

Hanami



Hanami is the Japanese traditional custom of enjoying the beauty of flowers, especially cherry blossoms. The practice of Hanami is more than a thousand years old, and is still very popular in Japan today. **It takes place** in the spring, usually from March to April, because the blossoms only last for a week or two.

Hanami is very popular among Japanese people of all ages. Thousands of people fill the parks to eat and drink under the flowering trees. The parties start around lunch time and sometimes these parties go on until late at night. In more than half of Japan, the cherry blossoming days come at the same time of the beginning of school and work, and so welcoming parties are often held under the cherry blossom.

Usually, people go to the parks many hours before the party to **reserve** the best places to sit. Some people even stay overnight to save a space for the next afternoon. There is sometimes a lot of drinking and karaoke at hanami, but many people just relax with their family, friends, and **co-workers**. Hanami is a great way to enjoy the beauty that comes for only a short time each year.



1. According to the article, when did the tradition of Hanami begin?
 - a) less than 1,000 years ago
 - b) more than 1,000 years ago
 - c) more than 10,000 years ago
 - d) it is still very popular in Japan today
2. The word “It” in paragraph 1 refers to:
 - a) Japan
 - b) popular
 - c) Hanami
 - d) spring
3. The phrase “takes place” in paragraph 1 is closest in meaning to:
 - a) enters
 - b) realizes
 - c) leaves
 - d) happens
4. According to the article, who usually attends Hanami?
 - a) half of Japan
 - b) just school children
 - c) around lunch time
 - d) people of different ages
5. According to the article, what kinds of parties are often held at hanami?
 - a) welcome parties
 - b) farewell parties
 - c) birthday parties
 - d) Christmas parties
6. The word “reserve” in paragraph 3 could be replaced by:
 - a) secure
 - b) fund
 - c) respect
 - d) distribute
7. The word “co-workers” in paragraph 3 could be replaced by:
 - a) classmates
 - b) playmates
 - c) colleagues
 - d) opponents
8. Paragraph 3 tells us:
 - a) it is difficult to relax at hanami
 - b) hanami happens all year round
 - c) sometimes people drink and sing at hanami
 - d) everybody drinks and does karaoke at hanami

Answers: 1. (b) 2. (c) 3. (d) 4. (d) 5. (a) 6. (a) 7. (c) 8. (c)