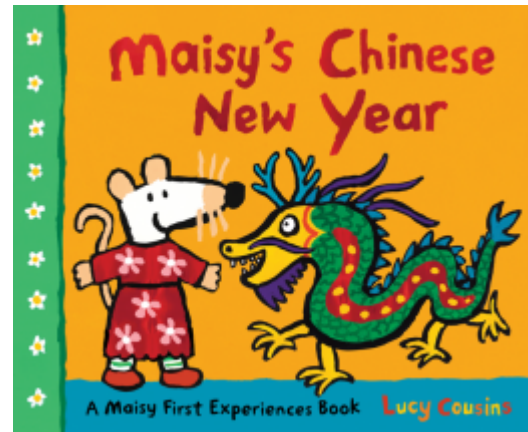


LEARNING TIME

Maisy's Chinese New Year By Lucy Cousins

Join Maisy in celebrating one of the world's biggest festivals, Chinese New Year! This beautiful book features many Chinese New Year traditions, including the giving of red packets, receiving gifts such as kumquat and flowers, and learning all about the Chinese zodiac.

Bright and colourful, an easy read aloud with several opportunities to engage in the story and learn all about this festival in an age appropriate and accessible way.



Key Message for Parents | Children learn language by listening to it and using it

Meaningful conversations provide language rich opportunities for children. This book has many new words explained through rich diagrams and explanations. Spend time talking about new words and concepts and find ways to incorporate them into daily conversations:

- Notice items for sale in stores celebrating Chinese New Year
- Visit China Town and play I-spy with the new words from the book
- Create your own Chinese New Year celebration or join a community event
- Look for other books and print information to share on the topic.

Australian Early Years Learning Framework | Outcome 1: Children have a strong sense of identity Outcome 2: Children are connected with and contribute to their world

Educators can support children's learning...

- By providing a safe, inclusive, welcoming space to ensure children feel safe, secure, and supported.
- Modelling to children how to respond to diversity with respect through learning about and appreciating a range of cultural activities, events and special dates (in this case Chinese New Year).

Welcome

Ask carers to write nametags for themselves and their children.

Welcome everyone, introduce yourself, remind adults to turn their mobile phones off and that there will be time for adults to chat after the story and songs.

Welcome Song (or your preferred song)

Have the words available as a handout or written on a board or butcher's paper for the adults to read and join in.

Good Morning

Good morning to you

Good morning to you

Good morning everybody

and welcome to you!

Song

Clap Everybody and Say Hello (English and Mandarin)

A simple way to create an inclusive welcome.

Clap everybody and say hello

No matter what the weather

Clap everybody and say ni hao

No matter what the weather



**(you can also try stomp, wave, wiggle instead of clap)*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LizFJ4Cg80Y>

NOTE: Ni hao (pronounced Knee How) is "Hello" in Mandarin Chinese.

Before Reading

Talk about Chinese New Year, asking the children what they know about it, if they have noticed anything about it in the community. Some children and families may use the term Lunar New Year which is the term preferred in other Asian countries who celebrate this festival too. Use a globe or map to show where China is and explain generally the concept of different countries, languages and celebrations. Show the children the book, they may recognise Maisy (on the cover) which will provide a discussion point to predict what the story is about. Identify the author and illustrator and invite the children to discover what happens on Chinese New Year.

During Reading

Allow time for discussion on key pages such as where there is the opportunity to look for other red items on the page. Follow the children's areas of interest and allow time to pause on detailed pages to explore new ideas such as lucky packets and the Chinese zodiac.

You may want to explain some of the new words from Maisy's story – consider whether you want to explain these words before the story, or as you reach them during the story. The illustrations can help with showing what the words mean including: celebrate, feast, packet, zodiac, midnight, fireworks, or parade. You may want to prepare a few items as props to show the children.

After Reading

Talk about the various aspects of the tradition that are shown in the book. How do we celebrate New Year in Australia? How do the Chinese celebrate Chinese New Year? Highlight differences and similarities.

Go back to the story of the Chinese Zodiac and work out the different animals they children have as their year of birth.

Song

Dragon Dance

See the dragons dance and prance,

See the dragons dance and prance,

on Chinese New Years Day.

**Repeat substituting with different actions [hop] [shake their tails] [turn around][go to sleep]*

<https://youtu.be/by5sTzh67fUs>

Extension Ideas

Play based activities are rich in language building opportunities. Try these:

- Create a mock restaurant celebrating Chinese New Year. Create visual and written lists of all the things you will need and all the roles that will need to be played. Provide chopsticks!
- Make your own 'Child friendly' chopsticks. They are great for fine motor skill development, and eating fun! Encourage children to use these chopsticks to practice picking up and placing various items (such as balls of play dough) into containers (bowls or ice cube trays). Have them pinch off the dough and roll the balls themselves for added fine motor practice. Instructions available here: <http://mamaot.com/how-to-make-kiddie-chopsticks/>

Create

- Colour in or create different animals from the Chinese Zodiac using coloured paper or card.
- The year 2021 is the Year of the Ox, so the children may have an interest in creating a large mural or collage of an Ox as a group.

Talk

- Attend or create your own Chinese New Year celebrations and/or notice relevant cultural artifacts in your own community. Talk about what you see, do and notice during these times such as items in shops or restaurants.

STEM Focus

STEM – Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics extensions:

- Revisit the pages where Maisy receives the lucky red packet. Create a lucky packet and colour it in red then make fake money to go into it. Encourage the children to count the coins and add up the 'money'. Ask them to 'gift' it to another child who can also count their 'money' received.
- Create playdough shapes of animals from the Chinese Zodiac, either using stamps or through free hand modelling.
- Make the lantern from the Activity Time (available for free on the Little Big Book Club website) and use a child-safe tea light (Flameless LED battery powered tealight) or torch inside it to illuminate it. Talk about light and dark, on and off and try out the lantern in a dark place like a show box with a small hole in the side to see the affect.

Goodbye

Conclude the session with some suggestions of books that parents might want to share with their children. The Little Big Book Club suggests the following books to support learning in this area. If your library has copies, make them available for families to borrow or include them in your story time session.

For more stories to share, we recommend the following titles:

- **Fang Fang's Chinese New Year** by *Sally Rippin*
- **The Great Race** by *Christopher Corr*
- **Chinese New Year Colors** by *Richard Lo*

An Activity Time for this book is available to download for FREE from our website. This is a great resource to share with families, you are welcome to print and distribute as necessary.

Goodbye Song

Depending on the size of your group, you may wish to insert each child's name in the place of 'you' as it develops a more personal relationship between yourself, the child and the family.

Sung to the tune of (Here We Go Round the Mulberry Bush) or your preferred choice.

Goodbye

This is the way we say goodbye (use a waving action) Say goodbye, say goodbye

This is the way we say goodbye

To all our library friends (or) (to our friend.....)!