

**LESSON PLAN #1 SHEET- SECONDARY****Teacher:** Ms. Hong Zhu**Subject:** Chinese New Year**Grade Level:** I, II**Purpose:** Through the presentation of Chinese New Year, the most colorful and important traditional festivals in China, lead students to learn more Chinese culture.

1. What is Chinese New Year compared to regular New Year in Western countries?
2. What is the legend related to Chinese New Year?
3. How do Chinese prepare for New Year?
4. How do Chinese celebrate New Year?
5. How long does Chinese New Year celebration last?

**Rationale:** In Chinese culture, the festivals play quiet critical role to display the richness of itself. Through the different festival, the students can definitely learn a lot of precious knowledge about China and its civilization**Materials:** Video tape about Chinese New Year, flash cards, “good luck” pattern, chopstick, dragon dance mask, Chinese zodiac chart, scissors, tape, stapler, color pencils.**Activities:**

1. To present first the history and legend of Chinese New Year and answer all the questions listed above in the purpose
2. To teach students how to say the common greetings and wishes in Chinese for Chinese New Year
3. To show students how to use chopstick, how to cut and color “good luck” pattern and dragon dance mask. To organize them to display dragon dance
4. To explain the origin and legend of Chinese zodiac chart and let students to figure out what animal is this year according to zodiac chart, ask students to find out the animal of year of their parents, siblings or friends

**Assignment:**

1. Words writing in Chinese on common greetings and wishes used during Chinese New Year
2. paper cut for “ Good luck” pattern and dragon dance mask and color them

## **1. What is Chinese New Year compared to regular New Year in Western countries?**

Chinese New Year is also called Spring Festival. It is one of the traditional festivals which are based on the Chinese Lunar Calendar. It generally occurs somewhere between January 30 and February 20 of each year. So January 1 is a New Year celebration in the eyes of Chinese, but not traditional Chinese New Year which marks the beginning of spring. Each Chinese year is represented by a repeated cycle of 12 animals, the rat, ox, tiger, rabbit, dragon, snake, horse, ram, monkey, rooster, dog, and pig. Chinese New Year is China's biggest holiday.

## **2. What is the legend related to Chinese New Year?**

There is a famous legend about Chinese New Year. In Chinese, to celebrate New Year is also named "*Guo Nian*" which means keeping off the monster of Nian. It is said that *Nian* was a fierce monster back in ancient times. It looked like a strong bull with a head like that of a lion. Usually the monster stayed deep in the mountains and caught and ate other beasts. But during the winter, it could not find enough food. So it came out of its mountain lair and entered villages to eat whatever it could catch. Villagers were very frightened and moved away to escape the ferocious monster. But later the people found that even though it was fierce, *Nian* was afraid of three things: the red color, a bright flame, and a loud noise. After learning this, they figured out how to prevent *Nian* from entering their villages. Just before *Nian* came again, every household painted their door red and burned a fire in front of their door-ways.

Besides, the people did not go to bed. Instead, they stayed up all night beating on things to make a loud noise. Ever since, *Nian* has never again come to the villages. The villagers can once again enjoy their peaceful life. Later, the people found that bamboo could make a cracking sound when burned. In time, the noise of cracking bamboo was replaced with bang of firecrackers. This is how the Chinese people began go set off firecrackers for the Spring Festival.

The tradition of observing the conquest of *Nian* is carried on from generation to generation. The term “*Guo Nian*,” which means “Survive the Nian” became the “Celebrate the Year” and the word “*Guo*” in Chinese means both “pass over” and “observe.”

### **3. How do Chinese prepare for New Year?**

As part of the Chinese New Year celebration, people buy presents, decorations, special foods and new clothing. Days before the New Year celebration, Chinese family is busy giving their home a thorough cleaning. It is believed the cleaning sweeps away bad luck and makes the house ready for good luck to enter. All brooms and dust pans are put away on New Year's Eve so good luck cannot be swept away. Each person must have the bath and hair cut before New Year's Eve. In many homes, doors and windowpanes get a new coat of red paint. The home is decorated with paper-cuts and poems called couplets of “Happiness” “Wealth,” “Longevity” and “Satisfactory marriage with children.” In the countryside, people have habit to cook all the foods before the coming of New Year season.

### **4. How do Chinese celebrate New Year?**

The New Year's Eve supper is a feast with all the members of the family getting together. One popular food is “*JiaoZi*” which are dumplings boiled in water. After dinner, the whole family stays up all night playing card, board game or watching TV programs dedicated to the New Year's celebration. Lights in the house are kept on during the whole night. At midnight, the sky is lit up by fireworks which symbolize the sending out of the old year and the welcoming in of the New Year. People open all the windows and doors in the house in order to let the old year go out.

Very early the next morning, children greet their parents and receive their New Year present. They get lucky red envelopes with money inside. The rest of the first day of the New Year is spent visiting relatives, friends and neighbors. The Festival of the Lanterns begins fifteen days after New Year's Day.

It is celebrated with lantern shows and folk dances. Children display their lanterns in a night time parade. This is when the Chinese people welcome the first full moon of the New Year. The typical food is “*TangYuan*,” dumplings made of sweet rice rolled into balls and stuffed with either sweet or spicy fillings.

### 5. How long does last Chinese New Year celebration?

Chinese New Year celebration generally lasts fifteen days. The Festival of the Lanterns mark the end of the New Year’s celebration and life goes back to normal.

#### Some useful Chinese words:

1. Happy New Year: 新年好/ 过年好
2. Jiao Zi:(dumplings boiled in water) 饺子
3. fire crackers: 鞭炮
4. Wish you longevity: 祝你长寿
5. Wish you wealth: 祝你发财

Some articles for the students:

<http://www.uen.org/utahlink/activities>

[www.new-year.co.uk/chinese/](http://www.new-year.co.uk/chinese/)

<http://www.byroncs.nsw.edu.au/starfish/art/chinese/cny.html>

#### Some useful materials for the teachers:

1. **Dragon dance mask:** [Hands On Crafts for Kids - Show 202](#)

202-2 **Chinese Dragon Mask:** When the first new moon enters the sign of Aquarius, ... 202-

3 **Dragon Dance stick:** When you join the celebration, ...

[www.crafts4kids.com/projects/200/202.htm](http://www.crafts4kids.com/projects/200/202.htm) - 7k - [Cached](#) - [Similar pages](#)

2. Chinese Zodiac legend: <http://www.c-c-c.org/chineseculture/zodiac/zodiac.html>

3. Good luck pattern: to be located later