Spring Festival: Welcoming the New Year

1. Any two of the following: cleaning the home, receiving 'hongbao' (red envelopes), watching dragon or lion dances, lighting lanterns, or sharing a meal of sweet rice balls. (2 marks)

Working: The text mentions: 'cleaning of the home', 'receive 'hongbao'', 'traditional performances, such as the energetic dragon and lion dances', 'light lanterns', 'share a meal of sweet rice balls'.

1 mark for each correct activity identified, up to a maximum of 2 marks.

2. The home is cleaned to symbolise sweeping away the 'dust' of the old year to make room for good luck. (1 mark)

Working: The text states: 'This tradition symbolises sweeping away the 'dust' of the old year to make room for good luck.'

Accept any answer that mentions cleaning away the old year/dust to invite good luck.

3. Someone might use red items because it is the most significant colour of the festival and is believed to bring prosperity and ward off misfortune. (2 marks)

Look for: The student must link the colour red to the concepts of prosperity and protection from bad luck.

Good: They use red because it is a lucky colour for the festival.

Better: They use red because the text says it brings prosperity and helps ward off misfortune.

Best: Red is used because it is the most significant colour during the festivities, as it is believed to bring prosperity and ward off misfortune.

What moves an answer up: Moving up the levels requires increasing use of specific vocabulary and direct reference to the text's explanation of the colour's purpose.

4. The date changes because the festival follows the traditional lunisolar calendar, whereas the UK uses a different calendar system. (2 marks)

Look for: The student must identify that the festival follows a 'lunisolar' calendar rather than the standard UK calendar.

Good: It is because they use a different calendar called the lunisolar calendar.

Better: The date changes because it follows the lunisolar calendar, which is different from the calendar we use in the UK.

Best: The festival date changes each year because it is based on the traditional lunisolar calendar, unlike the calendar used in the UK, which causes the date to fall between late January and mid-February.

What moves an answer up: Moving up the levels requires incorporating more detail from the text to explain the 'why' behind the date shift.

5. Yes, it is important for community spirit because the text describes it as a time for families to gather and mentions the 'shared excitement of a fresh start' and 'unity'. (2 marks)

Look for: The student must provide an opinion supported by evidence like 'families to gather', 'unity', or 'shared excitement'.

Good: Yes, because it brings families and communities together to celebrate.

Better: Yes, it is important because the text says it is a time for families to gather and it is defined by hope and unity.

Best: Yes, the festival is important for community spirit because it is a time for families to gather and is defined by 'hope, unity, and the shared excitement of a fresh start' within the community.

What moves an answer up: Moving up the levels requires quoting or referencing specific words from the text to support the opinion.

What a secure answer looks like

A secure answer demonstrates the ability to locate specific facts and link them to the underlying themes of tradition and symbolism mentioned in the text.

If your child is stuck

Ask your child to re-read the paragraph where the question topic is mentioned. Encourage them to

underline the sentence that contains the answer before they start writing.

Common mistakes to watch for

Children often confuse the 'lunisolar' calendar with the standard calendar, or they may forget to include the 'why' (the belief in prosperity) when explaining the significance of the colour red.