

Celebrating Chinese New Year with Zara

Learning objective: To understand the traditions, symbolism, and significance of Chinese New Year within the context of global religious and cultural celebrations.

Read each question carefully. Use your knowledge of cultural celebrations to provide detailed, thoughtful answers. Refer to the word bank if you need help with key vocabulary.

Zara the zebra is fascinated by the patterns and colours of Chinese New Year. She has been learning about how families clean their homes to sweep away bad luck, prepare special meals to ensure prosperity, and decorate the streets with vibrant red lanterns to welcome the spring season.

Word bank: Lunar calendar · Zodiac · Prosperity · Red envelope · Lantern · Symbolism · Tradition · New beginnings

1. Explain why the colour red is considered so significant in Chinese New Year celebrations. What might this represent for a family starting a new year? (2 marks)

2. Compare and contrast the idea of 'cleaning the home' before the festival to how people in the UK prepare for other celebrations, such as Christmas or Eid. Why do you think preparation is an important part of a festival? (3 marks)

3. Chinese New Year follows the lunar calendar rather than the solar calendar we use daily. Justify why a lunar calendar might be important for traditional festivals. (2 marks)

4. Red envelopes (hongbao) are often given to children containing money. If you were giving a gift to represent 'good fortune' rather than wealth, what would you choose and why? (2 marks)

5. What might happen if a community decided to stop celebrating traditional festivals? Explain the impact this could have on a culture's identity. (3 marks)

Draw: Zara is designing a new decorative pattern for a lantern. Draw a pattern that uses symbols of luck and prosperity (such as flowers, gold coins, or clouds) and explain in one sentence why you chose those specific shapes.



Extension challenge: Research the twelve animals of the Chinese Zodiac. Choose one animal and write a short poem or a persuasive paragraph justifying why that animal represents the traits of a good leader.