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Chinese New Year: A Festive Tradition

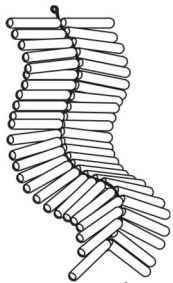
Chinese New Year, also known as the Spring Festival, is a grand and vibrant celebration deeply rooted in Chinese culture. This festive occasion, marked by a rich variety of customs and traditions, is celebrated with enthusiasm and joy by millions of people around the world.

The celebration kicks off on Lunar New Year's Eve with families coming together for a reunion dinner. This meal is symbolic, representing unity and the beginning of a prosperous year. Traditional dishes like fish, dumplings, and longevity noodles are served, each carrying unique meanings associated with good luck and well wishes.

In the days leading up to Chinese New Year, homes and streets are decorated with vibrant red decorations. Red is believed to ward off evil spirits and bring good fortune. People hang red lanterns, couplets, and banners with auspicious sayings to create an atmosphere of joy and positivity.



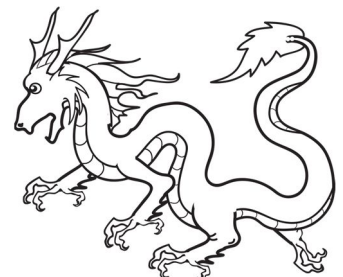
Lantern



Firecrackers

One fascinating tradition during Chinese New Year is the retelling of the legend of Nian. According to folklore, Nian was a mythical beast that would terrorize villages. Over time, people discovered that Nian was afraid of loud noises and the color red. This led to the tradition of setting off fireworks and wearing red during the celebration to ward off evil spirits.

The streets come alive with vibrant dragon and lion dances during Chinese New Year. These mesmerizing performances, accompanied by the rhythmic beats of drums and clashing cymbals, are believed to bring good luck and prosperity. The dragon, a symbol of strength and good fortune, weaves through the streets, and lion dancers mimic the playful movements of lions, warding off evil spirits.



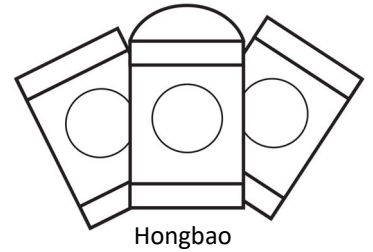
Dragon





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One of the most anticipated traditions for children during Chinese New Year is the exchange of red envelopes, known as "hongbao." These envelopes, often containing money, are given as a symbol of good luck, prosperity, and blessings. It is common for married couples and elders to give red envelopes to children and unmarried individuals.



Many people visit temples during Chinese New Year to offer prayers and seek blessings for the coming year. Lighting incense, making offerings, and participating in traditional ceremonies are common practices during these temple visits. It is a time for reflection, gratitude, and spiritual renewal.

Chinese New Year is a magnificent celebration that goes beyond just welcoming a new year; it is a reflection of cultural richness, family bonds, and the collective spirit of hope and renewal. The diverse traditions, from festive feasts to colorful parades, create an unforgettable tapestry of celebration that resonates with people worldwide.

1. How does the Chinese New Year celebration start off? _____

2. Why is the color red used to decorate for the Chinese New Year? _____

3. Why are fireworks set off during the celebration? _____

4. What tradition does the text suggest is a favorite of children? _____

5. What would be your favorite part of Chinese New Year celebration? _____