

# ✨ Thidamaepra: Events ✨

by Elizabeth A. Clayborne



Picture this:

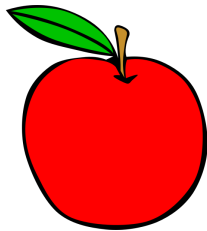


As usual, you're a little sleepy still (it's not even 9 am), but a smile tugs at the corners of your mouth as you set up your teacher's desk. Today's gonna be a good day. You put extra effort into planning this lesson, and you're excited about it. Unexpectedly, however, your Thai co-teacher comes up and taps you on the shoulder. "Teacher, the students won't have class today. There is an assembly." Your smile sticks as you think of all of your hard work going to waste. "What is the assembly about?" you ask. But the language barrier makes a clear understanding of expectations elusive. You know this is an opportunity to become a calmer, more centered person able to weather life's changes with imperturbable chill. And you're sure the assembly will be fun, even though you don't know what it's for. Or how long it will be. Or what's expected of you 😊



Thai culture is vividly gorgeous. One noteworthy cultural feature here in Thailand is the relaxed attitude towards time and schedules. Those of us from more “Westernized” places might be accustomed to hustle culture and strict adherence to time-tables. But Thailand invites us to see that things can be done differently. Perhaps schedules can be flexible things that bend to the natural rhythms of the day, the season, and the individual rather than the other way around. This different perspective gives rise to frequent (and unexpected) interruptions to teaching at Thida. In my personal life, I deeply appreciate how restorative dropping hustle culture has been for me. But while I’m at work? If I’m being honest– I’m still adjusting 😊

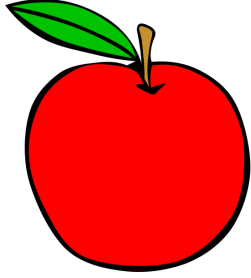
In this article, I’ll do my best to prepare you for the events at Thidamaepra. I’ve listed them in the order they happen throughout the school year. You still might not hear about them until the day before, or even the day of. And any of the info I give you is subject to change. But at least you’ll have a bit more of an understanding of what to expect, and what will be expected of you. While chill is an excellent skill to cultivate, it’s also a process.



## ✧ First Day of School ✧

- ♥ Event Type: School Event
- ♥ Event Time of Day: Morning
- ♥ Event Location: Outdoor Assembly Area
- ♥ Event Length: 30 mins - 45 mins
- ♥ Event Purpose: Introductions
- ♥ Where You’ll Sit/Stand: You’ll stand at the front of the Assembly Area with the other foreign teachers
- ♥ What’s Expected of You: Introduce yourself to the students (about 2 - 5 minutes)
- ♥ It’s a Good Time To...: Tell your new students where you’re from, and what your favorite things are (color, animal, anime, etc.) or anything else you want to include about yourself





## ✨ Teacher's Day ✨



♥ Event Type: Thai Holiday

♥ Event Time of Day: Morning / Early Afternoon

♥ Event Location: IEP Building

♥ Event Length: 40 mins - 1 hr

♥ Event Purpose: Honoring Teachers

♥ Where You'll Sit/Stand: You'll sit wherever your Thai co-teacher tells you, probably in a chair by your MEP class

♥ What's Expected of You: To receive a gift from your students (last year it was an orchid). Also to watch your students for bad behavior (they love to act up during assemblies)

♥ It's a Good Time To...: Take videos and pictures of your students





## ✨ Sports Day ✨

♥ Event Type: School Event

♥ Event Time of Day: All Day

♥ Event Location: Outdoor Assembly Area

♥ Event Length: All Day

♥ Event Purpose: Letting the students have fun

♥ Where You'll Sit/Stand: You'll sit on the steps at the front of the Assembly Area

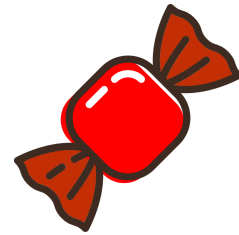
♥ What's Expected of You: To hang out with the students and participate in at least a few games

♥ It's a Good Time To...: Wear clothes that are good for running around and sweating in (dark colors are best). Bring noise canceling headphones if you have them (it's SO LOUD). Bring a fan. Bring water. Monitor your energy levels. You might get tired way before the end of the day (it's hot, it's loud, and the kids are in full gremlin mode). Make sure you take breaks, sit in the A/C, eat, and drink when you need to.





## ✨ Halloween ✨



♥ Event Type: Western Holiday

♥ Event Time of Day: Midday (probably)

♥ Event Location: Wherever your MEP classes are

♥ Event Length: Most (if not all) of MEP class time ; IEP class can be a Halloween party or business as usual. It's up to you

♥ Event Purpose: Candy and Trick-or-Treating

♥ Where You'll Be: Wherever your MEP classes are, going from MEP class to MEP class trick-or-treating. And then, once that's done, sitting with your MEP students in your classroom eating candy

♥ What's Expected of You: Bring some candy/snacks to contribute. Dress up if you can (it will be HOT, so maybe pick a light costume if you plan to dress up)

♥ It's a Good Time To...: Take pictures and videos of/with your students and Thai teacher. These pics will be great, some students really go all out with their costumes

**[Note: X Motorbike Rentals also has a costume shop where you can rent costumes for about 300 (plus a deposit that is returned to you when you return the costume).]**





## ✨ River Festival ✨



♥ Event Type: Thai Holiday

♥ Event Time of Day: All Day

♥ Event Location: Assembly Area

♥ Event Length: All Day

♥ Event Purpose: Honoring the goddess of the river / making flower boats to send prayers down the river (this is my favorite Thai Holiday that I know of)

♥ Where You'll Sit/Stand: The students actually do this without you, so you can stay in the office if you want. But you can also go out and make a flower boat with them

♥ What's Expected of You: Nothing!

♥ It's a Good Time To...: Take pictures and videos of/with your students and Thai teacher. Because of the flowers, these will be some of the most beautiful pictures you take at Thida







# Christmas Party



♥ Event Type: Western Holiday

♥ Event Time of Day: Class Time (but not on actual Christmas. We have off for the holiday. This will be before Dec. 30th)

♥ Event Location: Classroom

♥ Event Length: Most (if not all) of MEP class time ; IEP class can be a Christmas party or business as usual. It's up to you

♥ Event Purpose: Sharing gifts, having a party, and celebrating together

♥ Where You'll Sit/Stand: Anywhere you like, maybe on the floor with your students

♥ What's Expected of You:

♥ Prior to party- Organize the event a couple of weeks prior with your Thai co-teacher first, and then with students. See which students' parents will contribute to the party and what items they will contribute (in my class we voted on the kinds of food and snacks we wanted. Then I asked if anyone thought they could bring something. I didn't even need to contact the parents. We had more food than we could eat). Also maybe do Secret Santa pulls.

♥ During the party- Help your Thai co-teacher pass out food and clean up wrappers and food. Bring a gift for your Thai co-teacher and for one student (if you did Secret Santa pulls a few weeks before)

♥ It's a Good Time To...: Take pictures and videos of/with your students and Thai teacher. Dress up (maybe in a red or green shirt. Maybe add a cute headband/Santa hat/set of elf ears). Bring healthy snacks for yourself if you don't want to feel terrible by the end of the day





# ✨ Christmas Assembly ✨



♥ Event Type: Western Holiday

♥ Event Time of Day: Probably morning or early afternoon

♥ Event Location: IEP Building

♥ Event Length: 45 mins - 1 hr

♥ Event Purpose: MEP students present foreign teachers with a gift from the school (last year it was a cute, fuzzy blanket)

♥ Where You'll Sit/Stand: You'll sit where you MEP Thai co-teacher tells you. Probably in a chair by your MEP students

♥ What's Expected of You: Watch your kids for bad behavior (they love to act up during assemblies). Accept the gift from your students

♥ It's a Good Time To...: Take pictures and videos of/with your students and Thai teacher. Dress up a little (maybe in a red or green shirt. Maybe add a cute headband/Santa hat/set of elf ears)







# Christmas Show



♥ Event Type: Show / Pageant

♥ Event Time of Day: All Day (Not on actual Christmas. Also not the day of the MEP Christmas party)

♥ Event Location: High School Stage

♥ Event Length: All Day (but most of your participation will last around 2 - 3 hours ; not including the 3 - 4 hours of rehearsal in the weeks prior)

♥ Event Purpose: The kids showing off their dancing/singing/acting skills. The foreign teachers looking silly/cute

♥ Where You'll Sit/Stand: You'll sit in chairs with the other MEP foreign teachers in the back of the High School Assembly area until you get on the stage to perform

♥ What's Expected of You: Dress up a little (maybe in a red or green shirt. Maybe add a cute headband/Santa hat/set of elf ears) or a lot for this one. Do a choreographed Christmas dance with the other MEP foreign teachers in front of the school

♥ It's a Good Time To...: Get over your stage fright if you have it 😊

**[Note: X Motorbike Rentals also has a costume shop where you can rent costumes for about 300 (plus a deposit that is returned to you when you return the costume).]**





## ✨ Last Day of Classes ✨



♥ Event Type: Class Celebration

♥ Event Time of Day: MEP class time

♥ Event Location: Classroom

♥ Event Length: MEP class time (as long or short as you want)

♥ Event Purpose: Celebrating the end of the year with your MEP class ; IEP can be business as usual or a (smaller, simpler) party. It's up to you

♥ Where You'll Sit/Stand: Wherever you want. Maybe on the floor with your students

♥ What's Expected of You:

♥ Prior to party- Organize the event a couple of weeks prior with your Thai co-teacher first, and then with students. See which students' parents will contribute to the party and what items they will contribute (in my class we voted on the kinds of food and snacks we wanted. Then I asked if anyone thought they could bring something. I didn't even need to contact the parents. We had more food than we could eat).

♥ During the party- Help your Thai co-teacher pass out food and clean up wrappers and food

♥ It's a Good Time To...: Eat so much food. Have fun with your students. Take pictures and videos. Prepare for tears. You'll miss each other



I hope this article helps you feel a little more prepared to face the plethora of holidays and events at Thidamaepra. Happy Holidays!