

Chinese New Year

2-4

Learning objectives

- To learn about the Chinese New Year festival
- To learn that circles can be cut into spiral shapes

What to do

- Find out if any of the children have Chinese friends, neighbours or relatives, who may be prepared to talk to the children about how they celebrate New Year.
- Explain to the children that Chinese people celebrate the start of their New Year around February. It is a time when they do much cleaning and have specially prepared meals with their families. They decorate their houses with decorations and lanterns.
- Show the children a Chinese snake spiral that you can hang around the room.
- Help the children draw around a circle on a piece of A4 red card and cut it out.
- Encourage the children to paint dots and spiral shapes all over their card using the gold paint. When it is dry the child should paint the other side.
- When both sides are dry cut into a spiral shape and hang up with gold thread.
- Hang them over a radiator so that the children can watch them moving and twirling.
- Show the children how to make Chinese lanterns (see page 123).

Extensions/variations

- Set up a Chinese take-away in your home corner. Wool makes great noodles and the children will really enjoy frying it in a pretend wok. Your local take-away may be prepared to provide you with price lists, menus and Chinese calendars that you can display on the walls.
- Show the children how to make little red envelopes and fill with plastic money. During the festival many Chinese people give gifts of money wrapped in red envelopes to each other.
- Make Chinese dragon face masks and fortune cookies (see template pages 123 and 124).

Links to home

- Encourage the children to talk about visiting their local Chinese take-away. Did they see any special decorations hanging inside? What does Chinese food taste like?
- How do the children celebrate New Year with their family?

Celebrate this very special festival by making a sparkly spiral decoration.

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Resources

- A4 red card
- Templates on pages 123 and 124
- Scissors
- Gold thread
- Gold paint
- Paintbrushes
- Glue
- Wool
- Pretend cooking equipment
- Chinese take-away menus
- Price lists
- Chinese calendars
- Red paper
- Plastic money

