

Mountain Fire Festival

Known as Wakakusa yamayaki firework Festival

In Japan

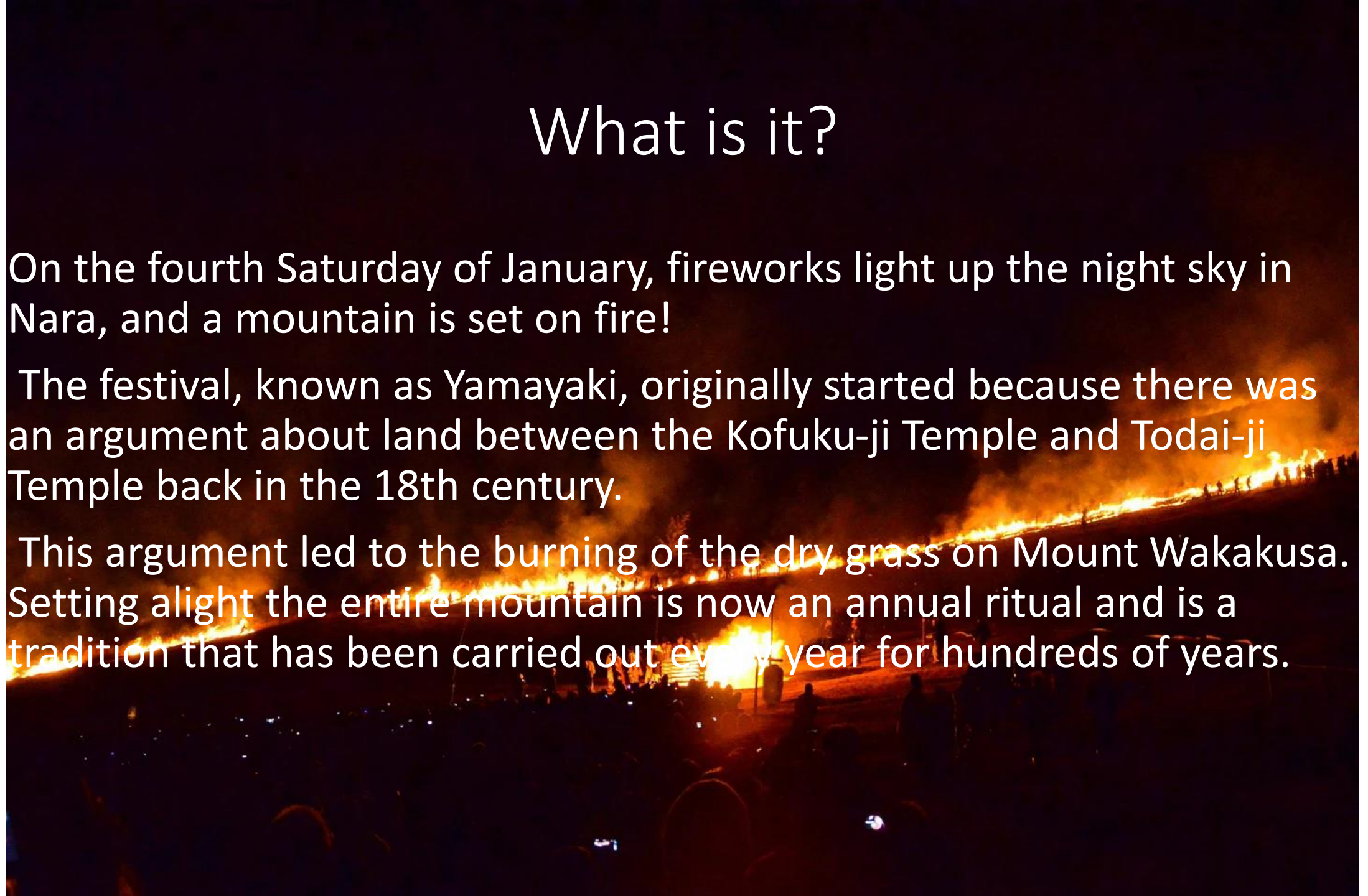
23rd January

What is it?

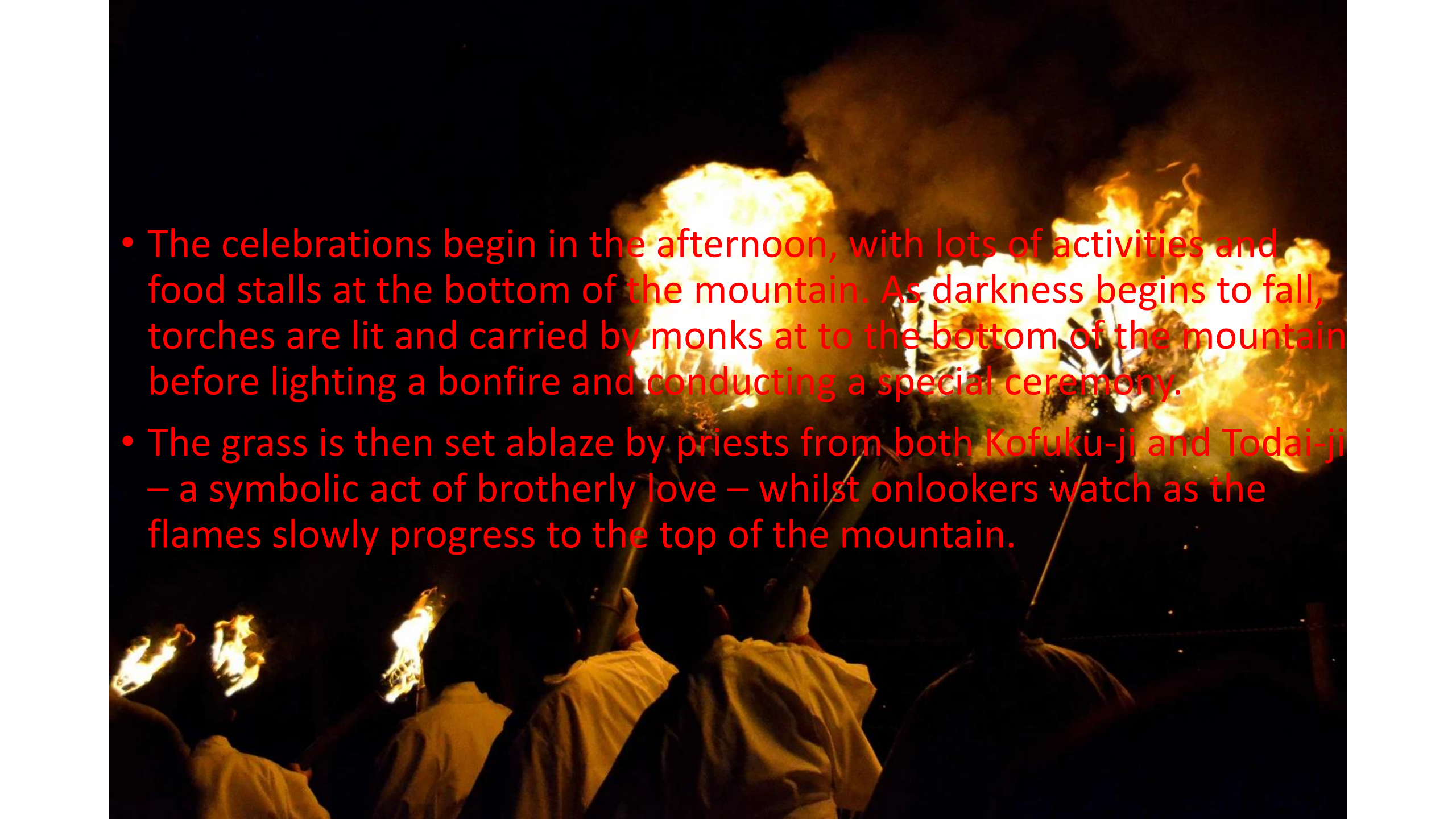
On the fourth Saturday of January, fireworks light up the night sky in Nara, and a mountain is set on fire!

The festival, known as Yamayaki, originally started because there was an argument about land between the Kofuku-ji Temple and Todai-ji Temple back in the 18th century.

This argument led to the burning of the dry grass on Mount Wakakusa. Setting alight the entire mountain is now an annual ritual and is a tradition that has been carried out every year for hundreds of years.





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- A photograph capturing a night festival. In the foreground, several individuals, likely monks, are seen from behind, wearing light-colored robes. They are holding large, cylindrical torches that are lit, with bright orange and yellow flames. The background is dominated by a large, intense bonfire, with thick plumes of white smoke rising into the dark night sky. The overall scene is illuminated by the warm glow of the fire and torches, creating a dramatic and atmospheric setting.
- The celebrations begin in the afternoon, with lots of activities and food stalls at the bottom of the mountain. As darkness begins to fall, torches are lit and carried by monks at to the bottom of the mountain before lighting a bonfire and conducting a special ceremony.
 - The grass is then set ablaze by priests from both Kofuku-ji and Todai-ji – a symbolic act of brotherly love – whilst onlookers watch as the flames slowly progress to the top of the mountain.







Then they set off 200 fireworks which can be seen in Nara City in Japan



Some links..

- A video to show you the mountain burning and fireworks

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=38Rm7Ed6nMA>

Pictures and information from:

<https://theculturetrip.com/asia/japan/articles/heres-how-japan-celebrates-its-mountain-fire-festival/>

Get involved.....

- You might want to create your own pretend fire festival – you could build a pretend fire using sticks and leaves you find on your walk or in the garden. Use orange and yellow material or paper.
- You could recreate the heat you might feel by using handwarmers or hot water bottles
- You could watch the video or find a similar video of a fire burning or fireworks on Youtube
- You could make an exploration tray with coloured rice to mark make in, use party poppers, sparkly material, leftover tinsel etc