

Chinese New Year

LO- Your learning objective here



Where is China?



- The country of China is in Northeast Asia.
- China has the largest population in the world with over 1.3 billion people!
- China is the fourth biggest country in the world.
- China is divided into provinces.
- The capital city of China is Beijing.

What is China like?

- China has very diverse geography including deserts, mountains and fertile river basins.
- In the north of China, there are mountains, where it snows much of the year.
- The south of China is filled with jungles and it is very hot and humid.
- Central China consists mostly of mountainous regions.
- Most of Western China is mountains, including the Himalayas.
- Rivers are very important in China, both for transportation and for irrigation.
- Rivers are very important because much of the wheat and rice fields in China rely on irrigation.



What are Chinese people like?

- China is home to people from lots of different ethnicities and cultures.
- Chinese culture is very unique.
- The Chinese calendar, architecture, food, handicrafts, dance, festivals and martial arts are very popular across the world.
- Chinese people mainly speak Mandarin, but some also speak Cantonese, Hakka or Swatow, depending on which part of the country they are from.
- The staple food in China is rice and it is eaten with nearly every meal.
- In the last 20 years China has changed more than any country in the world.



When is Chinese New Year?

- Chinese New Year starts somewhere between late January and early February.
- The date changes from year to year because it follows an ancient farmer calendar which is based on phases of the moon.



Preparing for the New Year

- Chinese people spring clean their houses and gardens to sweep away any bad luck.
- Houses are decorated with paper scrolls and lanterns with good luck phrases such as 'happiness' and 'wealth' on them.
- All unfinished business is settled so there is a fresh start for the new year. Debts are paid, quarrels are resolved and any work is brought up to date.



New Year's Eve

- Families gather together and have a large, traditional feast of fish and chicken.
- In the North people eat dijiaozi – a steamed dumpling.
- In the South people eat nian gao – a sticky sweet rice pudding.
- People stay up till midnight setting off fireworks to scare evil spirits away.



New Year's Day

- Children wake up to find red envelopes filled with money and sweets under their pillow left by their parents or grandparents.
- Every family member starts the day with brand new clothes from head to tow. Red is a very popular colour for clothing as it is considered lucky.
- The first stop of the day is the temple to worship Gods and welcome the New Year.
- Most Chinese families gather together for a New Years Banquet. Each family has their own special dish they prepare for this time.



The Second Day

- Cai Shen, the Chinese God of Wealth's birthday is celebrated.
- The Chinese pray to their ancestors as well as the Gods.
- It is believed to be the birthday of all dogs so dogs are treated with special foods.
- It is also a time for visiting families.



The Third and Fourth Day

The Third Day

- Chinese people believe they should not visit friends and relatives on this day.
- Instead, they visit the Temple of Wealth and have their futures told.



The Fourth Day

- Most people go back to work.
- It is also the day of Spring Dinners. Businesses have department dinners or social events for their employees.



The 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th and 9th day

- The 5th Day – Dumplings are eaten for good luck and some people shoot fire crackers to worship the God of War.
- The 6th Day – Firecrackers are thrown to keep away bad spirits and worship the God of War.
- The 7th Day – Day 7 is considered everyone's birthday.
- The 8th Day – This is the eve of the Jade Emperor's birthday. Special family dinners are held.
- The 9th Day – The Jade Emperor's birthday. The Emperor is worshipped by lighting incense and offering prayers.



The 10th, 11th, 12th, 13th and 14th day

- The 10th Day – Recognition and offerings continue towards the Jade Emperor.
- The 11th/12th Day – Family dinners.
- The 13th Day – everyone converts to vegetarian on the thirteenth day to give their stomachs a rest!
- The 14th Day – This day is spent resting and preparing for the lantern festival, the last day of Chinese New Year.



The 15th Day!

- The 15th day is also known as the Lantern Festival.
- There are dragon dancing and lion dancing parades in the streets, and all the streets will be crowded with people.
- Families walk the streets carrying lit lanterns.
- Candles are lit outside homes to guide wayward spirits home.
- Rice dumplings are eaten on this day.
- In Malaysia and Singapore, single women write their phone numbers on oranges and throw them into a river or lake. Single men eat the oranges and the taste of the orange (sweet or sour) represents good or bad fate.





THE END