

A Story About Chinese New Year

All around was red. Red lanterns, red garlands and red banners decorated every building as far as the eye could see. At last, the preparations were almost complete. We had been cleaning for days already to get rid of the bad luck which had gathered over the last year. We had made the traditional red and gold banners for the front door with our friends and now it was time to prepare the most important meal of the year.

"There is plenty to do in here," called Mum. "Come and help!"

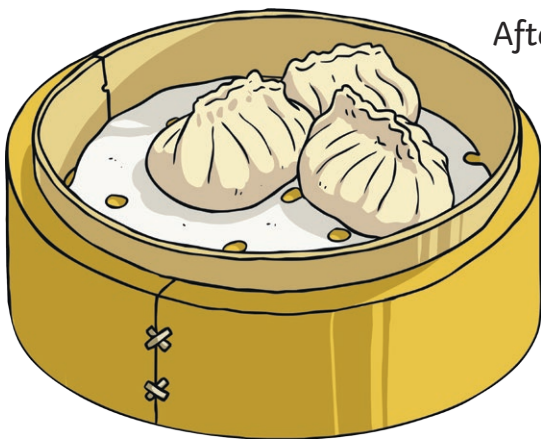
"Can I prepare the dumplings, Mum?"

I loved trying to make the dumplings the right shape to look like gold ingots. This year, we were making our favourite pork dumplings and spinach and mushroom dumplings which Dad had chosen.

Rushing along the crowded streets, Dad was caught in a sea of people all heading out of their offices to make the journey home. He'd remembered to buy the all-important firecrackers and was looking forward to setting them off after the meal. First, though, he had to squeeze onto the busy train out of the city.

"Dad, at last you're home!" I shouted excitedly. It felt like I'd been looking out for him for hours!

Before long, we were sharing the wonderful food which had been prepared. Everything had a meaning, from the long noodles for a long life to the dumplings for good luck. It all tasted delicious.



Afterwards, I was thrilled with my lucky red envelopes with a gift of money inside and the wish for health and a long life.

The evening of celebrations came to an end at midnight with Dad lighting the firecrackers outside the house to keep bad luck away for another year.





The best thing about new year is that we celebrate for two weeks! So, the next day, we travelled into town to see the dragon parade and meet more friends. Seeing the dragon parade through the streets is a spectacular sight.

On the 15th day, it was time to celebrate the lantern festival. We watched in amazement as thousands of lanterns were released into the sky to symbolise the longer days of spring and the light of the full moon. There was just time to eat a few more delicious rice dumplings before we went home to bed with all the wonderful experiences to remember for another year.

Questions

1. Why has the narrator been cleaning for days? Tick one.

Their rooms were untidy. ☐

They were tidying up after the new year. ☐

They were getting rid of the bad luck. ☐

They were preparing for Dad's birthday. ☐

2. What is placed on front doors? Tick one.

lanterns ☐

red and gold banners ☐

firecrackers ☐

dumplings ☐

3. Which two different dumpling fillings are being prepared?

4. What important role does Dad play in the preparations? Tick one.

He buys the firecrackers. ☐

He prepares the meal. ☐

He hangs the banner on the door. ☐

He releases lanterns. ☐

5. What do the following things symbolise?

long noodles: _____

dumplings: _____

6. What do family and friends exchange at new year?

7. Match up the sentences.

New year celebrations
People visit the temple
The dragon parade

to say prayers.
is a spectacular sight.
last for two weeks.

8. Why are lanterns released on the 15th day of celebrations?

Answers

1. Why has the narrator been cleaning for days? Tick one.

Their rooms were untidy. ☐

They were tidying up after the new year. ☐

They were getting rid of the bad luck. ☒

They were preparing for Dad's birthday. ☐

2. What is placed on front doors? Tick one.

lanterns ☐

red and gold banners ☒

firecrackers ☐

dumplings ☐

3. Which two different dumpling fillings are being prepared?

Accept the two following answers: pork and spinach and mushroom.

4. What important role does Dad play in the preparations? Tick one.

He buys the firecrackers. ☒

He prepares the meal. ☐

He hangs the banner on the door. ☐

He releases lanterns. ☐

5. What do the following things symbolise?

long noodles: **represent long life**

dumplings: **represent good luck**

6. What do family and friends exchange at new year?

Red envelopes containing money.

7. Match up the sentences.

New year celebrations	to say prayers.
People visit the temple	is a spectacular sight.
The dragon parade	last for two weeks.

8. Why are lanterns released on the 15th day of celebrations?

Lanterns are released on the 15th day of celebrations to represent the longer days of spring and the light of the full moon.

A Story About Chinese New Year

All around was red. As far as the eye could see, buildings were decorated with the colour of good luck and happiness. From lanterns to garlands and banners, it had taken weeks to put all the decorations in place and, at last, the preparations were almost complete. At home, we had been cleaning for days already to get rid of the bad luck which had gathered over the last year. It was important to start the new year with a clean house to be sure of a fortunate year to come. My friends and I had made the traditional red and gold banners for our front doors and now it was time to help Mum to prepare the most important meal of the year.

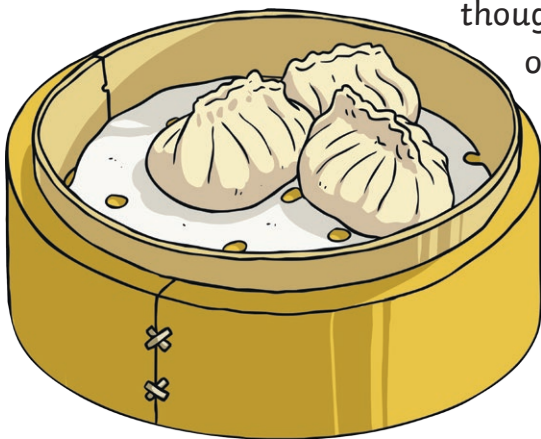


"There is plenty to do in here," called Mum. "Come and help!"

"Can I prepare the dumplings, Mum?"

Every year, I loved trying to make the dumplings the right shape to look like gold ingots. It could be tricky to keep the filling in the middle but each year's attempts were better than the last. This year, we were making our favourite pork dumplings and spinach and mushroom dumplings, which Dad had chosen. He'd be ready to enjoy them when he got home from work later that day.

The streets were a sea of people as Dad headed out of his office to make the journey home. He knew the family were already preparing their meal for the evening and he was looking forward to sharing it with them and celebrating the start of the new year together. Luckily, he'd remembered to buy the all-important firecrackers and was looking forward to setting them off after the meal. First, though, he had to squeeze onto the bustling train out of the city.



"Dad, at last you're home!" I shouted excitedly. It felt like I'd been looking out for him for hours! After all the preparations, I couldn't wait to start celebrating and I was particularly proud of my dumplings this year.



Pushing him through the door to get ready, I shouted after him.

"Get ready quickly, Dad, the first visitors are coming in half an hour!"

Before long, I was sitting together with my grandparents, aunties, uncles and cousins and sharing the wonderful food which had been prepared. No wonder it had taken so long – the table was groaning under the weight of it all! Everything had a meaning: long noodles for a long life, dumplings for good luck and chicken for wealth. Most importantly, it all tasted delicious.

Afterwards, I was thrilled with my lucky red envelopes with a gift of money inside and the wish for health and a long life. My uncle even sent me a 'virtual' red envelope to my smartphone this year.

The evening of celebrations came to an end at midnight with Dad lighting the firecrackers outside the house to keep bad luck away for another year.

The best thing about the new year is that we celebrate for two weeks. So, the next day, we visited the town to see the dragon parade and meet more friends. Seeing the dragon parade through the streets was a spectacular sight. Over the next fortnight, we set out to see new year markets to buy red lanterns. We also journeyed to the temple to say prayers and watch the amazing lion dance, which is supposed to bring good luck for the new year.

On the 15th day, it was time to celebrate the lantern festival. We watched in amazement as thousands of lanterns were released into the sky to signify the longer days of spring and the light of the full moon. There was just time to eat a few more delicious rice dumplings before we went home to bed with all the wonderful experiences to remember for another year.

Questions

1. How do we know the new year celebrations are extremely important to the family in the text?

2. Name three ways the family has prepared for the festivities.

3. What task does the narrator do each year at this time?

4. Find and copy a word which means the same as busy.

5. How do we know that Dad has a particularly important task?

6. What do family and friends exchange at new year?

New year celebrations
People visit the temple
The dragon parade

to say prayers.
is a spectacular sight.
last for two weeks.

7. What does the clause below tell you about the meal?

the table was groaning under the weight of it all

8. What items symbolise the following things?

good luck: _____

wealth: _____

long life: _____

9. Name two ways that Chinese New Year is celebrated.

10. Write one way in which you celebrate the new year.

Answers

1. How do we know the new year celebrations are extremely important to the family in the text?

Answers may vary but should show evidence from the text, such as: The story tells us the preparations had taken weeks and they still had to prepare the food for family meal.

2. Name three ways the family has prepared for the festivities.

Accept any three of the following: hanging banners garlands and lanterns for decoration; cleaning the house to get rid of the bad luck; preparing food including dumplings for a meal.

3. What task does the narrator do each year at this time?

The narrator prepares the dumplings which are shaped like gold ingots.

4. Find and copy a word which means the same as busy.

bustling

5. How do we know that Dad has a particularly important task?

The firecrackers he buys are described as 'all-important'.

6. What do family and friends exchange at new year?

New year celebrations	to say prayers.
People visit the temple	is a spectacular sight.
The dragon parade	last for two weeks.

7. What does the clause below tell you about the meal?

the table was groaning under the weight of it all

It tells us that there is a lot of food there which has been prepared or brought by visitors so the meal is something special because it is much bigger than usual.

8. What items symbolise the following things?

good luck: **represented by dumplings**

wealth: **represented by chicken**

long life: **represented by long noodles**

9. Name two ways that Chinese New Year is celebrated.

Accept any two of the following: by having a shared meal; visiting the temple to pray; dragon parades; lion dances; releasing lanterns into the sky.

10. Write one way in which you celebrate the new year.

Pupils' own response.

A Story About Chinese New Year

All around was red. As far as the eye could see, buildings were decorated with the colour of good luck and happiness. Countless lanterns, garlands and banners had been created as part of the preparations. All the decorations were in place and, at last, everyone was ready to begin the celebrations. At home, we had been cleaning for days already to banish the bad luck which had gathered over the last year. It was important to start the new year with a spotless house to guarantee a fortunate and prosperous year to come. My friends and I had made the traditional red and gold banners for our front doors and now it was time to help Mum to prepare the most significant meal of the year.

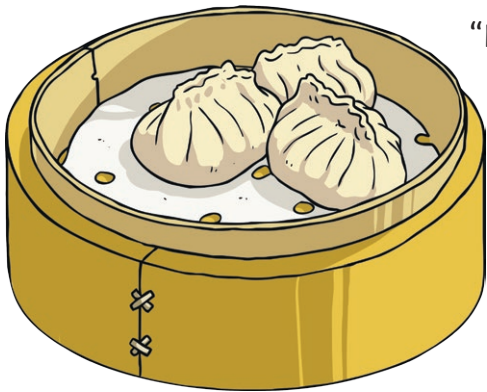


"There is plenty to do in here," called Mum. "Come and help!"

"Can I prepare the dumplings, Mum?"

Every year, I loved trying to make the dumplings the right shape to resemble gold ingots. Keeping the filling in the middle could be challenging but each year's attempts were better than the last. This year, we were making our favourite pork dumplings and spinach and mushroom dumplings, which Dad had chosen. He'd be ready to enjoy them when he got home from work later that day and I really wanted to do a good job.

The streets were a sea of people as Dad departed from his office to make the journey home. He knew the family were already preparing their meal for the evening and he was looking forward to sharing it with them and celebrating the start of the new year together. At the last minute, he'd remembered to buy the all-important firecrackers and was in anticipation of setting them off after the meal. First, though, he had to squeeze onto the bustling train out of the city.



"Dad, at last you're home!" I shouted excitedly. It felt like I'd been looking out for him for hours! After all the preparations, I couldn't wait any longer to begin celebrating and I was eager to show off my dumplings this year.

Pushing him through the door to get ready, I



shouted after him,

“Get ready quickly, Dad, the first visitors are coming in half an hour!”

Several knocks on the door heralded the arrival of my grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins and soon we were sitting together to share the irresistible food which had been prepared. No wonder it had taken so long – the table was groaning under the weight of it all! Everything had a meaning: long noodles for a long life, dumplings for good luck and chicken for wealth. Most importantly, it all tasted delicious and Dad said my dumplings were the highlight of the meal.

Afterwards, I was thrilled with my lucky red envelopes with a gift of money inside and the wish for health and a long life. My uncle even sent me a ‘virtual’ red envelope to my smartphone this year!

The evening of celebrations came to an end at midnight with Dad lighting the firecrackers outside the house to prevent misfortune occurring for another year.

Despite feeling tired after the late night watching fireworks, Mum woke me up the next morning to go to the temple.

“Are you coming with us to see the lion dance?” I asked Dad.

“Wouldn’t miss it for the world!” he replied enthusiastically.

It was a good job he joined us because the lion dance was as impressive as always. While we were at the temple, we took some time to pray for good luck during the year ahead. The best thing about new year is that we celebrate for a whole fortnight. There were special events including a dragon parade and a new year market. The dragon parade through the streets is always a spectacular sight.

On the 15th day, it was time to celebrate the lantern festival which brings festivities to a close. We watched in amazement as thousands of red lanterns were released into the sky to signify the longer days of spring and the light of the full moon. There was just time to eat a few more delicious rice dumplings before we went home to bed with all the wonderful experiences to remember for another year.

Questions

1. What does the extent of the preparations for the new year tell us about the celebration?

2. Name three ways the family prepared for the festivities.

3. What fillings are included in the dumplings this year?

4. Find and copy a word which means the same as busy.

5. What phrase tells us that Dad has a crucial task to do?

6. Explain in your own words what you understand by the word **heralded**.

7. Explain how you think the narrator felt when Dad said the dumplings were the highlight of the meal. Give a reason why you think this.

8. Name three items connected with the New Year and explain what they symbolise.

9. Describe how your new year celebrations compare to the Chinese New Year celebrations discussed in the text. Use examples from the text to explain your answer.

10. Explain why you think new year is important for people and why it is celebrated.

Answers

1. What does the extent of the preparations for the new year tell us about the celebration?

The preparations take a long time and involve everyone contributing to the different jobs which need to be completed for the celebrations. This tells us that new year celebrations are very important.

2. Name three ways the family prepared for the festivities.

Accept the following answers: cleaning the house to banish the bad luck; decorating buildings with red banners and garlands and lanterns; cooking a feast to share with family including special dumplings.

3. What fillings are included in the dumplings this year?

Accept the two following answers: pork and spinach and mushroom.

4. Find and copy a word which means the same as busy.

bustling

5. What phrase tells us that Dad has a crucial task to do?

The firecrackers he buys are described as 'all-important'.

6. Explain in your own words what you understand by the word **heralded**.

Accept any suitable explanation of the word, such as: I think heralded means when a sign indicates that something is about to happen or arrive.

7. Explain how you think the narrator felt when Dad said the dumplings were the highlight of the meal. Give a reason why you think this.

Answers may vary, such as: I think the narrator felt pleased and proud when Dad said the dumplings were a highlight because they were quite difficult to make and the narrator was eager to get them right.

8. Name three items connected with the New Year and explain what they symbolise.

Accept the following answers: Good luck is represented by dumplings; wealth is represented by chicken; long life is represented by long noodles.

9. Describe how your new year celebrations compare to the Chinese New Year celebrations discussed in the text. Use examples from the text to explain your answer.

Pupils' own response; must use examples from the text.

10. Explain why you think new year is important for people and why it is celebrated.

Pupils' own response.