

CHINESE NEW YEAR

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Intermediate A2–B1

PDF 6 – Reading & Vocabulary

PDF 7 – Language & Discussion

PDF 8 – Critical Thinking & Homework

Reading: A Time to Come Home

Chinese New Year, also known as the Spring Festival, is one of the most important traditional celebrations in China. It usually takes place between late January and mid-February, because its date follows the traditional Chinese lunisolar calendar.

For many people, the most important part of the festival is spending time with family. In the days before the celebrations, people clean and decorate their homes, prepare food and buy gifts. Red decorations are especially popular because red is traditionally associated with happiness, good fortune and protection.

Food plays a central role in family celebrations. Many families prepare dumplings, fish, rice cakes and other special dishes. The foods and their meanings can vary between regions and families. In some parts of China, dumplings are particularly popular in the north. Families may prepare them together, turning cooking into an important part of the celebration.

The New Year period is also a time when many people travel to their hometowns to visit relatives. This journey can be difficult because millions of people travel at around the same time. For many families, however, being together is worth the effort.

Festivities may include lantern displays, fireworks where permitted, temple fairs, lion dances and dragon dances. Children may receive red envelopes containing money from older relatives. The celebrations are not exactly the same everywhere, but the ideas of family, good wishes and a fresh beginning are important to many people.

Activity 1 – Reading Comprehension

Answer in complete sentences.

1. What is another name for Chinese New Year?
2. When does the festival usually take place?
3. Why are red decorations popular?
4. Name three foods that people may prepare.
5. Why do many people travel during this period?
6. What might children receive from older relatives?
7. Name two activities people may enjoy during the festival.
8. Are Chinese New Year traditions exactly the same everywhere?

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Activity 2 – Vocabulary in Context

Find words or phrases in the reading that mean:

1. Connected with a particular area. _____
2. A journey to a place where someone grew up. _____
3. A good thing that may happen in the future. _____
4. A large number of people. _____
5. A period of celebration. _____
6. A new start. _____

Activity 3 – True or False?

1. Chinese New Year always takes place on the same date. _____
2. Red is traditionally linked with good fortune. _____
3. All Chinese families eat exactly the same food. _____
4. Many people travel to visit relatives. _____
5. Dumplings are popular in some parts of China. _____
6. Children may receive red envelopes. _____

Activity 4 – Food and Meaning

Discuss:

1. Why do you think special foods are important during festivals?
2. Does your family prepare food together for special occasions?
3. Which dish in the reading would you most like to try?
4. Do you think food can help people feel connected to their culture?

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Teacher's Key

Activity 1:

1. The Spring Festival.
2. Between late January and mid-February.
3. Red is traditionally associated with happiness, good fortune and protection.
4. Any three: dumplings, fish, rice cakes and other special dishes.
5. To visit family and return to their hometowns.
6. Red envelopes containing money.
7. Any two: lantern displays, fireworks where permitted, temple fairs, lion dances or dragon dances.
8. No, traditions vary between regions and families.

Activity 2: 1 regional, 2 hometown, 3 good fortune, 4 millions, 5 festivities, 6 fresh beginning. Accept contextually appropriate alternatives.

Activity 3: 1 False, 2 True, 3 False, 4 True, 5 True, 6 True.

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