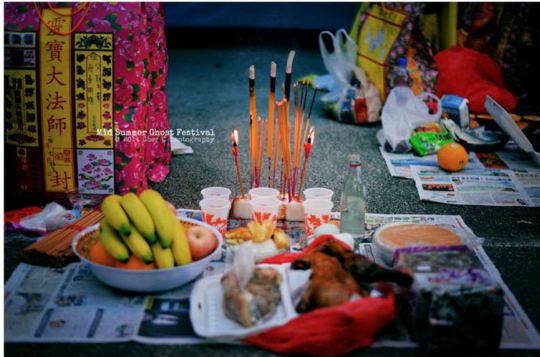


Appendix II: Leaflet of Hungry Ghost Festival

Name: _____ Class: _____ () Date: _____

Your guide to the Hungry Ghost Festival in Hong Kong

What is the Hungry Ghost Festival?



The Hungry Ghost Festival is a traditional festival celebrated annually in several East Asian countries.

When is it?

The festival begins on the fifteenth night of the seventh lunar month, which for 2020 falls on 2 September.

Where did this festival come from?

Originally, Zhongyuan Festival (中元節) was a festival to celebrate the harvest at the beginning of autumn. People worshipped the nature and their ancestors. It was celebrated as early as the Han dynasty (206 BC–220 AD).

According to Chinese folk belief, the gates of Hell are opened in the whole seventh lunar month (usually in August), which allows ghosts to visit the realm of the living.



Hungry Ghost Festival customs in Hong Kong

➤ Offerings

During this month, food and drinks are offered to the wandering souls that no one looks after. Joss paper or paper money from the Bank of Hell are also burned as well, giving the ghosts money to spend. Other than paper money, paper models of cars, mansions, TV sets, and clothes, are often offered. So, if you are around during the festival and see some leftovers on the roadside, don't try to grab them as they are offerings for the ghosts!



Pun Siu Chi, Lee Ho Chung, Sun Zhuoer, Tam Wan Ting, Yam Tsz Shun @2021

➤ Live performances

Apart from offerings and paying tribute, live performances are held to provide these wandering souls with entertainment. Chinese opera performances are set up on bamboo stages all over the New Territories. You'll notice that the front rows are always left empty. That's because those seats are reserved for the souls!



➤ Giving away rice

On the last day of the festival, free rice is sometimes given away as well. People donate the rice to community organisers of the festival so that their names are listed on their 'Golden Chart' as a sign of good merit—think of it as gathering good karma in this life for a better afterlife.

