## FRIENDSHIP NEWSLETTER

For Thai English Students

## Songkhran through the eyes of a Foreigner

In Thailand you have a very unique way of celebrating your New Year! Does any other country in the world celebrate with a nation-wide water fight? People all around the world would be very upset if someone they did not even know, threw a bowl of water on them.

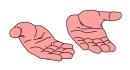
I will never forget the first time I experienced Songkhran! I had lived in Thailand only a few months. On one of the water fight days, I traveled by bus across



Bangkok for an appointment with my boss. He wanted to talk to me about where I would live after my first year of Thai language study. I was very surprised when people

threw buckets of water into the bus at the bus stops. When I got off the bus, I was a bit wet for my important appointment.

Later that day as I walked down the lane towards my apartment, two small children came running excitedly towards me. They carried a bowl of water out in front of them as they ran! I was sure I was going to get all wet. When they came close, I held out my hands in front of me to protect myself from getting wet. With the few Thai words that I knew, I asked them not to throw water on me! I will never forget what happened next.



The two little Thai children did not throw water on me. Instead they gently poured the water over my hands. I thought I was going to get all wet, but I was surprised by their kindness and respect for me, a person they did not even know!

So that first year in Thailand, I experienced *all* of the Songkhran festival. I got wet because people threw water into my bus. And two little Thai children kindly blessed me! In my mind, I can still see them running towards me and remember feeling so blessed by their kindness!



## Questions:

- 1. What does the word "unique" mean?
- 2. Songkhran is like a "nation-wide water fight!" What does this mean?
- 3. How did these Thai children show respect?
- 4. Tell about one of your Songkhran experiences.
- 5. Tell about an experience where someone was kind to you! Who was kind and how did that make you feel?

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