



Chinese New Year

14

✓ Lesson Objectives

Core Content Objectives

Students will:

- ✓ Locate Asia and China on a map or globe
- ✓ Describe the Chinese New Year

Language Arts Objectives

The following language arts objectives are addressed in this lesson. Objectives aligning with the Common Core State Standards are noted with the corresponding standard in parentheses. Refer to the Alignment Chart for additional standards addressed in all lessons in this domain.

Students will:

- ✓ Interpret information from a Celebrations Venn diagram and connect it to information learned in “Chinese New Year” (RI.2.7)
- ✓ Compare and contrast in writing Diwali and Chinese New Year (RI.2.9)
- ✓ With assistance, categorize and organize facts and information from “Chinese New Year” in a Venn diagram (W.2.8)
- ✓ Use word parts to determine the meaning of words ending in the suffix *-uos* in “Chinese New Year” (L.2.4c)
- ✓ Prior to listening to “Chinese New Year,” identify orally what they know and have learned about early Chinese civilization
- ✓ Prior to listening to “Chinese New Year,” orally predict how Chinese New Year is similar to or different from New Year’s Day in the United States, and then compare the actual outcomes to predictions

Core Vocabulary

adhering, v. Following or holding onto

Example: Adhering to old routines can be difficult when moving to a new place.

Variation(s): adhere, adheres, adhered

banished, v. Sent or drove away

Example: The good king banished the wicked pirate for stealing his ships.

Variation(s): banish, banishes, banishing

grudges, n. Bad feelings held against one or more persons


Example: Even though her brothers apologized, Andrea was still holding grudges instead of forgiving them.

Variation(s): grudge

prosperous, adj. Having good fortune or success

Example: Everyone in the neighborhood wished the new store owners a prosperous start.

Variation(s): none

<i>At a Glance</i>	Exercise	Materials	Minutes
<i>Introducing the Read-Aloud</i>	What Have We Already Learned?	map from Map Quest extension; world map or globe	10
	Making Predictions About the Read-Aloud		
	Purpose for Listening		
<i>Presenting the Read-Aloud</i>	Chinese New Year		15
<i>Discussing the Read-Aloud</i>	Comprehension Questions		10
	Word Work: Prosperous	chart paper, chalkboard, or whiteboard	5
 Complete Remainder of the Lesson Later in the Day			
<i>Extensions</i>	Vocabulary Instructional Activity: Traditions	drawing paper, drawing tools	20
	Celebrations Venn Diagram	Instructional Master 14B-1 (optional) chart paper, chalkboard, or whiteboard	



Chinese New Year

14_A

Introducing the Read-Aloud

10 minutes

What Have We Already Learned?

Have students locate China on the class map, a world map, or a globe. Have each student share one thing s/he learned about early Chinese civilization and contributions from ancient China.

Making Predictions About the Read-Aloud

Share the title of the read-aloud, and ask students to predict how the Chinese New Year is similar to or different from New Year's Day in the United States.

Purpose for Listening

Tell students to listen carefully to see if their predictions are correct.



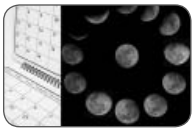
Chinese New Year

◀ Show image 14A-1: Fireworks ¹

- 1 What do you see in this picture?
- 2 How many of you have seen fireworks splinter, or split, the darkness?
- 3 Have you ever watched fireworks as a part of a New Year's celebration?

Weeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeee! Pop! Weeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeee! Pop!

The air crackles as fiery bursts of color illuminate the night sky. Sparks fly. Red. Green. Yellow. Blue. Eyes are glued to the night sky above, as fireworks splinter the darkness. ² It is the beginning of the Chinese New Year. ³



◀ Show image 14A-2: Calendar and moon cycle

- 4 [Pause for student responses.]

In the United States, we celebrate New Year's Day on the same day every year. Who knows what day that is? ⁴ That's right. It's on the first day of January. But in China, the calendar is based on the cycles of the moon. Because of this, the Chinese New Year does not always fall on the same day every year on the calendar we use in the United States. The New Year in China begins with a new moon and the start date ranges from the end of January to the middle of February. ⁵ Unlike New Year's celebrations in the United States, Chinese New Year's celebrations last for two whole weeks!

- 5 What do you see when there is a new moon? [Students who studied *Astronomy* in Grade 1 of the Core Knowledge Language Arts program may remember that the moon only appears to change shape depending on how sunlight hits the moon during its orbit. When the moon is between the sun and the earth, it is called a new moon. We can't actually see it, because no light is reflecting off the moon toward us.]

The celebration of the Chinese New Year, the longest and most important of all Chinese festivals, can be traced all the way back to the time of Confucius. For centuries, Chinese people have cleaned their houses from top to bottom in the days before the festival, bought new clothes, prepared special foods, and wished each other good fortune at the beginning of each new calendar year. These customs are continued even today.



◀ Show image 14A-3: Fireworks, food, red decorations, and red envelopes

The celebration begins with fireworks displays on New Year's Eve, which are believed to scare away evil spirits and are followed by other age-old traditions: children are allowed to stay up late on New Year's Eve, **adhering** to ⁶ a traditional belief that each extra

- 6 or following

7 Is any of this similar to your New Year's celebration?

8 What happy wishes would you write down and share with your family?

9 [Point to them in the image.]



◀ **Show image 14A-4: Chinese dragons dancing in the street**

wakeful hour will add years onto their parents' lives. Feasting on fish, pork, poultry, tangerines, oranges, dumplings, and special cakes, families gather to wish each other good luck.⁷

Luck and good fortune are common themes for the Chinese New Year. The color red, thought to be a sign of good fortune and happiness, is the color chosen to wear during the festivities. Homes are decorated with red paper cut into designs, and happy wishes written on red paper are also hung throughout the house.⁸ Children and unmarried adults often receive red envelopes⁹ with money tucked inside; the people who receive these envelopes are also supposed to receive good fortune in the New Year.

10 Why do you think that red is the most popular color for dragons?

11 *Prosperous* means to have good fortune or enough money for the things you need. So people are preparing for a year of financial success.

12 or driven away

13 Grudges are bad feelings held against others.



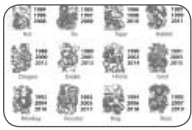
◀ **Show image 14A-5: Birthday cake**

Dragons are another good luck symbol in Chinese culture. During New Year's celebrations, people dress up in dragon costumes and parade and dance in the streets. Red is often the most popular color for dragons, making them especially lucky!¹⁰

The main focus of the two weeks of New Year celebrations is to prepare for a **prosperous** year ahead.¹¹ People believe that evil spirits are scared off by fireworks and **banished**¹² from homes, as every inch of every room is scrubbed clean. New clothes and haircuts give people a sense of fresh, new beginnings. People forgive one another for past **grudges**, agreeing to put their disagreements behind them.¹³ Some people visit temples to give thanks and pray for good times ahead. Friends and families everywhere enjoy relaxing together.

14 What does lunar mean?

At the end of the first week, on the seventh day of celebrations, everyone has a birthday! The Chinese celebrate everyone's birthday on that day rather than on the day on which each person was born. In China, time is measured differently than it is in the United States. Their traditional calendar is called a lunar calendar.¹⁴ A lunar calendar is based on the cycles of the moon. The New Year begins with the appearance of a new moon.



← **Show image 14A-6: Twelve animal signs of Chinese New Year**

15 Who was the Buddha?

16 So each New Year marks the start of the next animal year. Once we reach the end of the list, the year of the boar (or pig), the cycle begins all over again with the year of the rat.

Each new year is named for a particular animal—rat, ox, tiger, rabbit, dragon, snake, horse, sheep, monkey, rooster, dog, and boar (or pig). According to Chinese legend, when the Buddha was dying, he called all the animals in the kingdom to his side.¹⁵ Only twelve animals came. As a reward for their loyalty to him, the Buddha named a year after each of these twelve animals.¹⁶



← **Show image 14A-7: Street celebration with dragon**

17 What do we see when the moon is full?

18 What two animals symbolize luck to the Chinese people?

19 or crowds

On the fifteenth day of the Chinese New Year, when the moon is full, the lucky dragon leads parades all across China.¹⁷ Up to fifty people fit inside large cloth dragons, stretching the length of a city block, bobbing and weaving their way through the streets. Cloth lions, also symbolizing power and luck, nod their papier-mâché heads in time to the drumming and music.¹⁸ Vendors sell dumplings—sticky rice balls stuffed with sweet and salty fillings—to the throngs¹⁹ of people in the streets.

The fifteenth day of the Chinese New Year is the day of the Lantern Festival, when thousands of colorful lanterns, large and small, cover the marketplace. Some people spend an entire year designing lanterns for competitions held that day. Others write riddles and post them on their lanterns for a popular guessing game. When the light of the lanterns mingles with the light of the moon on this final day of celebrations, there is joy and hope for the year ahead.

Comprehension Questions

10 minutes

1. *Evaluative* Were your predictions correct about the similarities and differences between Chinese New Year and New Year's Day as it is celebrated in the United States? (Answers may vary.)
2. *Inferential* What do people celebrate and hope for during Chinese New Year celebrations? (prosperity, good fortune, luck)
3. *Inferential* What symbols of good luck are displayed during the Chinese New Year? (the color red and dragons; Red is used to decorate homes and streets; people wear red clothing; people parade the streets in dragon costumes.)
4. *Inferential* How do people prepare for the Chinese New Year? (They clean their homes, buy new clothes and get new haircuts, prepare special foods, set off fireworks which they believe will banish evil spirits, and forget grudges; they also allow children to stay up late, adhering to a traditional belief that each extra wakeful hour will add years onto their parents' lives.)
5. *Evaluative* What differences are there between the Chinese New Year celebration and New Year's in the United States? (New Year's in the United States happens on the same day every year, January 1, and lasts for one day. The Chinese New Year begins with a new moon in either January or February and lasts two weeks. They are celebrated with different activities.)
6. *Literal* When do the Chinese usually celebrate their birthdays? (on the seventh day of the Chinese New Year and not on the day they were born)
7. *Inferential* What is the Chinese lunar calendar? (a calendar based on the cycles of the moon with names for each new year) What is each new year named after? (one of the twelve animals that, according to a Buddhist legend, came to visit the Buddha when he was dying: rat, ox, tiger, rabbit, dragon, snake, horse, sheep, monkey, rooster, dog, and pig/boar)

[Please continue to model the *Think Pair Share* process for students, as necessary, and scaffold students in their use of the process.]

I am going to ask a question. I will give you a minute to think about the question, and then I will ask you to turn to your neighbor and discuss the question. Finally, I will call on several of you to share what you discussed with your partner.

8. *Inferential Think Pair Share*: What activities did you hear about that are parts of the Chinese New Year celebration? (Answers may vary.)
9. After hearing today's read-aloud and questions and answers, do you have any remaining questions? [If time permits, you may wish to allow for individual, group, or class research of the text and/or other resources to answer these questions.]

Word Work: Prosperous

5 minutes

1. In the read-aloud you heard, "The main focus of the two-weeks of [Chinese] New Year celebrations is to prepare for a *prosperous* year ahead."
2. Say the word *prosperous* with me.
3. *Prosperous* means having good fortune or success.
4. Juan's new construction business had a prosperous first year.
5. Have you ever had a prosperous year, week, or day? Try to use the word *prosperous* when you tell about it, and describe why it was prosperous. [Ask two or three students. If necessary, guide and/or rephrase the students' responses: "I once had a prosperous _____ because . . ."]
6. What's the word we've been talking about? What part of speech is the word *prosperous*?