

Dragon Boat Festival Scavenger Hunt

A fun, educational activity you can do at home!

You Will Need:

- MOCA's Scavenger Hunt Clues worksheet (provided)
- a pair of scissors
- tape (optional)

Instructions for Adults:

1. Print out the scavenger hunt materials and cut them into individual items (nine in total, plus the list of clues).
2. Hide the items in the places indicated in the clues. The riddles were written so that you can adapt the locations to your home's specific layout. You can use tape to help secure the items in place. In general, we recommend the following hiding spots (make sure to keep your child's height and sightlines in mind!):

balanced egg
Qu Yuan
poisonous pests
lucky bracelet
perfume pouch
herbal bundles
zongzi
boat paddle
dragon boat

bedroom, underneath a pillow
taped to the front door
dryer, drying rack, or laundry hamper
coat/linen closet
under the couch
bathroom shelf or cabinet
kitchen
bookshelf, reading nook, or couch
by any computer, tablet, or phone (for easy access to other virtual MOCA Dragon Boat events you can do after the scavenger hunt!)

3. Starting with clue 1, read each clue aloud to your child. Feel free to give your child additional hints if they seem to be struggling. Once an item is found, read the description on the other side of the picture aloud to learn more about it and its relevance to the Dragon Boat Festival.
4. Happy hunting!

Scavenger Hunt Clues

1. It is said that on Dragon Boat Festival at noon,
You can perfectly balance an egg.
For good luck, start off your search in the room
Where you go to sleep at the day's end.
2. According to legend, the festival began
To celebrate the honorable poet Qu Yuan.
If you're curious and want to learn even more,
Look no further than your front door!
3. Scorpions and centipedes and venomous snakes,
Spiders and lizards, oh my!
To help get rid of the five poisonous pests,
Head over to where you put wet clothes to dry.
4. Five lucky colors, woven in thread,
From yellow to green, black and white, finally red,
Form a beautiful Dragon Boat Festival bracelet!
Could there be one hanging in your coat closet?
5. What's that nice smell, and that jingling sound?
Why, it's coming from a decorative perfume pouch!
During festival days, people carry them around—
You might find your own hiding under the couch!
6. Calamus and wormwood, bound up in bundles,
Are hung from the door for good fortune and health.
In order to work out this sweet-scented puzzle,
Try rummaging around in your bathroom shelf!
7. *Zongzi*, the official festival food, is made with sticky rice,
Stuffed with tasty fillings, then wrapped in bamboo leaves.
To get to taste one on your own would surely be quite nice,
Move toward the kitchen and see if you can try a piece!

8. We're nearly ready for the race, but it seems that we still need
A paddle for the dragon boat so we can take the lead!
I've heard the missing paddles have been spotted in the nook
Where you would go and curl up if you want to read a book.
9. Hurry! Now it's almost time for the festival to start.
But before joining in the fun, there's one last final part.
Grab your boat and hope it floats—the secret to this rhyme
Is waiting for you by the device you use to go online!

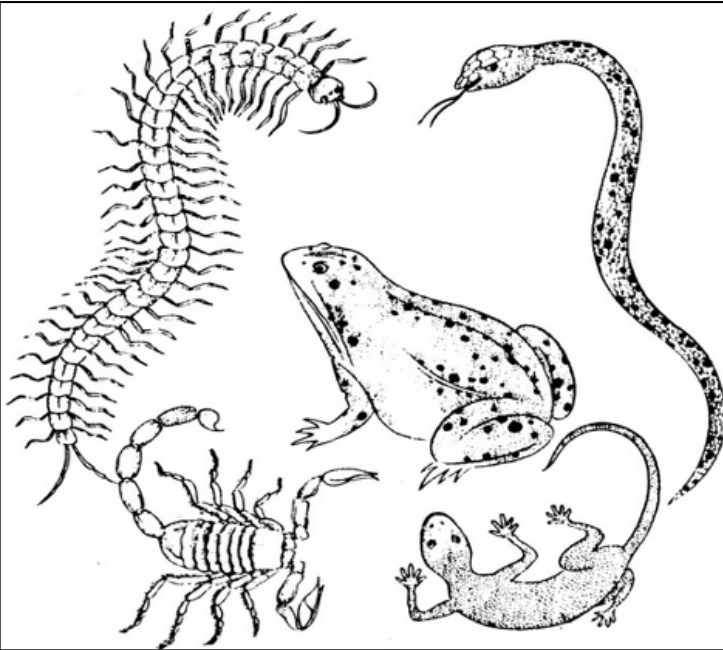
To begin the scavenger hunt, cut out the items below. Fold each one in half, along the edge where the picture meets the words. Have someone hide them according to the riddles. Once you find them, flip them over to read more about each Dragon Boat Festival tradition!



Did you know? Balancing eggs is a popular (and fun!) tradition practiced during the Dragon Boat Festival. Many people believe that if you can make an egg stand on its end the day of the festival, you will have good luck all year round. Wondering how it works? Since the Dragon Boat Festival normally occurs in June, it takes place close to the summer solstice, or the longest day of the year. During this time, especially at noon, the pull between the sun and the earth is the strongest, and that makes it easier to balance an egg! But don't worry, you can balance an egg all year round.



Every year, we celebrate the Dragon Boat Festival in honor of Qu Yuan, an ancient poet who cared about his country very much. Even after he was sent away by jealous officials, Qu Yuan remained loyal to the king and wrote beautiful poems about his patriotism—his love for his country. One day, Qu Yuan heard that his country had been conquered, and in his sadness, he threw himself in the river. Legends say that villagers raced to the river and threw in bamboo leaves filled with rice (*zongzi*) to distract the fish. Today, people make *zongzi* and race dragon boats as a celebration of Qu Yuan.



The five poisonous pests—scorpions, centipedes, snakes, lizards, and toads—often start appearing around the time of the Dragon Boat Festival, when the weather gets hotter and stickier.

To prevent disease and get rid of the five poisonous pests, many people put up paper cuts of the pests on their doors and sew their images onto clothes. Some even make cakes iced with their designs. In some places, people draw a needle in the head of the pests to show that they are no longer dangerous!



Wearing five-color spring bracelets is another popular Dragon Boat Festival tradition. The colors black, white, yellow, red, and green were considered lucky in ancient China. Parents would often give their children five-color bracelets to wear as a wish for a long and healthy life.

If you make your own five-color bracelet, be sure to throw it into the water during the first rain after the Dragon Boat Festival! This is said to bring even more good luck.



The history of the perfume pouch, known as a *xiangbao* (香包) in Chinese, can be traced all the way back to ancient times, when people would carry around small, fragrant pouches to ward off disease and poisonous insects. They are usually made of cloth such as silk and decorated with embroidered designs and colorful beads.

However, the most distinctive part of a perfume pouch is, of course, its wonderful scent! These good luck charms are often filled with sweet-smelling ingredients such as dried flowers, aromatic herbs, and even spices—what would you put in your perfume pouch?



Hanging bundles of herbs such as calamus and wormwood from the door frame around Dragon Boat Festival is said to help avoid bad luck and disease. These plants are not only good for keeping insects away but are also believed to have healing properties.

Did you know? Perfume pouches and hanging bundles are not the only ways in which herbs are featured during Dragon Boat Festival! Another tradition is bathing in herbal water to prevent diseases and wash away bad luck. In some places, especially mountains in the countryside, people celebrate the festival by picking herbs at noon.



The most traditional festival snack, *zongzi* (粽子), is made of glutinous, or sticky, rice and wrapped in bamboo leaves. Zongzi are often stuffed with different fillings. They can be sugary and sweet, with fillings such as tapioca or red bean paste, or salty and savory, filled with meat or eggs.

According to legend, the reason why zongzi became the official food of Dragon Boat Festival is because the villagers threw them into the river to protect Qu Yuan. Today, eating zongzi is one of the most important Dragon Boat Festival traditions. Have you ever eaten one? What is your favorite kind?



In a dragon boat race, you can't go anywhere without a paddle—and not just one! Take a look at the boats pictured above. How many people do you see paddling?

A standard racing team has *twenty* paddlers! They all have to work together in order to row as fast as possible. Usually, there is a drummer who sits at the front of the boat and beats a drum to help paddlers row at the same pace. At the back of the boat, there is a steersperson who has the important job of controlling the direction of the boat. It can get really crowded on board one of these dragon boats!



Have you ever wondered why dragon boats are shaped like dragons? In Chinese culture, dragons are considered the rulers of rivers, lakes, and seas. They are also often associated with the sun. The Dragon Boat Festival occurs around the summer solstice (or the longest day of the year), which is when both the sun and the dragon are considered to be the most powerful. Its Chinese name, *Duan Wu Jie* (端午节), refers to the sun at its highest position in the sky, directly overhead at 12 noon.

Dragon boats are generally made out of wood and measure about 20-30 yards long and 1-2 yards wide. That's REALLY big! The front of the boat is decorated with a dragon's head, while the back of the boat is shaped like a dragon's tail. Along the body of the boat are colorful scales and other patterns like waves or clouds. Before the races begin, there are ceremonies to wake up the dragons for their first races of the season and to honor important people like beloved poet Qu Yuan. Once the gong is rung, it's off to the races for the mighty dragon boats!

