

New Year Celebrations Around the World

New year festivals are celebrated all over the world.

They often include activities that aim to bring people good luck. Different countries and people celebrate the new year at different times. Many countries choose to celebrate the new year with huge firework displays. Fireworks were first used because people thought that the fire and loud noises could help to scare away evil spirits.

New Year in Thailand



When Is It Celebrated?

The Thai new year is celebrated on 13th April.
This is one of the hottest months in Thailand!

What Is It Called?

The Thai new year is called Songkran.

How Do People Celebrate the New Year?

Songkran is a big water festival. People celebrate the new year with street parties and even giant water fights. Some people choose to visit a temple with their family.

New Year in Japan

When Is It Celebrated?

In Japan, the new year is celebrated between 1st January and 3rd January.



What Is It Called?

The Japanese new year is called Shōgatsu.

How Do People Celebrate the New Year?

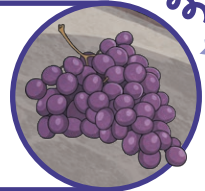
Lots of temples can be heard ringing their bells for the new year. They ring 108 times. Eight times to say goodbye to the old year and 100 times to ring in the new year.

More Traditions from Around the World



Siberia - In Siberia, a few brave people dive into a frozen lake on New Year's Eve. Some people even try to plant a tree at the bottom of the lake!

Spain - In Spain, some people choose to eat one grape each time the clock strikes midnight on New Year's Eve. Eating all 12 grapes is supposed to bring you good luck.



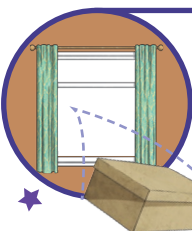
Romania - In Romania, some children dress up and dance in bear costumes. This is thought to help scare away any evil spirits.

South America - Some people carry an empty suitcase around with them on New Year's Eve. This shows that the new year will be full of adventures.



Denmark - In Denmark, some people smash plates against the doors of their friends to bring them good luck.

Scotland - In Scotland, many people celebrate Hogmanay which begins on 31st December.



South Africa - In South Africa, some people make space to prepare for the new year by throwing their old belongings out of the window.

Questions

1. What is the Thai new year called? Tick one.

- ☐ Thailand
- ☐ Songkran
- ☐ Shōgatsu
- ☐ Hogmanay

2. How many times do temple bells ring for the new year in Japan? Tick one.

- ☐ 3 times
- ☐ 30 times
- ☐ 40 times
- ☐ 108 times

3. How many grapes do some people eat at midnight in Spain? Tick one.

- ☐ one grape
- ☐ three grapes
- ☐ four grapes
- ☐ twelve grapes

4. Draw **three** lines to complete each sentence.

In Siberia...

some people smash plates against the doors of their friends.

In Romania...

a few brave people dive into a frozen lake.

In Denmark...

some children dress up and dance in bear costumes.

5. Look at the first paragraph.

Find and copy one word which shows that the firework displays are **not small**.

6. When is the Thai new year celebrated?

7. Which new year celebration would you most like to take part in? Explain why.

Answers

1. What is the Thai new year called? Tick one.

- ☐ Thailand
- ☒ **Songkran**
- ☐ Shōgatsu
- ☐ Hogmanay

2. How many times do temple bells ring for the new year in Japan? Tick one.

- ☐ 3 times
- ☐ 30 times
- ☐ 40 times
- ☒ **108 times**

3. How many grapes do some people eat at midnight in Spain? Tick one.

- ☐ one grape
- ☐ three grapes
- ☐ four grapes
- ☒ **twelve grapes**

4. Draw **three** lines to complete each sentence.

In Siberia...	some people smash plates against the doors of their friends.
In Romania...	a few brave people dive into a frozen lake.
In Denmark...	some children dress up and dance in bear costumes.

5. Look at the first paragraph.

Find and copy one word which shows that the firework displays are **not small**.

huge

6. When is the Thai new year celebrated?

The Thai new year is celebrated on 13th April.

7. Which new year celebration would you most like to take part in? Explain why.

Pupils' own responses, such as: I would most like to take part in the new year celebrations in Romania because I would enjoy dressing up like a bear and dancing.

New Year Celebrations Around the World

New year festivals are celebrated all over the world.

They often include traditions that aim to bring good luck into the new year. The new year is celebrated at different times in different countries, depending on calendars, cultures and traditions. Many countries choose to celebrate the new year with large firework celebrations. These are thought to have first been used because fire and loud noises were believed to scare away evil spirits.

New Year in Thailand



In Thailand, the new year is traditionally celebrated on 13th April. This festival is known as Songkran.

Water plays a big part in the festival of Songkran as it is thought to wash away the old year to prepare for the new year. During Songkran, some families will visit a Buddhist temple and pour water over statues of Buddha. This is thought to bring good fortune. Many people also clean their houses in preparation for the new year. During Songkran, adults and children can often be found outside enjoying a street party and a giant water fight.

New Year in Japan

In Japan, new year celebrations usually last for three days between 1st January and 3rd January. This festival is known as Shōgatsu.



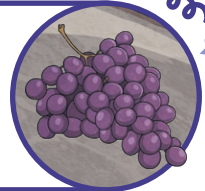
On New Year's Eve, many temples can be heard ringing their bells 108 times. It is thought that eight rings say goodbye to the new year while 100 rings welcome in the new year. During this celebration, many people choose to visit local temples with their friends and family. While at the temple, they ask that the new year is filled with good health.

Traditions from Around the World



Siberia - In Siberia, a few brave people take part in a new year's tradition of diving into a frozen lake and planting a tree at the bottom!

Spain - In Spain, some people choose to eat one grape each time the clock strikes midnight on New Year's Eve. Eating all 12 grapes is thought to bring good luck.



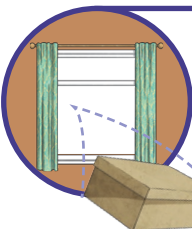
Romania - In Romania, some children dress up in bear costumes and perform a dance. This is thought to help scare away any evil spirits.

South America - In a few countries across South America, some people carry an empty suitcase around with them on New Year's Eve to show that the new year will be full of adventures.



Denmark - In Denmark, some people choose to smash plates against the doors of their friends and families to bring them good luck in the new year.

Scotland - In Scotland, many people celebrate Hogmanay which begins on 31st December. Some people take part in 'first footing' which means being the first person to visit somebody's house in the new year.



South Africa - In South Africa, some people make space in their homes for the new year by throwing their old furniture out of the window.

Questions

1. Where are new year festivals celebrated? Tick one.

- ☐ only in Thailand
- ☐ only in Japan
- ☐ only in England
- ☐ all over the world

2. Tick one option to complete the sentence.

The new year is celebrated at different times in different countries, depending on...

- ☐ calendars, cultures and traditions.
- ☐ calendars and countdowns.
- ☐ a country's spoken language.
- ☐ when people want it to happen.

3. In which country might it be considered good luck to eat 12 grapes at midnight on New Year's Eve? Tick one.

- ☐ Japan
- ☐ Thailand
- ☐ Spain
- ☐ Denmark

4. Draw **four** lines and complete each sentence.

In South America...

temple bells can be heard
ringing 108 times.

In Thailand...

some people carry around
an empty suitcase.

In Romania...

adults and children can be
found enjoying a water fight.

In Japan...

some children dress up in
bear costumes and dance.

5. Fill in the missing words.

Fireworks are thought to have first been used because _____ and loud _____ were believed to scare away evil spirits.

6. Look at the section called **New Year in Thailand**.

Find and copy **a group of words** that mean the same as 'to get ready for'.

7. Using 20 words or fewer, summarise what you have learnt about new year celebrations in Japan.

8. Which new year celebration would you **not** like to take part in? Explain your answer.

Answers

1. Where are new year festivals celebrated? Tick one.

- ☐ only in Thailand
- ☐ only in Japan
- ☐ only in England
- ☒ **all over the world**

2. Tick one option to complete the sentence.

The new year is celebrated at different times in different countries, depending on...

- ☒ **calendars, cultures and traditions.**
- ☐ calendars and countdowns.
- ☐ a country's spoken language.
- ☐ when people want it to happen.

3. In which country might it be considered good luck to eat 12 grapes at midnight on New Year's Eve? Tick one.

- ☐ Japan
- ☐ Thailand
- ☒ **Spain**
- ☐ Denmark

4. Draw **four** lines and complete each sentence.

In South America...	temple bells can be heard ringing 108 times.
In Thailand...	some people carry around an empty suitcase.
In Romania...	adults and children can be found enjoying a water fight.
In Japan...	some children dress up in bear costumes and dance.

5. Fill in the missing words.

Fireworks are thought to have first been used because **fire** and loud **noises** were believed to scare away evil spirits.

6. Look at the section called **New Year in Thailand**.

Find and copy **a group of words** that mean the same as 'to get ready for'.

in preparation for

7. Using 20 words or fewer, summarise what you have learnt about new year celebrations in Japan.

Pupils' own responses, such as: In Japan, the new year is called Shōgatsu. Temples ring their bells 108 times. People visit temples with their family.

8. Which new year celebration would you **not** like to take part in? Explain your answer.

Pupils' own responses, such as: I would not like to take part in the new year tradition in Siberia of diving into a frozen lake because it sounds very cold and dangerous and I would not enjoy that.

New Year Celebrations Around the World

New year festivals are celebrated all over the world and often involve traditions that say goodbye to the old year and bring good luck into the new year. Depending on different calendars, cultures and traditions, the new year is celebrated at different times in different countries. For example, while some people celebrate the new year on 1st January, the Chinese New Year doesn't begin until between the end of January and the middle of February.

New Year in Thailand



Songkran is a water festival that celebrates the Thai new year on 13th April.

Water plays a big part in the festival of Songkran as it is thought to wash away the old year in preparation for the new year. Traditionally, families will visit a Buddhist temple and pour water over statues of Buddha. This is thought to represent good fortune. Many people also clean their houses and public spaces (such as schools) in preparation for the new year. During Songkran, adults and children can often be found outside enjoying a street party and a giant water fight.

New Year in Japan

Shōgatsu is a Japanese holiday in which many people celebrate the new year. Celebrations begin on 1st January and usually end on 3rd January.



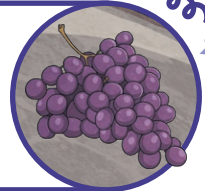
On New Year's Eve, many temples across Japan ring their bells 108 times. It is thought that eight rings say goodbye to the new year while 100 rings welcome in the new year. During this celebration, many people wake up early to watch the first sunrise of the new year and choose to visit local temples with their friends and family. While there, they ask that the new year is filled with good health.

Traditions from Around the World



Siberia - In Siberia, a few brave people take part in a new year's tradition of diving into a frozen lake. Some people have even challenged themselves to plant a tree at the bottom of the lake!

Spain - In Spain, some people choose to eat one grape each time the clock strikes midnight on New Year's Eve. Eating all 12 grapes is thought to bring good luck in the year ahead.



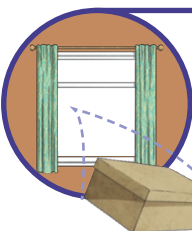
Romania - In Romania, one new year's tradition is for children to dance while dressed up in bear costumes. This is thought to help scare away any evil spirits.

South America - In a few countries across South America, some people choose to carry an empty suitcase around with them on New Year's Eve. This is thought to show that the new year will be full of exciting adventures.



Denmark - In Denmark, finding smashed plates on your doorstep on New Year's Day can be a sign of good luck. This is because some people choose to smash plates against the doors of their friends and families to bring them good luck into the new year.

Scotland - In Scotland, many people celebrate Hogmanay which begins on 31st December. During this celebration, people sometimes take part in 'first footing' which is the tradition of being the first person to visit somebody's house in the new year.



South Africa - In South Africa, some people make space in their homes for the new year by throwing their old furniture out of the window. This symbolises a fresh start.

Questions

1. When is Songkran celebrated? Tick one.

- ☐ 1st January
- ☐ between the end of January and the middle of February
- ☐ 1st January to 3rd January
- ☐ 13th April

2. According to the text, during which celebration do people wake up early to watch the sunrise? Tick one.

- ☐ Chinese New Year
- ☐ Songkran
- ☐ Shōgatsu
- ☐ Hogmanay

3. Look at the section called **New Year in Japan**.

Find and copy one word which shows that the temples that people visit are **nearby**.

4. During which celebration might people take part in **first footing**?

5. Fill in the missing words.

In Romania, one new year's _____ is for children to _____ while dressed up in bear costumes.

6. Using 20 words or fewer, summarise what you have learnt about new year celebrations in Thailand.

7. Explain how the layout of the text helps you to understand the information.

8. Do you think that the author likes new year celebrations? Explain your answer.

Answers

1. When is Songkran celebrated? Tick one.

- ☐ 1st January
- ☐ between the end of January and the middle of February
- ☐ 1st January to 3rd January
- ☒ **13th April**

2. According to the text, during which celebration do people wake up early to watch the sunrise? Tick one.

- ☐ Chinese New Year
- ☐ Songkran
- ☒ **Shōgatsu**
- ☐ Hogmanay

3. Look at the section called **New Year in Japan**.

Find and copy one word which shows that the temples that people visit are **nearby**.

local

4. During which celebration might people take part in **first footing**?

People might take part in 'first footing' during Hogmanay.

5. Fill in the missing words.

In Romania, one new year's **tradition** is for children to **dance** while dressed up in bear costumes.

6. Using 20 words or fewer, summarise what you have learnt about new year celebrations in Thailand.

Pupils' own responses, such as: It is called Songkran and is celebrated on 13th April. Water plays a big part and people have water fights.

7. Explain how the layout of the text helps you to understand the information.

Pupils' own responses, such as: The layout is split into small paragraphs that each have their own heading. This helps you to find the information easily and the headings help you to understand what the information is going to be about.

8. Do you think that the author likes new year celebrations? Explain your answer.

Pupils' own responses, such as: I think that the author does like new year celebrations because they make them sound really exciting and fun. I also do not think that they would have chosen to write about something that they did not like.