



Culture, Children and Chinese Zodiac

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Culture is the heritage of the people. It is based on language, beliefs and rituals that various races practice. It is the mark and the distinctive characteristic of each individual. Culture is based on the art, the manners, the knowledge and the achievements of each race. It makes us who we are and it has a big impact on our decisions and on our futures. Most of us have a certain religion, a type of food that we like and the way we act to people because we got those ideas from our culture. By seeing how your dad or mom acts, you also get to follow their beliefs and religion.

Each year, cultural aspects are threatened due to modernization. Most practices are no longer followed in Africa and in other countries because children today no longer accept their heritage. Some have turned away from their culture and accepted fully the culture of others. This means that their identity, lifestyle and even their behavior has been changed radically. In the future, a lot of cultural beliefs and practices will be lost and it can only be stopped if we protect our own cultural identity.

Recently, Jackie Chan released a movie called Chinese Zodiac - CZ12. The movie is about 12 zodiac animal fountain heads which is from a very old castle. The 12 animal heads represent the 12 zodiac constellational symbols. Some of the animals found in the Chinese zodiac are the ox, the lion and the snake. During the 1800s Opium war the British looted the treasures and they brought it to another place. It took over a century before the treasures were given back to the Chinese people. In the end, Jackie tried hard to get back the treasures. He was even hurt while protecting some of them.

In the story, several countries were fighting over their cultural relics. Most of those treasures were taken by other countries during wars. There are also treasures which were stolen by thieves and sold at black markets. Why do you think that their treasures and old relics are important? The answer is that the treasures and old items that a country has is its cultural background. Such treasures, such as the zodiac animal heads, were relics of the past and it contains about the rich history of the Chinese culture. Such treasures do not belong to collectors but to the people. They should be displayed in museums so that the kids will also learn about their past. That is why history, culture and the relics are important.

Questions:

- 1) What is a black Market?
- 2) What are constellations? What are some that you know?
- 3) Who was the actor in the movie Chinese Zodiac? Why is he famous?
- 4) Why are the cultural relics important?
- 5) How can you preserve your culture?