



**Level:** Pre-Intermediate and above.

**Language Aims:** To practice reading for understanding, to practice asking and answering questions, to learn about customs of different cultures.

**Preparation:** Make copies of the worksheets A or B on the next page so that each student in a pair will have either an A. or B. worksheet.

### Procedure:

1. Give half of the students in your class the Student A. worksheet, the other half the Student B. worksheet. Ask the As to sit together and the Bs. to sit together.
2. Tell the class they are going to read about how Chinese people celebrate the New Year. Ask them to spend a few minutes reading through their worksheet. (You may like to discourage them from using dictionaries.) If your class are predominantly Chinese, you may wish to miss out this part of the activity.
3. After a few minutes, ask them to look at the parts of the text that have gaps. They should think about what kind of words will go in the gaps.
4. They then look at the question prompts in brackets next to each gap. Tell them to work with other students around them to make a question to ask about the missing information for each gap. Circulate and help with question formation. Students can check their questions with other students who have the same worksheet (e.g. As talking to As.) if you wish.
5. When everyone has had enough time, ask students to find a partner with someone with the other worksheet. Then ask students to sit in their pairs facing each other over a desk or table.
6. Students ask their partner questions to find the words that go in each gap. They answer their partner's questions. Their aim is to complete their worksheet with the correct information.
7. You may like to check answers with the whole class quickly at the end.
8. You could extend this activity by talking about customs for other festivals or celebrations. This will be especially effective if you have a multinational class. If you have students from places like Korea or Vietnam, they can compare what they do for New Year (Vietnamese call it Tet and Koreans call it Sol-Nal) with what is in the text below.

**Extension:** With more advanced students you may like to delete the question prompts in brackets so students must make the questions on their own.



## Worksheet for Student A:

For Chinese people, Chinese New Year is very important. It is a time to be with family, give  and eat great food. It is usually held in late January or early February but it is on a different day every year.

(What do people ?)

Each year has two parts, the first part is one of five elements (wood, fire, earth etc), the second one of twelve zodiac signs (rat, pig, monkey etc). 2007 is the Year of the Red Fire Pig.

The Chinese New Year celebrations last for  days but many businesses take a holiday for a week.

(How long do  last?)

Chinese New Year celebrations may have started when people celebrated the end of the  giving thanks to the gods for good harvests. It became very popular during the Tang Dynasty (AD 618 - 907) and is very popular now.

(What did people celebrate for the first Chinese ?)

Here are some of the things that happen for Chinese New Year. Before Chinese New Year starts, people often  their houses and sometimes paint them. On New Year's Day (when there is a new moon)  give gifts of money in a red envelope.

(Who gives gifts  on New Year's Day?)

No-one does any cleaning because it is very bad luck to sweep out the good fortune. On  people wait at home to welcome the god of wealth.

(When do people wait at home to ?)

On Days 6 to 10 people go and visit their friends and relations and on Days 10 to 12 they invite their friends and relations for dinner.

On Day 15, the night of the first full moon, there is a , the end of the Chinese New Year when people light lanterns and eat sticky rice balls.

(What happens on ?) \*

**\*(Please note: these are only a few of the customs and of course not everyone in these countries does things the same way.)**

## Worksheet for Student B:

For Chinese people, Chinese New Year is very important. It is a time to be with family, give and eat great food. It is usually held in late January or early February but it is on a different day every year.

Each year has two parts, the first part is one of five elements (wood, fire, earth etc), the second one of twelve zodiac signs (rat, pig, monkey etc). 2007 is the Year of the Red Fire Pig.

The Chinese New Year celebrations last for 15 days but many businesses take a holiday for a .

(How long do businesses ?)

Chinese New Year celebrations may have started when people celebrated the end of the harvest, giving thanks to the gods for good harvests. It became very popular during the  Dynasty (AD 618 - 907) and is very popular now.

(When did Chinese New Year become ?)

Here are some of the things that happen for Chinese New Year. Before Chinese New Year starts, people often clean their houses and sometimes  them.

(What do people sometimes ?)

On New Year's Day (when there is a new moon) older people give gifts of money in a red envelope.  does any cleaning because it is very bad luck to sweep out the good fortune.

(Who cleans ?)

On Day 5 people wait at home to welcome the god of wealth. On Days 6 to 10 people  their friends and relations and on Days 10 to 12 they invite their friends and relations for dinner.

(What do people on Days ?)

On Day 15, the night of the first full moon, there is a Lantern Festival, the end of the Chinese New Year when people light lanterns and eat  balls.

(What do people eat ?)

**\*(Please note: these are only a few of the customs and of course not everyone in these countries does things the same way.)**

