

# Chinese New Year

## Topic

Chinese/Lunar New Year

## Aims

- To learn about Chinese culture
- To practise language for speculating
- To learn how to take turns, reach an agreement with a partner and respect the rules of a game
- To develop intercultural awareness

## Age/level

Older primary/Younger secondary  
CEFR level A2 and above

## Time

60 minutes

## Materials

*Dragons & Scrolls* board (one per group)  
*Dragons & Scrolls* question cards (one set per group, cut up)  
*Dragons & Scrolls* answers (one per group)  
*Dragons & Scrolls* rules (one per group)  
Dice (one per group) and counters (one per pair of players) – you can print dice and counters here:  
<https://learnenglishkids.britishcouncil.org/en/crafts/snakes-and-ladders>

## Introduction

In 2017, Chinese New Year is on 28 January. It is the Year of the Rooster. In this lesson, children learn about Chinese New Year customs. They are introduced to some expressions for speculating at the beginning of the lesson that will be practised in context when they play a board game in small groups. The game will encourage players to read and speculate about customs in a fun way. At the end of the lesson children find out which Chinese zodiac animal they are.

## Procedure

### 1. Warmer (5 minutes)

Introduce the topic by writing *Happy New Year* on the board. Ask learners when they hear this greeting and elicit an answer. Explain that in China and many other parts of the world, the new year doesn't start on 1 January. It starts on a different date each year.

<b>2. Game to present language for speculating (5–10 minutes)</b>	<p>Play a guessing game to present language for speculating. On the board write <i>Chinese New Year is on ___ January 2017</i>. Ask learners to work in pairs to guess the date of Chinese New Year. Write these expressions on the board:</p> <p><i>I think Chinese New Year is on ...      I disagree. I think ...</i>  <i>Maybe Chinese New Year is on ...      I think you're right/wrong.</i>  <i>Could Chinese New Year be on ...?      Yes, it could be!</i></p> <p>Go around the class, asking for each pair's idea. Explain that they should use some of the expressions on the board while they are choosing a date with their partner. Play the game until one pair guesses correctly.</p>
<b>3. Game to practise language for speculating (20–30 minutes)</b>	<p>Put learners into groups (five or seven) and appoint a captain. Put the remaining players in each group into pairs to play the game. This will encourage the use of speculating language as they discuss the questions.</p> <p>Give each group a <i>Dragons &amp; Scrolls</i> game board, counters, a dice, the <i>Dragons &amp; Scrolls</i> question cards (upside down) and the <i>Dragons &amp; Scrolls</i> rules.</p> <p>Give each captain a copy of the <i>Dragons &amp; Scrolls</i> answers.</p> <p>Allow learners time to read the rules and make sure they all understand how to play.</p> <p>Tip! Ask a few questions to check:</p> <p><i>Where do you put your counters?</i>  <i>What do you do if your answer is correct?</i>  <i>What do you do if you land at the top of a dragon?</i></p> <p>Monitor while learners play the game, helping where necessary and encouraging learners to use English as much as possible. Remind them to use some of the expressions on the board.</p>
<b>4. Optional extra (15–25 minutes)</b>	<p>Primary learners could watch a video about Chinese New Year and then do some exercises to check their understanding:  <a href="https://learnenglishkids.britishcouncil.org/en/short-stories/my-favourite-day-chinese-new-year">https://learnenglishkids.britishcouncil.org/en/short-stories/my-favourite-day-chinese-new-year</a></p> <p>Secondary learners could read a text about Chinese New Year and then do some exercises to check their understanding:  <a href="https://learnenglishteens.britishcouncil.org/uk-now/read-uk/chinese-new-year">https://learnenglishteens.britishcouncil.org/uk-now/read-uk/chinese-new-year</a></p>
<b>5. Finishing off the lesson (5 minutes)</b>	<p>Learners find out which Chinese zodiac animal they are at:  <a href="https://www.primarygames.com/holidays/chinesenewyear/games/my_sign/">https://www.primarygames.com/holidays/chinesenewyear/games/my_sign/</a></p> <p>This could also be set for homework.</p>

**Contributed by**

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