

AMERICA'S SPECIAL DAYS

New Years Day(s)

Lesson 1

PURPOSE OF LESSON:

The students will learn the significance of the New Year's celebration and the correlation between New Year's Day and the calendar, past to present. Chinese New Year celebrations and customs are also defined.

SYNOPSIS OF THE VIDEO:

America's Special Days and Francesca, our guide, take us to several locations where people are celebrating New Year's Day in a variety of ways. She explains how the calendar was developed, and briefly describes the solar and lunar calendars. The dropping of the lighted ball in New York City, "Auld Lang Syne" and street celebrations are shown as traditional ways to celebrate New Year's Day. The Chinese New Year celebration is also shown, depicting the dragon as a symbol of goodness and strength. Francesca concludes the program by writing a New Year's resolution and challenging the audience to make and keep their own resolutions.



SUGGESTED VOCABULARY FOR DISCUSSION:

celebration
Father Time
calendar
baby

New Year
holiday
scythe
almanac

auld acquaintance
lunar calendar
New Year's resolution
solar calendar

WATCH AND LEARN:

1. When is New Year's Day? (January 1)
2. How many days are in one year? (365)
3. What other culture's New Year's celebration do you see? (Chinese)
4. Look for the dragon in the Chinese New Year celebration. The dragon is a symbol of two things ...what are they? (goodness and strength)

PRE-TELECAST ACTIVITIES:

1. Bulletin board idea: Put New Year's Resolutions on a giant stork. Make diapers out of paper napkins and have the resolutions tucked inside of the napkins. **(P,I)**
2. Bulletin board idea: Make a hot air popcorn popper popping out popcorn and put a New Year's resolution on each piece. **(P,I)**
3. Learn how to say Happy New Year in other languages. **(P,I)**
4. Make cone hats that say Happy New Year on them. Make a birthday cake to celebrate the birth of the new year. **(P)**

CHECK IT OUT!

Francesca says: "Now it's your turn to make your own New Year's resolutions. Write them down. You see, the idea is to see if you actually kept your promises. After a couple days, see if you kept your New Year's resolutions. CHECK IT OUT!"

POST-TELECAST ACTIVITIES:

1. Make New Year's resolutions. **(P,I)**
2. Associate New Year's Day with birthdays of the children. Have each child bring in a baby picture. Talk about the fact that we celebrate the new year like they celebrate getting another year older. **(P,I)**
3. Count 365 beans into a jar, to see just how much it is. **(P)**
4. Start at January 1 and count how many days until your birthday. **(P,I)**
5. Learn the months of the year. **(P)**
6. Figure out how many seasons, months, days, hours, minutes and/or seconds in a year. **(P,I)**
7. Compare present day calendars to old calendars. **(P,I)**
8. Make a calendar. Mark important dates for the month. Mark birthdays of students and family members. **(P,I)**
9. Get an almanac and find and share unusual information in it. **(P,I)**
10. Observe a sundial. **(P,I)**
11. Draw pictures of the various stages of the moon. **(P,I)**
12. Do a study of tides. **(I)**
13. Create a new dance for the New Year. Make costumes if you want to. **(P,I)**
14. Have a Dragon Dance to celebrate Chinese New Year. Make dragon masks out of paper plates and tongue suppressors. Make the dragon out of cloth. **(P,I)**
15. Make "good luck" money. (Chinese in origin) Practice counting money. **(P)**
16. Learn the words to "Auld Lang Syne" and talk about what they mean. Make up another verse to "Auld Lang Syne" and talk about friendship. Older students may want to find out where "Auld Lang Syne" originated, and study the history of the song. **(P,I)**
17. Write to a friend you haven't written to in a long time. Write to a classmate that has moved away. **(P,I)**
18. Have your own class New Year's party. Send out invitations. Make your own decorations. **(P,I)**
19. Talk to someone much older than you are. Find out how they celebrated New Year's Eve and New Year's Day when they were young. **(P,I)**
20. Compare time zones in the U.S. or the world. Choose two locations and figure out when each of them would be celebrating New Year's. **(I)**
21. Discuss the similarities and the differences between the January 1st New Year and the Chinese New Year celebrations. **(P,I)**
22. Find out how other cultures celebrate New Year's Day. **(P,I)**

BOOK LIST:

- Chinese New Year by Tricia Brown, Henry Holt & Co., 1987.
Gun Hoy Fat Choy, by June Behrens, Children's Press, 1982.
New Year's Poems, by Myra Cohn, ed., Holiday, 1987.
(Short poems celebrating New Year's memories.) (3-6).
Goodbye Old Year, Hello New Year, by Frank Modell, Greenwillow, 1984.
(Marvin and Milton are a little late in celebrating New Year's.)
Happy New Year, by Priscilla Kiedrowski, Carolrhoda, 1984.
(A description of six different New Year's celebrations throughout the world.) (2-4)