Lunar New Year

EIGHT FUN THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW

1 *LUNAR NEW YEAR is also referred to as the Chinese New Year.

Lunar New Year is celebrated by many countries, including **China**, **Taiwan**, **Hong Kong**, **Singapore**, **Vietnam**, **Malaysia**, **Philippines,** and **Indonesia**. Lunar New Year marks the first new moon of the year, which is determined by the cycles of the moon and sun. This means that the date varies, usually falling between **January 21st** and **February 20th**.

2 The Lunar New Year is celebrated in 12-year cycles, with each year of the cycle represented by a different animal.

2024 is the Year of the Dragon. The Dragon is the fifth sign of the Chinese Zodiac, the ultimate auspicious symbol signifying success and happiness. The Dragon possesses a mystical side, one that is intuitive, artistic and strangely lucky. Dragons are tenacious and successful, managing to land on their feet despite whatever challenges they come across and shining in whatever they choose to do as long as they put their mind to it.

3 "Happy New Year" is pronounced differently in Mandarin and Cantonese.

The two dialects have the same written language, but differ in pronunciation. The traditional Lunar New Year greeting is *"***Congratulations and hope you get rich***."* In **Mandarin** it's *Gong Xi Fa Cai*, while in **Cantonese** it's *Gung Hay Fat Choy*.

4 The most common Chinese New Year gifts are red envelopes.

Red envelopes typically contain money and are gifted by older members of the family to their younger relatives.

5 There are specific foods in each country that are believed to bring good fortune, such as:

- China: **Yú** (fish sounds similar to word for "**leftover**"), *tang yuan* (glutinous sweet rice balls represent **togetherness**), **oranges** (sound like "**wealth**"), **long noodles** (symbolize long life), and **dumplings** (resemble ancient gold ingots)

- Taiwan: *Luo bo gao* (radish cakes made with glutinous rice flower)

- Korea: *Tteokguk* (rice cake soup), *manduguk* (dumpling soup)

- Vietnam: *Bánh chưng* (sticky rice cakes made with mung beans and pork and steamed in banana leaves)

6 The origin of Chinese New Year is based on the legend of Nian, a beast that appeared at the end of each year and terrified villagers.

The villagers discovered that Nian feared the color red, as well as the loud, cracking noises of burning dry bamboo. Thus, red has become a lucky color. During New Year festivities, streets, businesses, and houses are decorated with festive red decor, such as lanterns and banners. It is also tradition to set off firecrackers at midnight on New Year's Eve—a call to the dry bamboo burnt by villagers long ago—to bring good luck for the new year.

7 Lion and dragon dances are performed in Lunar New Year parades all over the world.

Both dragons and lions are mythical, spectacularly-colored creatures that bring good luck. Nine people usually perform the dragon dance, holding up the costume with poles and making it move in a flowing motion, usually chasing a pearl. Lion dances are performed by martial artists, with one person acting as the head and front legs and a second person acting as the tail and rear legs. Performed to the beat of a drum, gongs and cymbals, the two dancers jump and roll in unison, and perform many difficult acrobatic moves as they search for red envelopes containing money.

8 Lunar New Year festivities last for 15 days!

Celebrations begin with the first new moon and ends on the first full moon 15 days later. This year, the Lunar New Year begins on New Year's Eve (February 9) and ends on February 24 with a Lantern Festival, lion and dragon dances, and fireworks.

YEAR OF THE DRAGON, FEBRUARY 10, 2024

WRITE IN CHINESE!

The Chinese character is derived from the pictogram of a dragon: 🐉 Stroke order for the most part always goes from left to right, top to bottom. Also, generally, when a horizontal and vertical line cross, the horizontal lines are written first.

NOTE: A great resource for stroke order rules:

https://www.writtenchinese.com/chinese-character-stroke-order-rules/

How to write "Dragon"

丶 二 亠 立 产 咅 咅 咅 咅 龸 龸 龍 龍 龍 龍

Try it!

龍 龍 龍 龍 龍

LUNAR NEW YEAR WORD SEARCH

Can you find all the words?

Gung Hay Fat Choy

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M T M Y H X Y J D T P N C J S U E
G B E T R E G I T K Y A F T B M K
F R A B B I T J C A K I M M O V B
E P O L E V N E D E R Y S N F Y V
S N D E U L L I S E L N K W R S H
T A X S I N L U W W A E R E U B E
I U W S E O A O C K Y W B S P E G
V Y T I H N R R E B A Y O R F D S
A A R N O K O G Z X A E I O A W E
L C S G S C B O Z Z E A X H M T H
S O A S O Y J D M M P R T A I R E
S R J L A N T E R N O U D W L M C
D V S H E E P J D O L J M R Y Y X
U L N Q E N S H S O A I P M C G Q
S B F C T F D T O Q O T K C V F Z
W C J U I E E A Q C W E K L T I J
K J I T J R H T R E U Z U U K R Z
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BLESSINGS
CAKES
CALENDAR
CELEBRATE
DOG
DRAGON
FAMILY
FESTIVAL
FIREWORKS
HOLIDAY
HORSE
LANTERN
LUNAR
MONKEY
MOON
NEW YEAR
OX
RABBIT
RAT
RED ENVELOPE
ROOSTER
SHEEP
SNAKE
TIGER