Read and Speak

You are going to read about and describe three more fire and light festivals from around the world. Work in groups of three. Student A will read text 1, student B will read text 2 and student C will read text 3. Find this key information in your text and then share the information with your classmates.

	Text 1	Text 2	Text 3
The name of the festival			
Where the festival takes place			
When the festival takes place			
Who takes part in the festival			
What people do during the festival			
Why people celebrate this festival			

Work in groups of three to explain the festivals that you read about. Make sure you understand what your classmates are saying because you will have to answer some questions about the festivals. Now answer these questions and explain your ideas – there may be several possible answers. You should also include information about Diwali in your answers.

1. Which festivals are religious?

   _____

2. Which festivals do people make things for?

   _____

3. Which festivals try to include everyone equally?

   _____

4. Which festivals are dangerous?

   _____

5. Which festivals are popular with tourists?

   _____

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Text 1: Burning the Clocks



On 21 December, the shortest day of the year, thousands of people walk through the streets of Brighton, a seaside resort town in the south of the UK. Everyone in the **procession** is carrying paper lanterns. This is Burning the Clocks, a yearly **community** event that has been organised since 1994 by the arts charity Same Sky. It's free and absolutely everyone can join in – the event is carefully planned to include wheelchair users, young children and the elderly. It's also popular with tourists. Many of the lanterns show clocks, but others show local buildings, fantastic animals or even make comments about current news or give positive messages. Same Sky works with schools and other groups, including **the homeless**, to create the lanterns. They take many hours to create and each one has a personal meaning to the maker. At the end of the procession, all the lanterns are thrown onto a huge bonfire on the beach. This is followed by an amazing firework show. This event provides everyone in the community with an opportunity to celebrate the season without the need for shopping or eating and drinking too much.

Glossary:

procession → a line of people who are walking together as part of a festival or celebration.

community →the people who are living in one area and who share something like nationality, language, social group or interests.

the homeless→ people who do not have a permanent place to live; they may sleep on the streets.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Text 2: Yi Peng



Imagine this: a huge crowd of people, locals and tourists, **gather** together. After music and prayer, they light candles inside paper lanterns and **release** them into the sky at the same time. Under the full moon, the rising lanterns look completely magical. This festival is Yi Peng, in Chiang Mai, northern Thailand.

The festival takes place during the twelfth month of the Thai **lunar** calendar (normally sometime in November). A similar festival, Loi Krathong, when baskets are floated on the water, can happen at the same time. Both are Buddhist festivals which allow people to let go of bad luck from the past year, and wish for better things in the next year, or even in the next life.

You can buy paper lanterns in local shops and most people write a personal wish directly onto the paper before they release the lantern. Watch your lantern carefully – if it rises into the sky before the candle finishes, then you will have good luck. Of course, your wishes will only come true if you behave well during the year.

It's also important to remember that any festivals where people release lanterns into the sky can be dangerous because they may start fires, confuse airplanes and be dangerous to animals who find the lanterns when they fall to earth.

Glossary:

gather→ come together in a group

release→ give something freedom to move

lunar→ relating to the moon

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Text 3: Saint Lucy's Day



The year is 304. Lucia, a young girl, is bringing food to a group of Christians, who are hiding in tunnels under the city of Rome. She wears candles in her hair so that her hands are free to carry more food. However, she is discovered and then killed.

This is the origin of St Lucy's Day. On 13 December, girls in Sweden dress in white dresses and red belts and place a crown of evergreen leaves on their head. The headpiece is then lit with real candles (if the girl is old enough) or electric lights. The "Lucias" walk at the head of a little group which can include Star Boys and even younger children dressed as gingerbread biscuit men. Swedes used to choose just one girl to be the "Lucia" for their school or town, but nowadays they avoid competitions like this and welcome everyone to join in. The children give out ginger biscuits and people also eat special pastries made with the spice saffron and drink hot sweetened wine or coffee.

The modern festival has been celebrated in Sweden and other countries on 13 December since the 1900s. However, the 13 December was traditionally the first day of winter in the old Julian calendar, so perhaps St Lucy's Day also has some much older seasonal origins.

Glossary:

origin→ where or when something starts or begins

evergreen→ keeping green all year, not losing leaves in the winter months

competition→ an event where people are trying to win something or be the most successful

LIVEWORKSHEETS