



Teacher Resource

# Lunar New Year

## Focus Questions

Discuss the BTN story as a class and record the main points of the discussion. Students will then respond to the following:

1. About how many people around the world celebrate Lunar New Year?
2. Briefly explain the story about a monster called Nian.
3. What are some of the traditions that take place during Lunar New Year?
4. This Lunar New Year is year of the...
  - a. Dragon
  - b. Rabbit
  - c. Monkey
5. What is your Chinese zodiac animal sign? Find out [here](#).

## Activity: Class Discussion

After watching the BTN Lunar New Year story, hold a class discussion, using the following discussion starters. Brainstorm ideas in small groups and then students will report their group's responses to the class.

- What is Lunar New Year? Summarise using your own words.
- Lunar New Year is also known as...
- When is Lunar New Year? Why does it change each year?
- Who celebrates Lunar New Year?
- How is Lunar New Year celebrated? What traditions and symbols might you see?
- Lunar New Year 2024 is Year of the...
- How is Lunar New Year celebrated in your community?
- Have you taken part in Lunar New Year celebrations? Explain in more detail.

## Activity: Personal Response

Write a personal response to the BTN Lunar New Year story by completing the following sentences:

- It was interesting to learn...
- Five words that represent Lunar New Year...
- To me, Lunar New Year means...

### EPISODE 2

13th February 2024

#### KEY LEARNING

Students will learn about the significance of Lunar New Year, including customs, traditions and celebrations.

#### CURRICULUM

##### HASS – Year 3

Celebrations and commemorations in places around the world (for example, Chinese New Year in countries of the Asia region, Bastille Day in France, Independence Day in the USA), including those that are observed in Australia (for example, Christmas Day, Diwali, Easter, Hanukkah, the Moon Festival and Ramadan).

##### Civics & Citizenship – Year 3

Why people participate within communities and how students can actively participate and contribute.

##### Civics & Citizenship – Year 4

The different cultural, religious and/or social groups to which they and others in the community belong.

##### Geography – Year 4

Australia's connections with other countries and how these change people and places.

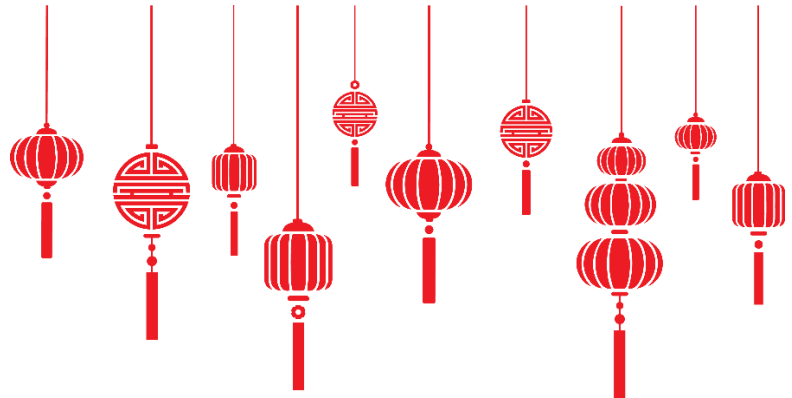
##### Geography – Year 6

The world's cultural diversity, including that of its indigenous peoples.

## Activity: Traditions and Customs

Ask students what traditions and customs one might see at a Lunar New Year celebration. What do these traditions and symbols mean? Below are some examples of Lunar New Year traditions that students can explore in more detail. Students will choose one to explore in more detail and present their findings to the class.

- Lion and dragon dancing
- Fireworks
- Chinese zodiac
- Red envelopes
- Spring cleaning
- Special foods
- Lanterns
- Music
- Clothing



## Activity: Origin of the Dragon

Around the world people are celebrating Lunar New Year and the start to the Year of the Dragon. To celebrate this mythical creature students will investigate the origins of the dragon, the meanings of dragons across different cultures, stories of dragons, and the characteristics of dragons. Students will work through the following activities to explore more about the mythical creature – the Dragon!

### Class Discussion – What do you already know about dragons?

Find out what your students already know about dragons. In small groups or as a class, facilitate a discussion using the following questions.

- What is a dragon?
- Where do you see dragons?
- What do dragons look like? Describe their features.
- What are the traits and characteristics of dragons? List some adjectives to describe dragons.



[ABC News](#) – Dragon dance performances



[BTN](#) – Dragon boat racing



[DreamWorks](#) – How to Train a Dragon movie



[Wikipedia](#) – The flag of Wales



[Wikipedia](#) – The flag of Bhutan



[Wikipedia](#) - Dragon Enma Elish

## Glossary

Students will brainstorm a list of key words that relate to mythical creatures. Here are some words to get them started.

LEGEND	MYTHICAL	FOLKLORE
SYMBOLIC	ZODIAC	LUNAR CALENDAR

### Research – Across what cultures do you see dragons?

Dragons feature in legend and folklore across many parts of the world including Asia, Europe, Africa, and America. They take many different forms and have varying characteristics.

Students will choose one country that considers the dragon to be an important cultural symbol and explore in more detail. Students will respond to the following during their investigation:

- What does the dragon symbolise in this culture?
- What are some traits and characteristics of the dragon?
- Does the dragon have special powers? Explain.
- How do dragons feature in the mythologies and folklore of this culture?

Students will share their findings with one another and analyse how dragon legends across different cultures are similar or different.

### Create – your own mythical dragon

What would a dragon look like in Australian culture? Students will use their imagination to create their own mythical dragon, using the following as a guide:

- What will your dragon look like?
- Describe your dragon's personality. Is it friendly?
- What are some features of your dragon? (size, colour, etc) Do these features have symbolic meaning?
- What will its strengths and powers be?
- What is your dragon's name?

Students will then choose one of the following to complete:

- Draw a picture of the dragon using only a black felt-tip pen on a piece of A4 art paper. Include as much detail as you can. Label features of the dragon.
- Create a 3D model of your mythical dragon using upcycled materials.
- Write a descriptive piece of writing that tells the story of your mythical dragon and its origins. Consider recording your story as an audio file or create a comic strip to tell the story.

## Activity – Choose a project

Individually or in small groups, students will choose one of the following projects to work on and then present their findings to the class.

### Venn Diagram

Investigate how Lunar New Year is different from the Western New Year. Use a Venn diagram to record your findings.

### Fireworks Design

Fireworks are a common Lunar New Year celebration. The Chinese believe that fireworks keep away evil spirits. Design your own Lunar New Year fireworks display and explain what they mean.

### Lantern Making

As a class discuss the cultural significance of Lunar New Year lanterns. Design and make a paper lantern which reflects your family symbols.

### Design a Poster

Find out what Chinese zodiac sign you are and learn more about it. Do you possess some of the same qualities as the animal? Create a poster which highlights your zodiac sign and qualities.

## Useful Websites

- [When is Lunar New Year 2024 and how is it celebrated? Find out which animal you are and where to celebrate](#) – ABC News
- [Lunar New Year](#) – BTN
- [Looking Back: The Sun Loong Dragon](#) – ABC Education
- [Lunar New Year: Year of the Dragon - what you need to know](#) – CBBC Newsround