傲，好像那是全世界最体面的差事。

三王节我没赶上，是我们班西班牙转学生卡洛斯讲的。他说一月五日夜里，三位国王骑骆驼上街，随从往人群里扔糖，他小时候挤在人群里，帽子都接满了。他还说乖孩子鞋里会有礼物，不乖的传说里只有一包炭。我问他你今年乖不乖，他想了想说，糖照拿，礼物照收，炭没见过。

讲完同学问：哪个儿童节最好？我想了半天，说都一样。鲤鱼旗会游、王冠会歪、糖果会吃完，可每个国家的孩子在那一天都仰着头笑，这一点一模一样。

# We Celebrated Three Children's Days

I have attended Children's Day at three schools - one in China, two abroad. Classmates always ask what Children's Day is like in other countries, and I count on my fingers and tell them.

First, Japan. We lived in Tokyo for a year, and that May the pole in our neighbor Sato's yard grew taller day by day, with a big fish at the top, mouth open, swimming forward; when the wind blew, its belly billowed. Sato told me the black carp was his father, the red one his mother, and the smallest one him. He said carp leap over the Dragon Gate, and his father hopes he will be as courageous as a carp. That day their living room also displayed a full set of samurai armor; Sato put on the helmet and posed before the mirror, laughing nonstop. Japan's Boys' Day is May 5th; Girls' Day is March 3rd, when families set up tiered doll stands. Sato's little sister treasured those dolls fiercely - whoever touched one had a fight on their hands.

Later we moved to Sweden. In early October our school suddenly buzzed - it was Boy's Day. The boys all wore paper crowns, each teacher handed out a small bag of candy, and even the cafeteria added pudding. The girls sat calmly in class - their big day comes on December 19th, Girl's Day. The school's biggest event that day is the sixth-grade girls singing in candle crowns: white gowns, garlands of green leaves, singing from morning till night. My deskmate is a girl, and she told me that at home on the morning of December 19th she too wears a crown and serves bread to her parents. She said it with a proud face, as if it were the most honorable job in the world.

I never got to see Three Kings' Day; our Spanish transfer student Carlos told me about it. He said on the night of January 5th three kings ride camels down the street and their attendants throw candy into the crowd; when he was little he used to squeeze into the crowd until his hat was full. He also said well-behaved children find gifts in their shoes, while in the legend the naughty ones get a bag of coal. I asked him whether he behaves this year. He thought for a moment and said: candy still

accepted, gifts still collected, coal never seen.

When I finished, a classmate asked: which Children's Day is the best? I thought a long time and said, they are all the same. Carp streamers swim, crowns tilt, candy gets eaten up - but on that day every child in every country looks up and smiles, and that part is exactly alike.

# 我们班的世界儿童节联欢会

六一儿童节那天，我们班没排舞蹈，办了一场世界儿童节联欢会。班主任说，全世界的儿童节不止六月一日，你们自己去找、自己来演。全班分成三组，一周后开演。

第一组演日本。几个男生用布缝了三条大鲤鱼，竹竿一撑，挂在教室窗边，风扇一开，鱼就游起来了。他们讲：日本男孩节在五月五日，挂鲤鱼旗，黑鱼是爸爸、红鱼是妈妈、小鱼是孩子，因为老传说里鲤鱼跳得过龙门，大人盼孩子有勇气。女生那边摆了一张桌子，铺红布，放上纸做的人偶，一层一层排好，说这是三月三日的女孩节，家里这样摆人偶祝女孩健康。讲完还教大家吃了菱形的小饼干，说是学人家吃彩色米糕。

第二组演瑞典。组长上台先宣布：瑞典的儿童节是分着过的，十月七日男孩日，十二月十九日女孩日。话音刚落，全班男生戴上纸王冠，每人领到一颗糖；女生不服，组长说别急，女孩的日子更大——女生戴上蜡烛王冠上场，王冠是用纸筒和黄色卡纸做的，代表圣露西亚的蜡烛冠。他们讲老传说：家里最大的女儿在十二月十九日早上戴王冠、穿白袍，给全家端咖啡和面包。台下听得认真，有同学问那男孩端不端，全班笑。

第三组演西班牙，也是最乱的一组。三个同学戴王冠、披床单，骑上拖椅当骆驼，绕教室游行，说这是一月六日的三王节，一月五日夜里三位国王上街。后面的同学拎一袋水果糖往过道撒，全班趴在地上抢，糖纸踩得咔嚓响。讲的人喊：乖孩子鞋里有礼物，不乖的只有炭！抢糖的手立刻举起来：我今年特别乖。

联欢会散了，班主任问大家看出什么没有。有同学说：日本看鱼，瑞典戴冠，西班牙抢糖。班主任点头：日子不一样，玩法不一样，可哪个国家的大人都在同一片心思里——把孩子当成顶顶要紧的人。教室窗边，布鲤鱼还在风里一鼓一鼓地游。

# Our Class's World Children's Day Party

On June 1st our class skipped the usual dance and held a World Children's Day party instead. Our teacher said: Children's Day around the world is not just June 1st - go find out yourselves, and act it out yourselves. The class split into three groups, and the show began a week later.

Group one performed Japan. Several boys sewed three big carp from cloth, propped them on bamboo poles by the classroom window, and with the fan running, the fish swam. They explained: Japan's Boys' Day is May 5th, when families fly carp streamers - the black carp is father, the red one mother, the small one the child - because in an old legend carp leap over the Dragon Gate, and grown-ups hope their children will have courage. The girls set up a table covered with red cloth and arranged paper dolls tier by tier, saying this is Girls' Day on March 3rd, when families display dolls to wish girls health. Afterwards they handed out diamond-shaped biscuits, saying they were imitating the colored rice cakes.

Group two performed Sweden. Their leader opened by announcing: Sweden splits its Children's Day - Boy's Day on October 7th, Girl's Day on December 19th. The moment he finished, every boy in class put on a paper crown and got a candy. The girls protested; the leader said wait - the girls' day is bigger - and the girls came out wearing candle crowns made from paper tubes and yellow cardstock, standing in for Saint Lucia's crown of candles. They told the old legend: on the morning of December 19th the eldest daughter of a household wears the crown, puts on a white gown, and serves coffee and bread to the whole family. The audience listened intently until someone asked whether boys ever serve too, and the whole class laughed.

Group three performed Spain - and was the messiest of all. Three classmates wore crowns, draped bedsheets over themselves, rode office chairs as camels, and paraded around the classroom, explaining that this is Three Kings' Day on January 6th, and that on the night of January 5th the three kings take to the streets. The students behind them grabbed a bag of fruit candy and scattered it down the aisle while the whole class dove to the floor to scramble for it, candy wrappers crunching underfoot. The narrator shouted: well-behaved children get gifts in their shoes; naughty ones get only coal! Hands snatching candy shot straight up: I have been extremely good this year!

When the party broke up, our teacher asked what we had noticed. One classmate said: Japan watches fish, Sweden wears crowns, Spain grabs candy. Our teacher nodded: the dates differ, the games differ, but every country's grown-ups share one and the same heart - treating children as the most important people there are. By the classroom window, the cloth carp were still swimming, bellies billowing in the fan's breeze.