

C1-C2 Worksheet: Las Fallas In Valencia - 26 March 2026

Article

While many festivals trade on permanence, Las Fallas in Valencia hinges on deliberate impermanence. Each March, neighbourhood associations and artists spend months gearing up for a few days in which towering sculptures, fireworks and brass bands take over the city. Built from wood, cardboard and other materials, the monuments are admired, photographed and then, on the night of La Crema, set aside for destruction. That paradox is central to the festival's pull: what the city values most is not preserved behind glass, but offered up to a crowd prepared to watch it go up in flames.

The spectacle draws in visitors because it works on several levels at once. At street level, it is noisy, comic and unapologetically excessive. Underneath that exuberance, however, lies a more exacting logic. The sculptures often build up layers of satire, local memory and technical bravura, while the ritual burning allows residents to carry out a form of collective release. What has been painstakingly assembled is stripped away in a matter of minutes, yet that transience is precisely what gives the event its emotional charge. Rather than weakening the art, the bonfire brings home the idea that beauty can be intensified, rather than diminished, by brevity.

That may explain why Las Fallas has retained its grip in an age of permanent digital storage. In many places, culture is curated, archived and endlessly replayed. Valencia offers the reverse: thousands come together to witness something unrepeatable, knowing the meaning lies partly in its disappearance. Once the flames die down, the city is left with ash, smoke and memory, but also with a renewed sense that public celebration can still be handmade, local and genuinely communal.

True/False

Decide if each statement is True (T) or False (F).

1. The article suggests that destruction is not incidental to Las Fallas, but fundamental to its meaning.
2. According to the writer, most of the sculptures are preserved after the festival in order to protect their artistic value.
3. The article presents Las Fallas as a spectacle that is both entertaining and emotionally resonant.
4. The second paragraph argues that the bonfire reduces the significance of the sculptures.
5. The writer implies that digital culture may help explain why an unrepeatable festival still feels powerful.
6. The article claims that Las Fallas has become less communal because of tourism.
7. The final paragraph suggests that the event derives part of its meaning from disappearance itself.
8. The article portrays brevity as something that can intensify, rather than weaken, aesthetic experience.

Phrase Match

Match the phrases (1-10) to the correct definitions (A-J).

Phrases (1-10)	Definitions (A-J)
1. gearing up	A. to become less intense or gradually fade
2. set aside	B. to gather or unite in one place
3. go up in flames	C. to make someone understand something fully
4. draws in	D. to be put to one side or reserved for a purpose
5. build up	E. to prepare actively for something that is coming
6. carry out	F. to accumulate or develop gradually
7. stripped away	G. to be destroyed by fire
8. brings home	H. to remove something completely
9. come together	I. to perform or complete an action
10. die down	J. to attract or pull people in

Synonym Match

Match the words (1-10) to the correct synonyms (A-J).

Words (1-10)	Synonyms (A-J)
1. impermanence	A. impossible to reproduce exactly
2. towering	B. appeal or attraction
3. pull	C. carefully selected and arranged
4. exuberance	D. kept or maintained
5. transience	E. very tall and imposing
6. charge	F. lively enthusiasm
7. curated	G. temporary nature
8. unrepeatable	H. short duration
9. communal	I. emotional force or intensity
10. retained	J. shared by a community

Use the new language

Please choose 5 words or phrases and make your own sentence using the new word or phrase.

Discussion Questions

Student A

1. Would you enjoy going to a festival where the main artworks are burned at the end? Why or why not?
2. Do you think art becomes more special when it is temporary?
3. What kinds of festivals or public events draw in large crowds where you live?
4. Is there anything in modern life that feels less communal than it used to?
5. Why do you think people come together so readily for shared rituals?
6. Does Las Fallas sound exciting, overwhelming or both?
7. How important is noise, spectacle and exaggeration in public celebration?
8. Would you rather see art in a museum or in the street? Why?

Student B

1. To what extent does deliberate destruction give Las Fallas its cultural force?
2. Can impermanence make an artistic experience more meaningful than permanence?
3. Does the festival challenge the modern instinct to archive, preserve and endlessly replay everything?
4. How far can collective rituals carry out an emotional function for a city or community?
5. Is spectacle enough on its own, or does a festival need deeper symbolic content to endure?
6. Why do some traditions retain their grip while others gradually die down?
7. Does the article suggest that public celebration still offers something digital culture cannot replicate?
8. At what point does tourism strengthen a tradition, and at what point does it hollow it out?

Answer Key

True/False: 1=T, 2=F, 3=T, 4=F, 5=T, 6=F, 7=T, 8=T

Phrase Match: 1=E, 2=D, 3=G, 4=J, 5=F, 6=I, 7=H, 8=C, 9=B, 10=A

Synonym Match: 1=G, 2=E, 3=B, 4=F, 5=H, 6=I, 7=C, 8=A, 9=J, 10=D

Example sentences with the phrases

1. Local volunteers were gearing up for the street parade weeks in advance.
2. One gallery was set aside for student work and experimental pieces.
3. Several old warehouses went up in flames after the electrical fault.
4. The free concert always draws in people who would not normally attend.
5. Tension can build up quickly when a crowd is kept waiting too long.
6. The museum carried out a careful restoration of the damaged painting.
7. Once the slogans were stripped away, the speech sounded far less impressive.
8. The documentary really brings home the human cost of long-term conflict.
9. Residents came together to repair the playground after the storm.
10. Public anger began to die down once the council explained its decision.