

Surf Soup Tomb Sweeping and Qingming Festival
Subtitle: Asian History and Traditions

978-1-956022-95-7

LCCN 2024922021

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Reader's Guide for Kids: Discovering Tradition, Science, and
Emotions

About the Book

In Surf Soup: Tomb Sweeping and the Qingming Festival, join Little Donna as she learns about Qingming, also known as Tomb Sweeping Day. This special day helps us remember our family members who came before us. Follow along as Little Donna and her mom honor their ancestors by sharing stories, cleaning graves, and offering food, flowers, and incense.

Discussion Questions

1. Exploring the Tradition

Q: Why is it important to remember our family members who came before us?

Q: How does Little Donna show respect for her ancestors?

2. Emotions and Social-Emotional Learning (SEL)

Q: How did Little Donna feel about going to the cemetery at first? Why was she nervous?

Q: Have you ever felt nervous about trying something new? How did you handle it?

Activity: Draw a picture of a time you were nervous and what you did to feel better, like talking to someone or learning more about the situation.

3. Empathy and Respect

Q: Why do you think Little Donna's mom wants to share this tradition with her?

Activity: Think of a family tradition or story that's important to you. Share it with a friend, teacher, or class to show how your family celebrates, remembers, or honors something special.

Activities for Learning

Science & STEAM Exploration

1. The Science of Flowers and Spring

During Qingming, many people bring fresh flowers to honor their loved ones. Flowers bloom more in spring due to longer daylight and warmer temperatures.

Activity: Observe flowers in your area and draw or photograph the different types. Look up their names and learn why they bloom in spring.

2. Making Art to Remember Loved Ones

Activity: Create a "memory tree" using your family members' names. Use leaves or shapes for each person, and write one thing you like or appreciate about each person.

3. Math: Counting Generations

Q: Did you know we all have many ancestors? If each person has two parents, think of how many grandparents and great-grandparents you have!

Activity: Draw your family tree, counting back three or more generations. Try calculating how many people came before you, all helping to make your family who you are today.

Words to Remember

Qingming – A Chinese tradition also known as Tomb Sweeping Day. It is a day of respect, remembering, and honoring our ancestors.

Ancestry – All the family members who came before us.

Respect – Showing care and appreciation for others, especially those who came before us.

Reflection: Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) Connection

Think about a family member or someone special to you. How do you show them you care? Remember that honoring someone can be as simple as telling them you're grateful, drawing a picture for them, or helping them with something.

Key Takeaway

The book Surf Soup: Tomb Sweeping and the Qingming Festival teaches us that traditions and family stories help us feel connected to our past. Learning about Qingming can help you feel closer to your family and show that remembering is a way of keeping love alive!