

A Teaching House New Year! – Teacher’s notes

New Year Traditions	Pre-intermediate/intermediate/upper-intermediate
<p>Learners will develop reading skills and review/expand their knowledge of New Year related vocabulary.</p>	<p>Learners will also develop their speaking fluency through summarizing an article verbally and contributing ideas on making</p>
<p>Note to the teacher: Fireworks, New Year resolutions, and singing “Auld Lang Syne” are not always a must in every country. This lesson explores the different ways people ring in the New Year. This lesson works best with multi-lingual and multi-cultural groups, but the introduction could be adapted for a mono-lingual group of students from the same country. It starts off with a personalized introduction to the theme where students can exchange information about their personal and national New Year traditions, if they have any. The lesson then moves on to students reading and learning about New Year traditions from around the world, some of which are quite bizarre which they share with members of the class. The final activity really lets their imagination run wild as students get to generate and share their own New Year resolutions.</p> <p>Enjoy and happy new year!!</p> <p>Text adapted from the following sources: http://www.travelandleisure.com/articles/worlds-strangest-new-year-traditions/1 http://www.rvanseacrest.com/2010/12/28/9-strange-new-years-traditions-from-around-the-world/</p>	

New Year Traditions from around the globe

1) Pre-reading:

Ss discuss these questions, which are on their worksheet

- How do you / people in your country celebrate the New Year?
- How do people in the USA celebrate New Year? Are there any similarities or differences? If so, what are they?

2) Prediction task:

- In pairs or small groups Ss discuss some of the ways people celebrate New Years around the world and why they do so.
- During feedback, write their predictions on the board for the first reading

3) Vocabulary:

- Depending on the level you may need to go over some words in the text. Check that Ss understand and are able to pronounce the words.

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4) Reading: Have Ss read and match the picture & country with the text.

Group A: reads “New Year Traditions around the world: Reading Worksheet A” and check their predictions.

Group B: reads “New Year Traditions around the world: Reading Worksheet B” and check their predictions.

They then compare their answers with someone from the **same** group.

Answer Key

- 1) Puerto Rico
- 2) South America
- 3) Denmark
- 4) Philippines
- 5) Spain
- 6) Germany
- 7) Belarus
- 8) Scotland

5) Speaking and summarizing.

Ss now work with someone from the **other** group. In their own words, they should tell their new partner about the New year traditions for the countries they don't have on their list. They then decide together which tradition they would most like to adopt.

6) Personalized Speaking:

Choose a good year for you. Tell your partner why the year was special: What happened? What did you do? Who did you meet? Where did you go?

7) Extension Activity: Ss decide on a New Years Resolution for themselves and share with their partner. After a few minutes, Ss mingle and find someone that has the same or a similar resolution to yours.

Ideas for resolutions:

Inspire, wear sunglasses, find Mr. or Ms. Right, try a new cuisine, eat well, be positive, be spontaneous, laugh a lot, jog, lose weight, smell the roses, eat a tomato like an apple, spend more time with loved ones, do what I love, learn something new,

Student Worksheet 1

1) Lead-in

- How do you / people in your country celebrate the New Year?
- How do people in the USA celebrate New Year? Are there any similarities or differences? If so, what are they?

Use these pictures to match the tradition and country with the text you have been given.

<p>The Philippines</p> 	<p>Germany</p> 
<p>South America</p> 	<p>Spain</p> 
<p>Puerto Rico</p> 	<p>Belarus</p> 
<p>Denmark</p> 	<p>Scotland</p> 

New Year Traditions around the world: Reading Worksheet A

3) Read the first half of the text and check your predictions.

Strange New Year Traditions from Around the World	
<p>What will your wardrobe be on New Year's Eve? Nice dress? Black tie? No matter what we wear, though, New Year signifies a new beginning. Flipping open a fresh calendar, with its 12 unmarked months, is perhaps one of the most universally hopeful actions we humans perform. Finally, a chance to start over.</p> <p>It's no wonder we all welcome the holiday with such enthusiasm. Here in the U.S. (and in lots of other countries), the event is celebrated with fireworks, parades, partying and toasts. Some cultures, though, have more unusual ways of ushering in the New Year.</p> <p>In many countries, there's a shared belief that specific actions taken on New Year's Eve or New Year's Day-or at the stroke of midnight when one becomes the other-can influence the fate of the months ahead.</p> <p>In other countries, New Year's customs are about driving away the bad spirits of the past year, so that the new one can arrive pure and unspoiled. No matter how odd they may seem to us, though, these customs share a hopefulness that's hard not to appreciate. Out with the old, in with the new!</p> <p>If you chose to be a little cultural this year and celebrate New Years in a different way, here are a few traditions that take place all over the world on the 31 of December.</p>	
<p>1. _____ When it's New Year's Eve in this country, they throw buckets of water out the window to "clean" the old year out. They also clean their homes and decorate them, as it is supposed to symbolize the "cleaning" of the spirit.</p>	<p>5. _____</p>
<p>2. _____ It's considered lucky to wear special underwear on New Year's Eve. Market vendors start displaying brightly colored underpants a few days before the holiday. The most popular colors are red and yellow: red is supposed to bring love in the coming year, and yellow is supposed to bring money.</p>	<p>6. _____</p>
<p>3. _____ Many leap off chairs at midnight, hoping to ban all bad spirits in the new year. They also have a very loud and destructive way of celebrating the new year- they break dishes. People throw their old dishes on their friends' doors on New Years and the one with the most dishes outside their door, usually has the most friends.</p>	<p>7. _____</p>
<p>4. _____ It is a tradition in this country that focuses on all round things. They consume round fruits such as grapes and wear clothing with round shapes such as polka dots. The round shape reminds and celebrates the roundness of coins, as they hope for prosperity in the new year</p>	<p>8. _____</p>

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4) Now share what you've read with someone from the other group.

Decide which tradition you would like to try out this coming year.

New Year Traditions around the world: Reading Worksheet B

3) Read the first half of the text and check your predictions.

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<p>What will your wardrobe be on New Year's Eve? Nice dress? Black tie? No matter what we wear, though, New Year signifies a new beginning. Flipping open a fresh calendar, with its 12 unmarked months, is perhaps one of the most universally hopeful actions we humans perform. Finally, a chance to start over.</p> <p>It's no wonder we all welcome the holiday with such enthusiasm. Here in the U.S. (and in lots of other countries), the event is celebrated with fireworks, parades, partying and toasts. Some cultures, though, have more unusual ways of ushering in the New Year.</p> <p>In many countries, there's a shared belief that specific actions taken on New Year's Eve or New Year's Day-or at the stroke of midnight when one becomes the other-can influence the fate of the months ahead.</p> <p>In other countries, New Year's customs are about driving away the bad spirits of the past year, so that the new one can arrive pure and unspoiled. No matter how odd they may seem to us, though, these customs share a hopefulness that's hard not to appreciate. Out with the old, in with the new!</p> <p>If you chose to be a little cultural this year and celebrate New Years in a different way, here are a few traditions that take place all over the world on the 31 of December.</p>	
1. _____	5. _____ At midnight on New Year's Eve, it's customary in this country to quickly eat 12 grapes one at each stroke of the clock and try to eat all of them by the time the clock stops chiming. Each grape supposedly signifies good luck for one month of the coming year. In major cities, people gather in the main squares to eat their grapes together and pass around bottles of cava.
2. _____	6. _____ People from this country pour lead as a tradition, which includes using molten lead like tea leaves. The lead pieces are poured into a bowl filled with water, leading the lead to form shapes which predict what is going to happen in the new year. If the lead forms a ball it means good luck, if it looks like an anchor it means you will need help in the new year and if it's a cross it means death.
3. _____	7. _____ In this country, unmarried women compete at games of skill to determine who will get married first in the new year. This game involves setting piles of corn and a rooster before each of the single ladies. Whichever pile the bird approaches first, is believed to be the one who is to be married first.
4. _____	8. _____ During the New Year's Eve celebration, "first-footing" is practiced all over this country. The custom dictates that the first person to cross the threshold of a home in the New Year should carry a gift for luck (whiskey is the most common). They also hold bonfire ceremonies, where people parade while swinging giant fireballs on poles overhead (supposedly symbols of the sun, to purify the coming year.

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- 5) Choose a good year for you. Tell your partner why the year was special: What happened? What did you do? Who did you meet? Where did you go?
- 6) Extension Activity: Decide on a New Years Resolution for yourself and share this with your partner. After a few minutes, mingle and find someone that has the same or a similar resolution to yours.

