


# CHINESE NEW YEAR MINI RESEARCH PROJECT

**RESEARCH GUIDE TOPIC:  
CHINESE MYTHOLOGY**



Your group's topic is CHINESE MYTHOLOGY. You will especially focus on the "The Race for the Zodiac" and The Monster Nian.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Period \_\_\_\_\_

What three things will scare the monster?

What does the name Nian mean in Chinese?

**RESEARCH GUIDE TOPIC:  
FOOD AND DRINK**





Your group's topic is FOOD AND DRINK. Chinese food in the USA is very different from Chinese food in China. Just like in many countries, Chinese love to eat with their families and socialize during meals.

List 5 foods you might find inside Chinese dumplings:

Why is tea popular in China?

**RESEARCH GUIDE TOPIC:  
SYMBOLS AND LUCK**



Your group's topic is SYMBOLS AND LUCK. Lots of things in China are considered lucky and unlucky. Here are some questions to guide you as you discover more about the importance of luck in China.

What colors are considered lucky in China?

Why is 8 considered a lucky number in China?


Why is 4 considered the unluckiest number?

What do Chinese store owners put near the cash register to help with good fortune for their business?

What plant has wood used for good luck?



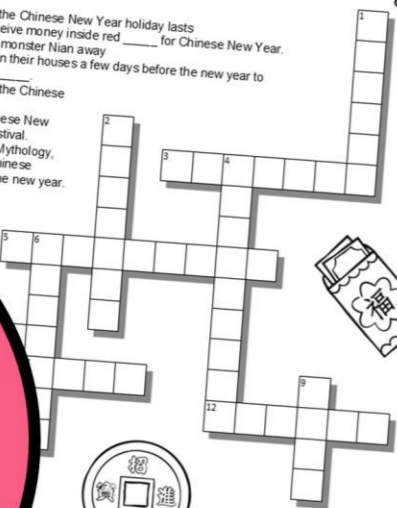
What are the "five Chinese blessings"?

**HAPPY CHINESE NEW YEAR!**



**ACROSS**

- The number of days the Chinese New Year holiday lasts
- Children in China receive money inside red \_\_\_\_\_ for Chinese New Year.
- This color scares the monster Nian away
- Chinese families clean their houses a few days before the new year to make room for good \_\_\_\_\_
- Number of animals in the Chinese zodiac
- Another name for Chinese New Year is the \_\_\_\_\_ Festival.
- According to Chinese Mythology, this monster attacks Chinese villages at the start of the new year.



Fortune in China

**RESEARCH GUIDE TOPIC:  
CHINESE NEW YEAR**



Your group's topic is CHINESE NEW YEAR. You will focus on Chinese New Year traditions and stories.

The dates of Chinese New Year vary each year. Why?	What are two other ways you can say Chinese New Year?	What are the Five Chinese Blessings? (list all 5)
2023 will be the Year of which zodiac animal?	What is the last day of Chinese New Year called?	How long do the Chinese New Year activities officially last?
What do children receive as gifts from older family members at Chinese New Year?	During your zodiac animal year, what should you wear to ward off bad luck?	What do the colors red and gold represent in China?

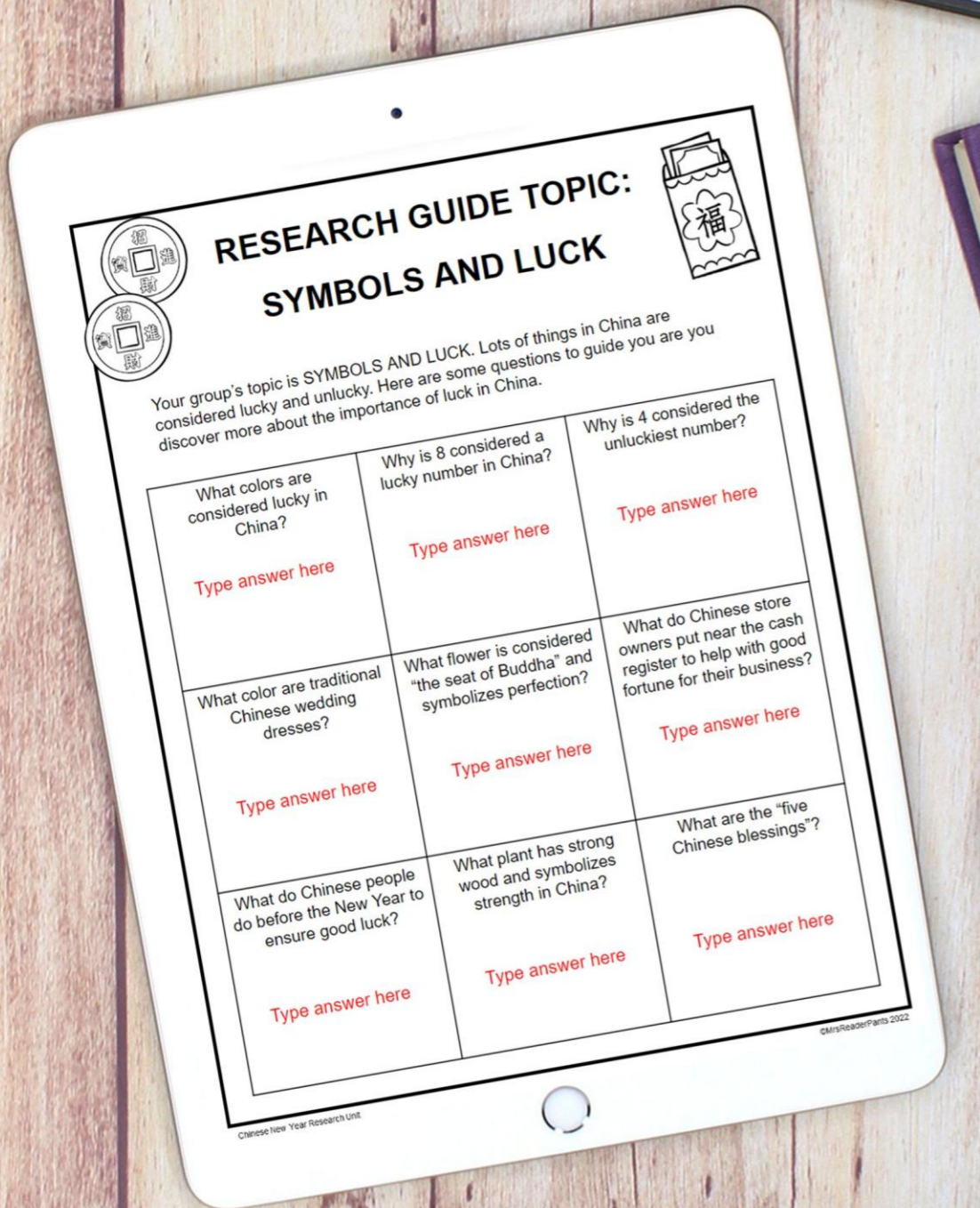
**GRADES  
4-7**



# 3 FLEXIBLE FORMATS

Research Guides and Answer Keys are editable in three formats: PPT, Google Slides, and PDF.

Crossword puzzle is partially editable and in PowerPoint and PDF formats.



# DETAILED DIRECTIONS FOR TEACHERS

## THREE DAY UNIT PLAN CHINESE NEW YEAR

This research activity is designed for students in Grades 5-8. Each "Day" is one lesson about 45-50 minutes.

### BEFORE THE ACTIVITIES/PREP WORK:

- Read all the directions in this planner and adjust it as you need. This planner is completely editable, so you can make any changes directly in the planner.
- Make copies of:
  - Research Guides—Since the research will be done in groups, you do not print all four guides for every student. If you have 28 students, you would print 7 of each guide (4 guides X 7 copies each = 28 students)
  - Crossword Puzzle—optional for review of research
  - Answer Keys for Trivia Game, Crossword, Research Guides
- Consult with your school librarian about print and electronic resources that are available in your library. You may also want to schedule a day in the library or a room with the librarian (give the librarian at least a few days notice). School librarians are fabulous resources, and I highly recommend you use them.
- If desired, add the links included on Day 1 to your class website. If you post them on the board or print them somewhere, be sure to shorten the links in the prep work. Both are free services that are easy to use. I included only the long link so you can see the full URLs.
- The Day 3 activity is noisy and requires some open space, especially if you have more than 25 students. The classroom (with desks pushed against the wall, gym, cafeteria, school lobby, or outside) are better. Be sure to let neighbors know about the increased noise level in case they are testing that day.
- Do you want prizes for the trivia game? You'll need to get those at a store. Trading ([www.orientaltrading.com](http://www.orientaltrading.com)) has loads of fun, inexpensive prizes for Chinese New Year!

## ONE WEEK MINI RESEARCH UNIT CHINESE NEW YEAR—DAY ONE

This research activity is designed for students in Grades 5-8. Each "Day" is one lesson about 45-50 minutes.

### DAY 1—INTRODUCTION AND RESEARCH

Show this video from History.com to your class as an introduction to Chinese New Year. (<https://youtu.be/asluM20q6rk>) Some of the questions on the Research Guides are answered in this video. (Warning: the video does have a 30-second ad at the beginning.) There are several articles linked below that students will find useful for their Research Guides.

Divide students into eight groups of 2-4 students each. Each group will research questions about China and Chinese New Year. I have included four different research guides. Two groups will work on the same guide to help ensure accuracy and that all the questions get answered.

**ASSESSMENT:** All of these questions appear in some form on the trivia game. You will know that students understood the information when they play the game on Day 5.

To research, I recommend students use your school's library and/or subscription research databases. Check with your school librarian or IT specialist for information on what subscription databases are available to your students. Don't forget to get the login information.

Other websites that you can recommend to your students for Chinese New Year research:

- <https://www.history.com/topics/holidays/chinese-new-year>
- <https://www.travelchina.com/essential/holidays/new-year/facts.htm>
- <http://www.chinesenewyears.info/>
- <https://www.kids-world-travel-guide.com/chinese-new-year.html>
- <https://chinesenewyear.net/>
- <https://www.echinacities.com/expat-life/The-Residue-of-Design-8-Symbols-of-Luck-and-Good-Fortune-in-China>
- <https://chinesenewyear.net/food/>
- <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Chinese-New-Year>
- <https://kids.nationalgeographic.com/celebrations/article/which-chinese-new-year-animal-are-you-like>

\*As with anything on the web, all links are subject to change or deletion. Links were last checked on December 8, 2022.

## ONE WEEK MINI RESEARCH UNIT CHINESE NEW YEAR—DAY TWO

This research activity is designed for students in Grades 5-8. Each "Day" is one lesson about 45-50 minutes.

### DAY 2

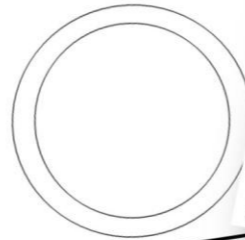
Continue Chinese New Year Research. Wrap up research by the end of this period. Groups that finish early can either help the other group working on the same research guide, or if both are finished, they can check their answers against the other group to make sure they got the same information.

In the last 5-10 minutes of class, students should partner with the other group to make sure all questions have been answered. If there is a disagreement on the same Research Guide they had. At this time, they should double-check their answers. You should make sure all questions have been answered. If there is a disagreement on the same Research Guide they had, they should consult the teacher (who has an answer key, which is included).

### FOR TOMORROW: INSIDE OUT CIRCLE

Students will need their completed Research Guides for tomorrow's activity. Students best—will they bring their Research Guides tomorrow, or do you want to have them up at the end of class today?

You will also need to move desks to the sides of your classroom for tomorrow's activity. You will need to find a large space for students to stand in two large concentric circles. This is a loud activity, so warn any teachers who might be within earshot of the activity outside.



## ONE WEEK MINI RESEARCH UNIT CHINESE NEW YEAR—DAY THREE

**\*\*DESKS NEED TO BE MOVED TODAY!**  
Make sure you have a large open space for this activity. Other options might include the gym, foyer, cafeteria, or outside. This is a loud activity, so the library is probably not ideal. If you are using your classroom, let the other teachers know that your class may be a bit louder than usual today.

### DAY 3: STUDENTS SHARE THEIR LEARNING

Students will need to use their research sheets from Days 1-2 of this unit.

#### OPTIONAL:

Give students blank copies of the other research guides. I would not personally do this, but you could. The process moves more quickly if students are not stopping to write, plus students would need clip boards since they are standing. I'd rather they practice their listening skills for this activity.

#### FIRST 5-10 MINUTES:

All students need their completed Research Guide. Have students arrange themselves in two large concentric circles (standing, not sitting down). Student groups should be mixed up so everyone gets to hear about the other groups' research. There should be an equal number of students in both circles.


#### INSIDE/OUTSIDE CIRCLE:

Students on the inside and outside circles should stand facing one another. Set a timer for 90 seconds. The student on the inside circle tells the other student about two research facts on their Research Guide. After 90 seconds (blow a whistle, ring a bell, blink the lights), the student on the outside circle has 90 seconds to share two research facts. If the other student already said one or both facts, the student speaking should choose a different fact.

After the three minutes, the inside circle moves left, and the outside circle moves right. Repeat. Continue until a few minutes before class is over. If you have 35 minutes for the activity, that is about 12 rotations.


One page per day + prep instructions Editable in PPT, Google Slides, and PDF

# STUDENTS RESEARCH IN GROUPS

**RESEARCH GUIDE TOPIC: CHINESE MYTHOLOGY** 


Your group's topic is CHINESE MYTHOLOGY. You will especially focus on the stories of "The Race for the Zodiac" and The Monster Nian.

Why do people fear the monster Nian? What does he do?	What three things will scare away the monster?	What does the name Nian mean in Chinese?
How do Chinese people today celebrate the story of Nian during Chinese New Year?	According to Chinese mythology, how were the animals for the Chinese zodiac chosen?	Which animal came in first place in "The Race for the Zodiac"? Why did he come in first?
How many animals are in the Chinese zodiac?	Why is there no cat in the Chinese zodiac?	According to Chinese mythology, Chinese people descend from what animal?

**RESEARCH GUIDE TOPIC: CHINESE NEW YEAR** 


Your group's topic is CHINESE NEW YEAR. You will focus on Chinese traditions and stories.

Chinese New Year. Why?	What are two other ways you can say Chinese New Year?	What are the Five Chinese Blessings? (list all 5)
Which	What is the last day of Chinese New Year called?	How long do the Chinese New Year activities officially last?
During your zodiac animal year, what should you wear to ward off bad luck?	What do the colors red and gold represent in China?	

**RESEARCH GUIDE TOPIC: FOOD AND DRINK** 

Your group's topic is FOOD AND DRINK. Chinese food in the USA is very different from Chinese food in China. Just like in many countries, Chinese people eat with their families and socialize during meals.

baozi and when are they typically eat it?	List 5 foods you might find inside Chinese dumplings:	Why is tea important to China's economy?
besides China, in what other countries do people mostly eat with chopsticks?	Name 5 foods that use rice as a base ingredient.	What should you not do when eating long noodles during Chinese New Year?
What is another word for egg rolls?	Why do people eat half of a fish on the eve of Chinese New Year?	How are Chinese chopsticks different from Japanese and Korean chopsticks?

**RESEARCH GUIDE TOPIC: SYMBOLS AND LUCK** 

Your group's topic is SYMBOLS AND LUCK. Lots of things in China are considered lucky or unlucky. Here are some questions to guide you as you research the importance of luck in China.

Why is 8 considered a lucky number in China?	Why is 4 considered the unluckiest number?
What flower is considered the "seat of Buddha" and symbolizes perfection?	What do Chinese store owners put near the cash register to help with good fortune for their business?
What has strong symbolism in China?	What are the "five Chinese blessings"?

Students research the questions in groups of 2-4. Each group gets one of four topics (see above). Editable in PPT, Google Slides, and PDF.

# FOR EARLY FINISHERS



Includes a bonus crossword puzzle as a filler activity for students who finish early

Text is editable

Includes larger-print version

# INCLUDES ANSWER KEYS

