

Chinese New Year

What Is Chinese New Year?

Chinese New Year is an important Chinese holiday. The celebration is also known as the Lunar New Year.

Chinese New Year is also celebrated in many other countries too; for example, in Malaysia and the Philippines



Facts About Chinese New Year

- It is the longest festival in the Chinese calendar.
- It is a time for people to clean their houses.
- Chinese New Year is a time to let go of the past and welcome new beginnings.

How Is It Celebrated?

Chinese New Year is celebrated through different traditions.

Red envelopes: The colour red is for good luck, fortune and joy in Chinese families. Money is given in red envelopes.

Firecrackers: Firecrackers are let off during the Chinese New Year. They are thought to scare off evil spirits.

Lion and dragon dances: Many people take part in these dances. Loud music is played to frighten away bad spirits.

Food and families: Chinese families gather together for a special dinner the night before the Chinese New Year begins.

Legends

Each year is named after a different animal, based on an old story. The story goes that the Jade Emperor told the animals to have a race. The order they finished the race was the order he named the years in the Chinese calendar.

Rat won the race, with the pig strolling in last.

Chinese New Year Questions

1. Chinese New Year has got another name. What is it?

2. Name another country which celebrates Chinese New Year.

3. What do some people do to their houses at this time of year?

4. Which colour means good luck?

5. What is the name of the fireworks that are let off?

6. People perform dances at this festival. Which animals do they dance like?

7. Loud music is played to frighten away what kind of spirits?

8. What do some Chinese families do the night before the New Year festival?

9. Who asked the animals to have a race?

10. Which animal came first in the race?

Chinese New Year Answers

1. Chinese New Year has got another name. What is it?
The other name for the Chinese New Year is Lunar New Year.
2. Name another country which celebrates Chinese New Year.
Either of the following: Malaysia and Philippines.
3. What do some people do to their houses at this time of year?
Some people clean their houses at this time of year.
4. Which colour means good luck?
Red means good luck.
5. What is the name of the fireworks that are let off?
The name of the fireworks that are let off is firecrackers.
6. People perform dances at this festival. Which animals do they dance like?
People dance like dragons and lions.
7. Loud music is played to frighten away what kind of spirits?
Loud music is played to frighten away bad spirits.
8. What do some Chinese families do the night before the New Year festival?
Some Chinese families have a special meal together the night before the New Year festival.
9. Who asked the animals to have a race?
The Jade Emperor.
10. Which animal came first in the race?
The rat came first in the race.

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What Is Chinese New Year?

Chinese New Year is a traditional and very important Chinese holiday. It is also known as the Spring Festival, or the Lunar New Year because the Chinese calendar uses the moon year as well as the solar year.

Chinese New Year is also celebrated in many other countries: Hong Kong, Taiwan, Singapore, Indonesia and the Philippines are only a few.



Facts About Chinese New Year

- The date changes each year depending on the lunar calendar.
- It is the longest festival in the Chinese calendar, lasting up to 15 days.
- It is a time for people to spring clean their houses.
- Chinese New Year is symbolic of letting go of the past and welcoming new beginnings.

How Is It Celebrated?

Chinese New Year is celebrated through a number of traditions.

Red envelopes: Red represents good luck, fortune and joy in Chinese traditions. Money is given in red envelopes. The amount people receive is usually an even number.

Firecrackers: Firecrackers are popular during the Chinese New Year. They are thought to scare off evil spirits. Some countries have banned them as they can be dangerous.

Lion and dragon dances: These dances are performed by

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talented people, under huge dragon and lion costumes. Loud music with cymbals and drums, is played. This is to frighten away bad spirits. The dragon dance is a popular part of the celebrations.

Food and families: It is usual for Chinese families to gather together for dinner the night before the Chinese New Year begins. Chicken and prawns represent happiness, whilst noodles represent long life.



Legends

Each year is named after a different animal. This comes from a legendary Chinese story. The story goes that the Jade Emperor told the animals to have a race. He would name each year depending on the order the animals finished the race.

Rat won the race, with the pig strolling in last.

Chinese New Year Questions

1. Name two other countries which celebrate the Chinese New Year.

2. How long can the festival last?

3. What is Chinese New Year symbolic of doing?

4. Name one thing that the colour red represents.

5. What does it mean when it says that 'some countries have banned the use of firecrackers'?

6. What word is used to describe the people who perform the dragon and lion dances?

7. Why is loud music played during the dancing?

8. Which food represents long life?

9. How did the Jade Emperor decide which order the years should be in?

10. Which animal is the last in the order and why?

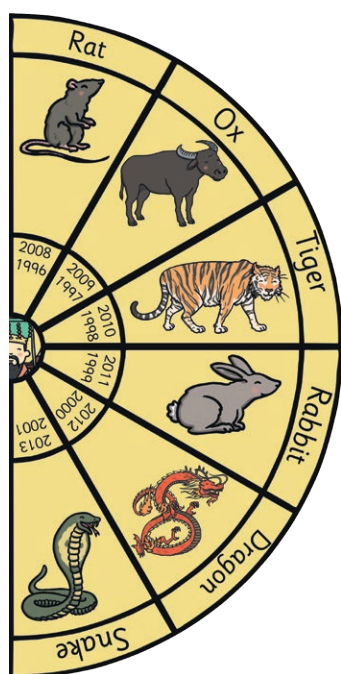
Chinese New Year Answers

1. Name two other countries which celebrate the Chinese New Year.
Any two of the following: Hong Kong, Taiwan, Singapore, Indonesia and the Philippines.
2. How long can the festival last?
The festival can last for up to 15 days.
3. What is Chinese New Year symbolic of doing?
The Chinese New Year is symbolic of letting go of the past and welcoming new beginnings.
4. Name one thing that the colour red represents.
Any of the following: The colour red represents good luck, fortune and joy.
5. What does it mean if when it says that “some countries have banned the use of firecrackers”?
‘Some countries have banned the use of firecrackers’ means that firecrackers are not allowed to be let off in some countries.
6. What word is used to describe the people who perform the dragon and lion dances?
The word used to describe the people who perform the dragon and lion dances, is ‘talented’.
7. Why is loud music played during the dancing?
Loud music is played during the dances to frighten away the bad spirits.
8. Which food represents long life?
Noodles represent long life.
9. How did the Jade Emperor decide which order the years should be in?
The Jade Emperor decided which order the years should be in by asking the animals to run a race and whatever order they finished in would be the order of the years.
10. Which animal is the last in the order and why?
Pig is the last in the order because he lost the race.

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What Is Chinese New Year?

Chinese New Year is a traditional and very important Chinese holiday. It was originally a festival to honour ancestors as well as holy or sacred beings. It is also known as the Spring Festival. The celebration can be referred to as the Lunar New Year because the Chinese calendar uses the moon phases (the amount of the moon you can see from Earth depending on how much is lit by the sun), as well as the solar year.



Facts About Chinese New Year

- The date changes each year depending on the lunar calendar.
- It is the longest festival in the Chinese calendar, lasting as long as 15 days.
- Each year is named after an animal and anyone born in that year is said to have the characteristics of that animal.
- It is a popular time for people to clean their houses.
- Chinese New Year is symbolic of letting go of the past and welcoming new beginnings.

How Is It Celebrated?

Chinese New Year is celebrated through a number of traditions.

Red envelopes: Red is an important colour in Chinese culture as it symbolises good luck, fortune and joy. Money is given in red envelopes. The amount people receive is usually an even number. The amount cannot be divided by four, as in Chinese

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tradition, the number 4 means death.

Firecrackers: Firecrackers are popular during Chinese New Year. They are thought to scare off evil spirits. Some countries have banned the use of firecrackers as they can be dangerous.

Lion and dragon dances: These dances are performed by highly-skilled acrobats, under huge dragon and lion costumes. The dance is accompanied by cymbals and drums, to frighten away bad spirits. The dragon dance is a highlight of the festivals around the world, and enormous crowds gather to watch it.

Food and families: It's common for Chinese families to have a reunion dinner the night before Chinese New Year festivities begin. Chicken and prawns represent happiness, whilst noodles represent long life.



Legends

Each year is named after a different animal. The story goes that the Jade Emperor requested the animals have a race so that he could decide the order of the Chinese years. He would name each year depending on the order the animals finished the race.

Rat won the race, with the pig strolling in last.

Chinese New Year Questions

1. Apart from celebrating the new year, what other purpose did the celebrations have?

2. Name two other names that Chinese New Year is known as.

3. What does it mean when someone is born in the year of a particular animal?

4. Why do you think Chinese New Year is a popular time for people to clean their houses?

5. Why is red an important colour at this time?

6. Explain why the money in envelopes should not be an amount that can be divided by 4.

7. Why are firecrackers not used in some countries?

8. The loud music is used to 'frighten' away the bad spirits. What other word could the author have used?

9. Explain why you think people might eat chicken and noodles at this time of year.

10. Why did the Jade Emperor ask the animals to have a race?

Chinese New Year Answers

1. Apart from celebrating the new year, what other purpose did the celebrations have?
Apart from celebrating the new year, another purpose for the celebrations was to honour ancestors and holy or sacred beings.
2. Name two other names that Chinese New Year is known as.
Two other names that Chinese New Year is known as is Spring Festival or Lunar New Year.
3. What does it mean when someone is born in the year of a particular animal?
When a person is born in the year of a particular animal, it means they will have the characteristics of that animal.
4. Why do you think Chinese New Year is a popular time for people to clean their houses?
Possible answers: they are getting rid of the past and welcoming the new year; they want a clean start; a fresh start.
5. Why is red an important colour at this time?
Red is an important colour at this time because it symbolises good luck, fortune and joy and these are things people want for the coming year.
6. Explain why the money in envelopes should not be an amount that can be divided by 4.
Money given in envelopes should not be an amount that can be divided by 4 because that number means death in Chinese traditions.
7. Why are firecrackers not used in some countries?
Firecrackers are not used in some countries because they are dangerous and have been banned.
8. The loud music is used to 'frighten' away the bad spirits. What other word could the author have used?
Possible answers: scare, get rid of.
9. Explain why you think people might eat chicken and noodles at this time of year.
People might eat chicken and noodles at this time of year because chicken represents happiness and noodles represent long life, and these are things people want in the new year.
10. Why did the the Jade Emperor ask the animals to have a race?
The Jade Emperor asked the animals to have a race so that he could decide what order to name the years.