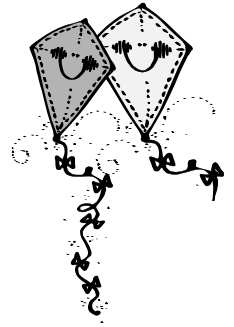


Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# The Exciting History of Kites and How They Fly

Kites have a fascinating history that goes back more than 2,000 years! The earliest kites were invented in China during the Han Dynasty (around 200 BCE). They were made from lightweight materials like silk for the sail and flexible bamboo for the frame. At first, kites weren't just toys—they were used for important jobs like sending military signals, measuring distances, and even predicting the weather. Some legends say that Chinese generals flew noisy kites over enemy camps to scare soldiers!



Over time, kites spread to other parts of the world. In Japan, kites became part of festivals and celebrations, often decorated with colorful artwork. In the 1700s and 1800s, scientists in Europe and America used kites to study wind and weather. Benjamin Franklin famously flew a kite in a storm to learn about electricity (but don't try this—it's dangerous!). Later, the Wright brothers, who invented the airplane, tested their ideas by flying large kites.

## How Do Kites Work?

Kites fly because of the forces of wind and lift. When wind blows against the kite's sail, it creates lift, pushing the kite upward. The string helps control the kite by keeping it at the right angle to catch the wind. If the string is too loose, the kite may wobble or dive. If it's held just right, the kite stays steady in the sky.

A good kite needs:

- **A lightweight frame** (usually wood or plastic) to keep it from being too heavy.
- **A smooth, sturdy sail** (often made of paper, nylon, or polyester) to catch the wind.
- **A tail** (optional) for balance—without it, some kites might spin out of control!

1. Where were kites first used? \_\_\_\_\_

2. List several ways kites were first used. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
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## Kites Today

Modern kites come in all shapes—diamonds, boxes, dragons, and even giant inflatable kites! Some kites are designed for tricks and stunts, while others are built for speed. Every year, kite festivals around the world showcase amazing designs, from tiny kites that fit in your hand to enormous ones that need teams of people to fly them.

Flying a kite is a fun way to learn about wind and science. Next time you fly one, think about how people from ancient China to today have enjoyed watching kites dance in the sky!

**Fun Fact:** The longest kite flight ever lasted over 6 days without landing!

3. What were early Chinese kites made of?
  - A) Plastic and metal
  - B) Silk and bamboo
  - C) Paper and glue
  - D) Cotton and rope
4. Which famous scientist flew a kite to study electricity?
  - A) Thomas Edison
  - B) Benjamin Franklin
  - C) Albert Einstein
  - D) Isaac Newton

How might the invention of kites have changed the way ancient people solved problems? Use at least two examples from the text to support your answer.

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