

Chinese New Year - Chinese Culture

Using this Chinese New Year activity, the children in your nursery will learn about similarities and differences that connect them to - and distinguish them from – others. It will support them to share celebration experiences with other children and build on their friendships.

Learning aims

- Notice detailed features in the environment
- Learn new words and start using them in conversation
- Enjoy sensory experiences making marks in paint
- Imitate drawing simple shapes such as lines and curves
- Discover similarities and differences between cultures
- Build on friendships.



Resources

- Everyday resources that reflect Chinese culture for the home corner, for example: a rice steamer pot, different real foods, rice spoons, chopsticks (for older children), artefacts, Chinese travel brochures etc
- A variety of traditional Chinese meals to taste, smell and explore
- Red paint, paint brushes, paper, 'Happy New Year' Chinese symbols
- Red envelopes
- Research the animal of the year.



Activity Outline

Creating a Chinese home corner with relevant activities helps immerse children in the Chinese culture. It provides opportunities for discussions on Chinese culture, a chance to be creative with bunting as well as practising traditions.

- Set up your home corner to reflect a Chinese home
- Set up red* paints with the Chinese new year symbols for children to copy
 - Display these as bunting around your home corner on the 4 February
 - Value babies and toddlers attempts and display these with pride
- On the 5 February discuss Chinese New Year and the animal of the year with children and enjoy a nursery family feast of Chinese foods
- Talk about the different tastes, smells and textures with the children
 - Even babies benefit from hearing a rich range of vocabulary
- With older children, ask each child to say some kind words about a child and/or staff member in the nursery. For example, 'I like you because...'
 - Write this down on a note and put it in a red envelope**.
 - At the end of the day send a red envelope home with each child and member of staff (to be opened at home).
 - Ask parents to read the kind words to children at home and talk about the value of friendships.
- Remind colleagues how much their work is valued.

*Red is believed to be the colour of success.

**Red envelopes are given during New Year with money and a message. They are also given out at other times of year such as weddings and the birth of a child. It is a traditional way to wish good luck and share blessings. A red letter should be received in two hands never just one. The receiver should express their thanks and open it in the privacy of their own home, never in the presence of the giver.

Extending the activity

Why not take children on trip to your local China town or visit a continental supermarket and let them do the shopping for their home corner resources? If this is not possible, you could suggest to parents that they look at international foods in the supermarket food isles with children. Perhaps they could buy something they have never tried before and tell you what it tasted like.