Understanding Traditions: The Lunar New Year

Learning objective: I can explain the significance of Chinese New Year and identify its key traditions.

About 45 minutes. Grown-up tip: Discuss with your child how different cultures celebrate the passing of time and the arrival of a new season.

Read each question carefully. Some questions require a short answer, while others ask you to explain your reasoning. Example: If asked 'Why is the colour red important?', you should explain its symbolic meaning (e.g., 'Red is used because it represents good luck and joy in Chinese culture.').

Chinese New Year, also known as the Lunar New Year or the Spring Festival, is one of the most important celebrations in many East Asian cultures. The date changes each year because it follows the lunar calendar, which is based on the cycles of the moon. The festival is a time to honour ancestors, gather with family for a reunion dinner, and welcome the coming spring. Traditions include cleaning the home to 'sweep away' bad luck, decorating with red lanterns, and giving red envelopes containing money to children for good fortune.

Word bank: Lunar · Zodiac · Prosperity · Tradition · Lantern

1. What is another name for Chinese New Year, and why does the date change every year? (2 marks) (2 marks)

2. Explain two ways that people prepare their homes for the festival to ensure a fresh start. (2 marks) (2 marks)

3. Why do you think families place such high importance on the 'reunion dinner' during this time? Give a reason. (3 marks) (3 marks)

4. In Chinese culture, the colour red is used extensively during the festival. What does this colour symbolise? (3 marks) (3 marks)

5. How does the Lunar New Year reflect the values of gratitude and family unity? Provide evidence from the text to support your answer. (5 marks) (5 marks)

6. Describe the significance of the red envelopes given to children. Why is this tradition considered a sign of good fortune? (5 marks) (5 marks)

7. Compare the focus of the Spring Festival with a tradition celebrated in the UK, such as Harvest Festival. How are they similar in terms of 'thankfulness'? (5 marks) (5 marks)

Draw: A festive scene showing a street decorated with red lanterns and a traditional dragon dance performance.

Extension challenge: Total: /25. Challenge: Research the Chinese Zodiac. Write a short paragraph explaining which animal represents your birth year and what personality traits are associated with it.

I did it! Name: _____ Date: _____

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