

# Lunar New Year

## • Curriculum Connections •

by | Cathy Spagnoli

S ometime every year, between January 21 and February 19, the Lunar New Year comes to brighten winter and herald the arrival of spring. This year it comes on January 22. The Lunar New Year is celebrated widely in China, Taiwan, Singapore and overseas Chinese communities. It is also celebrated in Vietnam and in Korea. The Chinese, Vietnamese and Korean Lunar New Years celebrations are related, but there are differences as well.

### What the Lunar New Years Celebrations Share

- **Respect for the ancestors and elders.** In all three cultures, offerings and prayers to ancestors are made; special foods, incense and more are placed on home altars, and the spirits of ancestors are invited to visit. Children bow before parents and grandparents, and listen to their advice.
- **The animal zodiac.** Everyone becomes a year older during the New Year. The cycle of sixty years rotates through twelve animals, each animal giving its characteristics to those born that year. The year 2004 is the Year of the Monkey. People born in this year are clever, funny and inventive.
- **Family gatherings.** Many city dwellers travel long distances to their parents' homes.
- **Clean and decorated homes.** Dirt and ill luck are banished from homes. In Vietnam and China, all debts are paid off.
- **Special foods.** During New Year's Eve day, special foods are prepared.
- **New Year's Eve traditions.** At night, families welcome the New Year with firecrackers in China and other sounds in Vietnam (where fireworks are now illegal). Many stay up late; in Korea, tradition warns that if you sleep, your eyebrows will turn white! Many people give prayers, and a special dinner is enjoyed by the Chinese.
- **Good thoughts and good behavior.** To start the New Year off well, you must not lie, use bad language, raise your voice or break anything.
- **Monetary gifts from the elders to the children.** After the children pay respect, they receive gifts of money from their elders. The Vietnamese and Chinese put the money in red envelopes.
- **New clothes.**
- **Feasts, visits and well-wishing, gift giving, gambling and playing, going to temple for Buddhists and fortune telling.**
- **Dances.** The Vietnamese and Chinese like the lion and dragon dances, while lively farmers' bands are popular with Koreans in the rural areas.
- **Multi-day celebrations.** Today's celebrations are shorter than those in the past, but often last at least three days.



### How the Lunar New Years Celebrations Differ

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#### China

*Xin Nian* (This means “New Year,” but in China the holiday is now called Spring Festival.)

**Greeting:** “*Gung Hey Fat Choy*”

**Decorations:**

- red, the color of happiness, is found everywhere
- New Year prints and pictures of door god guardians are displayed
- sayings for good fortune are hung
- paper cuts-outs brighten windows
- blossoms—narcissus, peach, plum and more—lighten homes

**Traditions:**

- The Kitchen God, whose picture hangs near the stove, is sent away on the 23rd or 24th of the last lunar month to report the family’s activities to the Jade Emperor in the heavens. Paper horses, money and objects are burned to help the journey. Sweet, sticky rice may be smeared on the drawing, perhaps to help sweeten the report or to make lips stick together in silence! In some parts of China, the Kitchen God is portrayed as a couple.
- Taboos warn people not to use sharp objects on New Year’s Day (lest luck be cut) or to sweep (since good fortune might be swept away).



**Food:**

- *Niangao* is eaten. It is a sweet steamed glutinous rice pudding often filled with walnuts and dates. Introduce it with *The Runaway Rice Cake* by Ying Chang Compestine.
- *Jiaozi*, small meat dumplings, are always eaten. They are also featured in many legends—they turn to gold and silver in a poor man’s soup, are thought to have been made first by a doctor to nourish the poor or created by a clever wife for her husband to eat while studying.
- Chinese feasts are rich in taste, and in meaning. Foods are often served because they are homonyms for words of good fortune: gold (orange), surplus (fish), etc. Many dishes have elegant names: Broth of Prosperity (a type of chicken soup), Mist of Harmony (seasoned pork shoulder) or Jade of Ink, Gold of Darkness (sea cucumber, squid and seaweed dish).
- Feasts feature an eight-sided tray with special treats called “The Tray of Togetherness.” It usually contains candied melon for growth and good health; melon seed dyed red to symbolize happiness and truth; lychee nut for strong family relationships; kumquat for prosperity; coconut for togetherness; peanuts for long life; longan for many good sons; and lotus seed for many children.

**Length:** The Chinese New Year can continue for days, and officially ends on Full Moon day (the 15th). That night, the Lantern Festival brightens the sky in a magical way. The illustrations on the lanterns are often elaborate. Over the years, they have included historic stories, crabs with moving claws, dragonflies with flapping wings and birds with swaying necks. Some round lanterns rolled, others were on wheels and some spun madly, powered by hot air.

#### Vietnam

*Tet Nguyen Dan* (Tet is the Lunar New Year in Vietnam.)

**Greeting:** “*Chuc Mung Nam Moi*”

**Decorations:**

- a Tet tree (often a kumquat tree) is bought and decorated
- apricot or peach blossoms are placed in the home
- couplets are displayed
- red is everywhere
- *Cay Neu* are often placed in front of homes for protection while the Kitchen Gods are away. They are bamboo poles stripped of leaves except at the top, wrapped in red paper and decorated with clay bells and talismans.

**Traditions:**

- The Kitchen Gods are also a part of Tet, but they are frequently pictured as two men and one woman. See [http://www.vnstyle.vdc.com.vn/lunar\\_newyear/tet\\_legend/index.html](http://www.vnstyle.vdc.com.vn/lunar_newyear/tet_legend/index.html) for their story. Many say that the idea of three gods comes from the three stones that often hold up the cooking pot in Vietnam. The gods wish to ascend quickly, so a drawing of a carp or a fish to ride on is placed beneath the altar. Markets also sell sets of three miniature paper hats and other objects to burn as they leave.
- The first visitor on New Year's Day is very important and is often specially invited to make sure that success will come to family.
- The first animal sound heard for the New Year is also meaningful: a dog's bark means no fear of thieves, a cock's crow signals bad crops and a water buffalo's lowing reminds listeners to work hard.

**Food:**

- *Banh Chung*, a square rice cake stuffed with meat that represents the earth, was created for a long-ago contest and now is essential for Tet. For more information, visit <http://www.vwam.com/vets/travel/tetcakes.html>.
- *Mut Tet* is a tray that is filled with candied fruits, vegetables and even blossoms, and happily shared with everyone.

**Length:** After much visiting, business resumes on the fourth day, and the official end comes after seven days, when the *Cay Neu* is taken down. The fifteenth, the first Full Moon of the year, is usually observed with visits to Buddhist temples

because of the popular saying, "Paying homage to Buddha all year long is not as effective as praying on the fifteenth day of the first lunar month."

**Korea**

*Seol-nal* in Korea

**Greeting:** "Say-hay boke mahn-he pah-du-say-oh."

**Background:** The Koreans had long celebrated Lunar New Year, but the Japanese rulers in the twentieth century forced celebrations of the Japanese New Year on January 1. After they left, the earliest Christian leaders continued to follow the January 1 celebration. At last, both were declared public holidays in South Korea. Although many Koreans enjoy two New Years, the most popular celebration is for the Lunar New Year.

**Decorations:**

- are simpler than the Chinese and Vietnamese New Years
- a special strainer, *bok jo ri*, is placed in some homes to protect people from evil spirits
- the altar to the ancestors assumes great importance and the offerings are many and carefully set out (visit <http://www.clickasia.co.kr/about/h0101.htm> for details of the ceremony)

**Traditions:**

- The ancestors and elders are honored.
- Auspicious signs, such as the weather, are important. If the weather is clear, or a south wind blows on New Year's Day or on the fifteenth day of the month, an abundant year will follow. When the sun is red, a drought will come, while a north wind foretells a bad year.

**Food:**

- It is a time for fine foods and feasts, but there are not as many special New Year foods. Most important for all, though, is a soup called *ttokkuk* which features sliced rice cakes in special beef broth.

**Length:** The celebration lasts three days. On the first Full Moon there may also be other ceremonies and games such as cracking and eating nuts in the morning to have strong teeth and scare away evil, crossing a bridge one time for each year of life to bring good health and swinging torches or tin cans with fire to chase away rats in the fields.

### Moving the Lunar New Year Across the Curriculum

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Use the following suggestions and resources to celebrate across the curriculum.

#### Social Studies

- Discuss how students celebrate their New Year. Do they have special foods, prayers, cleaning, games, parties, visits or feasting?
- Create a class calendar or list of all the New Year celebrations around the world. Visit <http://www.celebratetoday.com/newyears.html> as a starting point.
- Make a comparison chart of the three Lunar New Years celebrations. Discuss similarities and differences.
- Ask students how they might spend lucky money if they received it for the New Year. Then share *Sam and the Lucky Money* by Karen Chinn, which tells how a young Chinese-American boy spent his New Year money to help someone else.
- Who would you invite for a first visit in Vietnam? Why?
- What sounds might someone who lives in the U.S. hear first on New Year's Day? Create a meaning for each sound.
- Ancestors and elders are very important during the Lunar New Year. Do you celebrate any holidays to honor your ancestors or elder relatives?

#### Language Arts

**Spring Couplets.** In Vietnam and China, good luck verses written in black pen on red strips of paper are found in houses and stores. There are two types: a simple phrase with four Chinese characters and a more challenging form of matched couplets. Couplets have a head (the first line) and a tail. The tail corresponds to the head, matching word for word and phrase for phrase. In the past, Chinese children practiced writing couplets by beginning with one-word heads and tails, then two, three, five, six and finally, seven word couplets—the most common. Share these two examples, then try writing several class spring couplets!

*Our business grows like thick woods and slender bamboo.*

*Our wealth soars like tall hills and steep ranges.*

*Greeted by a joyful spirit, flowers all wear smiles on their faces.  
Moved by the cheerful sounds, birds also understand the lyrics.*

(From *Chinese New Year: Fact & Folklore* by William Hu.)

**Lunar Legends.** Legends surround the Lunar New Years. Books and Web sites containing legends are listed on pages 8–9. Share them with students and if anyone in your community celebrates a Lunar New Year, encourage students to collect legends orally. Students could also collect legends by mail or e-mail from pen pals, exchange students, sister schools, etc. Younger students can illustrate lunar legends, while older students can retell a legend and make a class book of Lunar New Year Legends.

**Lantern Riddles.** During the Chinese lantern festival, one type of lantern traditionally has riddles written on it. A Chinese legend says that the first riddle lantern was written to criticize a snobby merchant (who was white-haired, thin and short). One day, after he snubbed a poor scholar and served a cheat in fancy clothing instead, the scholar wrote the following riddle and placed it on a lantern near the merchant's shop:



*With a sharp narrow head, a short body, and silvery white,*

*On the scale, little weight shows,*

*Eyes narrow and often long,*

*It looks only at clothing and not at people.*

Everyone laughed at this description, which fit the merchant perfectly, so he ran in a rage to the scholar. But the scholar only smiled and said that the riddle was not about the merchant at all; the answer was clearly a sewing needle! Share these two Chinese riddles:

*Two white walls and between them a yellow beauty.*

(An egg.)

*Two pieces of bamboo drive white ducks through a narrow door.*

(Eating rice with chopsticks.)

Show older students how the riddle is a metaphor—describing something, then asking the mind to leap and find an answer with related characteristics. Encourage students to make up their own simple versions, or try creating a few class riddles.

## Art

**Dragons.** Dragons rule for Vietnamese and Chinese New Years. Download some great dragon pictures from

<http://www.newton.mec.edu/Angier/DimSum/Dragon%20Pictures.html>. For directions for individual and class dragons, visit: <http://www.adoptvietnam.org/vietnamese/tet-dragon.htm> or <http://www.kckpl.lib.ks.us/ys/CRAFTS/Dragon.htm>.

The book *Look What We've Brought You from Vietnam* is another resource.

**Gift Packets.** Have students make their own packets from red paper and put treasures inside them. For directions, visit: [http://www.chinatown-online.co.uk/pages/new\\_year/class\\_packet.html](http://www.chinatown-online.co.uk/pages/new_year/class_packet.html).

Decorations are also in Fay Robinson's *Chinese New Year* and in Chambers' *Chinese New Year*.

**Korean Kites.** Korean kites have a long history. They've been used in warfare to calm the population, to shoot firearms, to scare the enemy and to give instructions to troops. Today kite flying remains a traditional Korean New Year pastime. The shield kite is the most popular because it's a great fighting kite and very easy to control. Making an actual shield kite can be tricky (the hardy can visit <http://www.fki.or.kr/other/kbr/2003-04/html/culture.asp> for directions) but students can easily make kite pictures. Give each student a paper rectangle in the traditional width:length ratio of 2:3. Have them make and cut out a hole in the center (half the width of the kite), then decorate the kites in traditional or new ways. Refer to <http://www.csun.edu/~ghsiung/fighters4.html> or [http://www.koreakite.or.kr/kiteshop/e\\_kiteshop1.html](http://www.koreakite.or.kr/kiteshop/e_kiteshop1.html) for ideas. Older students may enjoy reading Linda Sue Park's *The Kite Fighters* about a New Year Kite-fighting competition.

**Paper Cut-outs.** Students of any grade can make paper cut-outs. Have them use the basic method for cutting paper snowflakes: fold a piece of paper

several times, cut out designs, then open up to enjoy. Challenge them to make ones with a Chinese flair and with typical New Year themes: flowers, good luck symbols, birds, animals and famous legends. This site can help with patterns and inspiration:

<http://www.newton.mec.edu/Angier/DimSum/paper-cuts.html>.

**New Year Prints.** Colorful pictures on doorposts and in homes are a part of Chinese and Vietnamese New Years. They share optimism for the year. See *Mooncakes and Hungry Ghosts* for a fine description of Chinese prints, then introduce some of the lovely Vietnamese paintings on [http://www.vnstyle.vdc.com.vn/lunar\\_newyear/traditional\\_painting/index.html](http://www.vnstyle.vdc.com.vn/lunar_newyear/traditional_painting/index.html). See how the paintings are made in "Traditional Tet Paintings" by Lisa Spivey on

[http://www.thingsasian.com/goto\\_article/article.1044.html](http://www.thingsasian.com/goto_article/article.1044.html). Students can try to make their own bright prints, using any simple printmaking technique, or they can draw/paint bright pictures for good luck. Encourage the use of traditional symbols: fish (abundance), melons (for children), bats (good luck), dragons (power) or deer (high position). If some students need a guide, download patterns from [http://www.chineseparade.com/history/fun/coloring\\_book.asp](http://www.chineseparade.com/history/fun/coloring_book.asp)

**Calligraphy.** Calligraphy is a popular art during the Chinese and Vietnamese New Years celebrations. Try to find someone who can teach students a little of this wonderful tranquil art. If you can't use the traditional method, challenge students to sample the shapes through the following resources: <http://www.childbook.com/images/coloring/character-truth.jpg>, [http://www.newton.mec.edu/Angier/DimSum/new\\_year\\_g.html](http://www.newton.mec.edu/Angier/DimSum/new_year_g.html) or *The Simple Art of Chinese Calligraphy*.

## Drama

Many New Year legends can be acted out. Have students look through the lunar legends to find the best prospects. They could also create small plays, perhaps like the Vietnamese play mentioned in MacMillan's *Tet*, where the Kitchen God gives a very humorous account to the Jade Emperor of what he's observed through the year.

### Dance

The Vietnamese and Chinese also celebrate through the powerful lion and dragon dances. To share this excitement, read about six-year-old Ernie as he dances in New York City in *Lion Dancer: Ernie Wan's Chinese New Year*. Have students make a class dragon (see page 5), then put together a dance/parade with the dragon. Introduce the idea with one of these stories: *Dragon Parade: A Chinese New Year Story*; *The Dancing Dragon*; *Silk Peony, Parade Dragon*; and *When the Circus Came to Town*. For the parade, have two students hold dragon pearls (large balls on sticks) in front of the dragon. Ask others to play drums, pots and pans for loud dancing music. Have dragon dancers practice moving together. Hang some greens with a bit of money for the dragon to capture, and later share!



### Science

**Animal Traits.** In traditional Chinese thought, the dragon combined the traits of various animals. Share the following list and have students identify what characteristic of each animal would help a dragon. If desired, students can create their own composite animals—defining traits from “donor animals,” then giving the new animal a name, diet, setting, etc.

- head of a camel
- whiskers of a catfish
- horns of a deer
- eyes of a rabbit
- ears of a water buffalo
- feet of a tiger
- neck of a serpent
- belly of a frog
- scales of a carp

- claws of a hawk

### Cooking

Traditional New Year dishes are often time consuming and tricky to make in a classroom or library. But the following simple adaptations of Korean rice cake soup and kimchi will work. More ideas can be found on the following Web sites:

- Niangao:  
<http://www.kitchenrecipes.com/recipes/Asian/581.htm>
- Chinese salad:  
<http://www.101chinesenewyear.com/recipes.html>
- Chinese deep-fried puffs and sesame cookies:  
[http://www.chinatown-online.co.uk/pages/new\\_year/food.html](http://www.chinatown-online.co.uk/pages/new_year/food.html)

**Mul Kimchi (Water Kimchi)**—since every Korean meal has a kimchi pickle.

- 1 pound Chinese (white) radish, sliced into bite size pieces (you may also use 1 large Chinese cabbage, sliced, or combine both, using half of each)
- 1½ quarts water
- 3 cloves garlic, chopped finely
- ½ tsp. sugar
- sprinkle of hot red pepper, if you wish
- ½ tsp. salt
- ½" piece of ginger, finely chopped

Mix all of the ingredients in a large jar or container. Let them sit at room temperature for 2–3 days, then serve small samples.

### Jo Rang Yi Ttokkuk

- 2 cups sweet rice flour (sold packaged in Asian food sections of many stores)
  - 1 egg, beaten and fried as an omelet, then cut into thin slices
  - 3 c. beef broth
  - ½ tsp. soy sauce
  - ¼ tsp. salt
1. Steam rice flour for about five minutes, so it sticks together.
  2. Put it in a bowl and pound until it becomes dough-like.
  3. Take a little dough and roll by hand into long rolls, about as thick as an adult pinky.

4. Slice the rolls into  $\frac{1}{2}$ " slices.
5. Take each slice, then press it down in the middle with a chopstick to make a bow shape.
6. Boil the broth and place the bows in the liquid; add soy sauce and salt.
7. Boil for a few minutes until bows are done, add egg slices, then serve in small bowls.

## Math

**Gregorian and the Lunar Calendar.** Help students to see the connections between the Gregorian calendar that they use, and one based on the moon's cycles. Visit <http://www.curriculum.edu.au/accessasia/vietnam/priext/teclunar.htm> for a chart of the Gregorian calendar, with the first day of the 1998 lunar calendar marked. Download it, white-out the January 28 date and make copies for all. Tell the students to mark January 22 as Day 1 and write each day of the lunar calendar after that, according to the lunar month lengths given. Then they can find their birthdays, school holidays and more on their own lunar calendar. You can also make a large class version.

**Zodiac Cycles.** The cyclical view of years portrayed through the Chinese zodiac is an important concept for American children to explore. Time is not always a linear progression, so introduce this idea as you let older students discover animal signs for relatives and friends. Give each student a paper, with a circle on it divided into twelve segments. First have them draw animals in each segment, starting with a rat at the top, then using either the Chinese or Vietnamese order listed below. Next have them place a rat year in the first segment, then write the following year in the next section, going clockwise, until they return to the rat twelve years later. They can make as many cycles as you wish, depending upon how far back they begin (younger students can simply draw the animals of the zodiac to do one cycle).

- Rat years: 1900, 1912, 1924, 1936, 1948, 1960, 1972, 1984, 1996
- Chinese: rat, ox, tiger, rabbit, dragon, snake, horse, ram/sheep, monkey, rooster, dog, pig
- Vietnamese: rat, water buffalo, tiger, cat, dragon,

snake, horse, goat, monkey, chicken, dog, pig

## Games

**Korean New Year Games.** In Korea, almost everyone plays the popular board game *Yut* for New Year. Big, loud teams compete, throwing yut sticks with great excitement to race around the board. You can order an inexpensive set from Asia for Kids (<http://www.afk.com/>), or find instructions for playing the game at <http://www.clickasia.co.kr/about/h0101.htm> under section 3 and in *South Korea: A Literature Based Multicultural Unit* by Betsy Franco. Tug-of-war is another traditional game: in villages, a huge rope was made and all the men tugged against all the women! You may not have such a large rope, but tug-of-war is still a great challenge. For more Korean New Year games, see [http://seoul.onnurynet.co.kr/SITE/data/html\\_dir/2003/09/06/200309060017.jsp](http://seoul.onnurynet.co.kr/SITE/data/html_dir/2003/09/06/200309060017.jsp).

**Beating the Drum.** Try these classroom adaptations of a traditional Chinese drinking game, using groups of ten or so.

- With water—best played outside! The group sits in a circle, with one student apart, his back to the group. He drums on a surface, varying his speed. When he starts, a glass of water is passed from one person to the next, reflecting the speed of the drumming. The object is to pass the water, quickly or slowly, without dropping anything. When water spills, the student holding the glass is out.
- With writing. A student sits with her back to the circle, ready to drum. All of the students have a book to write on, and one student has a large blank piece of paper. When the drum starts, the student apart writes one word, then passes the paper on. The next student adds another word underneath, trying to connect their meanings in some way. The speed of writing and passing must echo the varying drum speeds. The game continues until you say stop and the “poem” is read.

Open the door to the Year of the Monkey as you open doors for your students' understanding, too. Explore and enjoy the Lunar New Year throughout the curriculum. Sample the resources below to keep going. *Gung hay fat choi! Chuc Mung Nam Moi! Say-hay boke mahn-he pah-du-say-oh!*

### Resources

- *Celebrating Chinese New Year* by Diane Hoyt-Goldsmith. Holiday House, 1999. Follow young Ryan and his family as they get ready for the New Year with a visit to ancestors' graves, cleaning, cooking, and much more.
- *Chinese New Year* by Catherine Chambers. Raintree Publishers, 1997. One of several general books, this is best for its coverage of events in China, and for pictures of the Lantern Festival.
- *Chinese New Year* by David Marx. Scholastic Library Press, 2002. An easy-to-read book for young readers.
- *Chinese New Year* by Sarah Moyses. Millbrook Press, 1998. A very good general introduction, rich in photos and detail, explores the religious side more than some others.
- *Chinese New Year: A Time for Parades, Family and Friends* by Fay Robinson. Enslow Publishers, 2001.
- *Chinese New Year: Fact & Folklore* by William Hu. Ars Ceramica, 1992. Try to find this out-of-print treasure; it is an incredible resource for teachers and librarians.
- *The Dancing Dragon* by Marcia Vaughn. Mondo Publishing, 1996.
- *Dragon Parade: A Chinese New Year Story* by Steven Chin. Steck-Vaughn, 1993.
- *Happy New Year! Kung-Hsi Fa-Ts'ai!* by Hitz Demi. Bantam Doubleday Dell, 1999. Demi's lovely illustrations share important details about Chinese New Year, including a variety of Chinese gods, important flower symbols, and meanings of many food items.
- *The Kite Fighters* by Linda Sue Park. Houghton Mifflin, 2000.
- *Lion Dancer: Ernie Wan's Chinese New Year* by Kate Waters. Scholastic, 1990.
- *Look What We've Brought You from Vietnam* by Phyllis Shalant. Silver Burdett Press, 1988.
- *Lunar New Year for Kids* by Cindy Roberts. Cindy Roberts, 2000. This hands-on workbook, available from Amazon, includes classroom activities to help children 3–12 years celebrate the Lunar New Year.
- *Moonbeams, Dumplings & Dragon Boats* by Nina Simonds and Leslie Swartz. Gulliver Books, 2002. Great crafts, stories, recipes, and more on Chinese festivals.
- *Mooncakes and Hungry Ghosts* by Carol Stepanchuk and Charles Wong. China Books, 1993. An excellent teacher resource on Chinese festivals, with many details about all aspects of the New Year.
- *Runaway Rice Cake* by Ying Chang Compestine. Simon & Schuster, 2001.
- *Sam and the Lucky Money* by Karen Chinn. Lee & Low Books, 1997.
- *Silk Peony, Parade Dragon* by Elizabeth Steckman. Boyds Mills Press, 1997.
- *The Simple Art of Chinese Calligraphy: Create Your Own Chinese Characters and Symbols for Good Fortune and Prosperity* by Qu Lei. Watson-Guptill Publications, 2002.
- *South Korea: A Literature Based Multicultural Unit* by Betsy Franco. Evan-Moor Educational Publishers, 1995. Learn about the people of South Korea through their literature, music, food, art, games and language.
- *Ten Mice for Tet!* by Peggy Deitz Shea, Cynthia Weill and To Ngoc Trang. Chronicle Books, 2003. A delightful counting book that introduces children to the celebration of Tet.
- *Tet. Vietnamese New Year* by Dianne MacMillan. Enslow Publishers, 1994. A short introduction to Tet, especially as it is celebrated in the U.S.
- *This Next New Year* by Janet Wong. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2000. A bright book that captures the spirit of cleaning out the old and starting the New Year very well.
- *A Treasury of Asian Stories & Activities for Schools & Libraries* by Cathy Spagnoli. Alleyside Press, 1998.
- *When the Circus Came to Town* by Laurence Yep. HarperCollins, 2001.

### Lunar New Years Web Resources

- <http://www.mythinglinks.org/LunarNewYear2000.html>
- [http://www.familyculture.com/holidays/newyear\\_resources.htm](http://www.familyculture.com/holidays/newyear_resources.htm)
- [http://www.activityvillage.co.uk/chinese\\_new\\_year\\_links.htm](http://www.activityvillage.co.uk/chinese_new_year_links.htm)

## Chinese New Year Web Resources

<http://www.kidsdomain.com/holiday/chineseny.html>  
<http://www.chinatown-online.org.uk/index.html>  
<http://www.wku.edu/~yuanh/China/newyear.html#time>  
<http://www.c-c-c.org/chineseculture/festival/newyear/newyear.html>

## Vietnamese New Year Web Resources

<http://www.limsi.fr/Recherche/CIG/etet1.htm>  
[http://www.vnstyle.vdc.com.vn/lunar\\_newyear/](http://www.vnstyle.vdc.com.vn/lunar_newyear/)  
<http://www.adoptvietnam.org/vietnamese/tet-links.html>

## Korean New Year Web Resources

<http://www.clickasia.co.kr/about/h0101.htm>  
<http://www.lifeinkorea.com/culture/newyear/newyear.cfm>

## Zodiac Resources

- Most books on the New Year include information on the zodiac, as do Web sites like The Asia Society's <http://www.askasia.org/frclasrm/lessplan/l000038.htm>. For the best introduction, through elegant calligraphy, try *The Chinese Book of Animal Powers* by Chunglian Al Huang. HarperCollins, 1999.

To share legends of the zodiac, find:

- *The Animals of the Chinese Zodiac* by Susan Whitfield. Interlink Publishing Group, 1999. A familiar legend of the animals coming to Buddha's bedside.
- *Cat and Rat: The Legend of the Chinese Zodiac* by Ed Young. Henry Holt & Co., 1998. Ed Young's dramatic illustrations share this popular tale of the animals racing for a place in the zodiac.
- *The Dragon's Tale and Other Animal Fables of the Chinese Zodiac* by Hitz Demi. Henry Holt & Co., 1996. Chinese fables about the different animals of the zodiac.
- *The Rooster's Antlers* by Eric Kimmel. Holiday House, 1999. A lesser-known story about dragon's bald spot and the rooster.

## Lunar Legends Resources

Many books on the New Year include a legend; for the best selection, see Hu's *Chinese New Year: Fact and Folklore and Moonbeams, Dumplings & Dragon Boats* by Simonds et al.

## Chinese—

<http://www.chinatown-online.org.uk/nian.html>

## Vietnamese—

<http://www.vwam.com/vets/travel/tetcakes.html>  
[http://www.vnstyle.vdc.com.vn/lunar\\_newyear/tet\\_legend/index.html](http://www.vnstyle.vdc.com.vn/lunar_newyear/tet_legend/index.html)  
<http://www.nhandan.org.vn/english/folklore/20001021.html>

## Korean—

<http://www.clickasia.co.kr/about/h0101.htm>

## Looking for One Last Idea?

- Send New Year e-greetings: [http://www.123greetings.com/events/chinese\\_new\\_year/happy/](http://www.123greetings.com/events/chinese_new_year/happy/)
- Make a Chinese lantern for Lantern Festival: <http://www.chineseparade.com/history/fun/lantern.asp>
- Give students a word search puzzle of zodiac animals: <http://www.cstone.net/~bry-back/actpag126.html>
- Have students find their fortunes digitally: [http://www.yuk-sul.com/e\\_juyuk.html](http://www.yuk-sul.com/e_juyuk.html)
- Learn from the popular Chinese Almanac: <http://www.chinesefortunecalendar.com/SiteIndex.htm>
- Share the favorite Monkey King story: <http://www.china-page.com/monkey/monkey.html>
- Play music for the Chinese New Year: <http://china.tyfo.com/int/art/festival/spring%20festival/music.htm>
- Share memories of rural Vietnam through *Water Buffalo Days* by Huynh Q. Nhuong. HarperCollins, 1999.
- Find lesson plans on Korea: <http://www.koreasociety.org/>
- Find more Korean tales to tell: [http://www.korea.net/directo-ry/List.asp?Category\\_id=a01007](http://www.korea.net/directo-ry/List.asp?Category_id=a01007)
- Order Asian groceries: <http://www.ethnicgrocer.com>



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