Celebrating Chinese New Year with Nova and Kit

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 and use your knowledge of cultural celebrations to provide detailed answers. Use the word bank to help you with key terminology.

Chinese New Year, also known as the Spring Festival, is the most important festival in the Chinese calendar. It is based on the lunar calendar, meaning the date changes each year. Families come together for a 'reunion dinner' to mark the occasion. The festival is filled with symbols of good luck, such as the colour red, which is believed to ward off bad fortune. Many children receive red envelopes containing money as a sign of well-wishes for the year ahead. Each year is represented by one of twelve animals from the Chinese zodiac, and the celebrations often conclude with the Lantern Festival.

Word bank: Lunar calendar · Zodiac · Red envelopes · Prosperity · Dragon dance · Lunar New Year · Reunion dinner

1. Why does the date of the Chinese New Year change every year compared to a standard calendar date like Christmas Day? (2 marks)

2. Nova the owl is curious about symbolism. Explain why the colour red is significant during these celebrations. (2 marks)

3. Kit the fox is looking at the Chinese zodiac. If there are 12 animals in the cycle, how many years would it take for the same animal year to repeat? (1 mark)

4. Describe the purpose of the 'reunion dinner' and why it is considered an important part of the festival. (2 marks)

5. If a child receives three red envelopes each containing £5, how much money have they received in total? Show your calculation. (2 marks)

Draw: Draw a scene showing a traditional Chinese New Year celebration. Include at least two symbols you have learnt about, such as a red envelope, a paper lantern, or a dragon.

Extension challenge: Research the animal associated with your birth year. Write a short paragraph explaining which traits that animal is said to have and whether you think they match your own personality.