

china institute chinese new year activity packet



celebrate chinese
new year
from home

*about chinese new year • paper cutting
calligraphy • cooking • coloring • fun fact quiz*

Activities provided by





all about chinese new year

chūn jiē kuài lè • 春节快乐 • Happy Spring Festival!

Chinese New Year, also called the **Spring Festival**, is the most important holiday and festival in China. It celebrates the start of the **Lunar New Year** with food, colorful lanterns and other decorations, fireworks and a variety of festivities. This holiday has been celebrated in China for over **2,000 years!**

The Lunar New Year season lasts **15 days**. This year the Lunar New Year starts on February 1 and ends on February 15 with the Lantern Festival.

2022 will be the **Year of the Tiger**. The traditional Chinese calendar is a lunar calendar based on the cycles of the moon. The Chinese zodiac runs on a twelve-year cycle and each of the twelve years has a different zodiac animal to represent it. Each animal has different personality traits associated with that year. The tiger is thought to be brave, competitive, unpredictable and confident. The other zodiac animals are rat, ox, rabbit, dragon, snake, horse, sheep, monkey, rooster, dog and pig.

In addition to celebrating the traditional festival on-site at China Institute this year, you can also celebrate at home with these fun activities and a recipe for New Year cake!

gōng hè xīn xǐ • 恭贺新禧 • Wishing you a happy and auspicious New Year!

Activities provided by



student activity 1

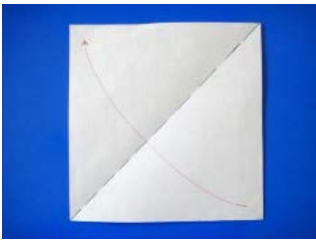
Name _____ Date _____

Paper-Cutting Activity: Three-Petal Flower

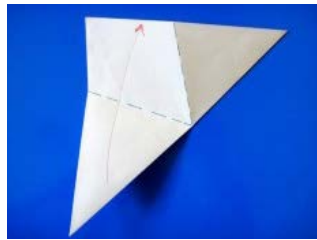
Paper-cutting artwork, called jianzhi (剪纸), is a folk art that originated from cutting patterns for rich Chinese embroideries. Paper-cut pieces are popular decorations and gifts at celebrations and big events including the Lunar New Year.

They are often placed in windows. A term for paper-cutting artworks is chuānghuā (窗花), which means “window flower.”

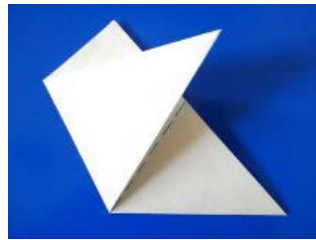
Here you can make your own flower:



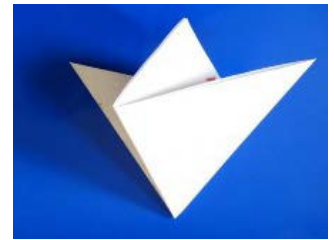
1. Fold a square paper in half, corner to corner. (Origami paper is ideal.)



2. Draw two dotted lines from the center of the long side, as shown in the photo.



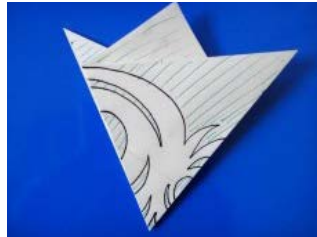
3. Fold the left side over to the right side on the dotted line.



4. Then, fold the right side under to the left side on the dotted line.



5. Draw a half flower design on the folder paper. (You can use the design here as a template or draw your own.)



6. Shade the areas outside of the flower design.



7. Cut out the shaded areas of the paper.



8. You now have the half flower cut-out.



9. Unfold the paper flower design.



10. You have finished the three-petal flower!

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student activity 2

Name _____ Date _____

Learn How to Write the Character 福

The character fú (福), meaning fortune or good luck, is often pasted on doors for Lunar New Year festivities. It is usually displayed upside down on diagonal red squares. Why upside down? In Mandarin the word for “upside down” (倒, dào) sounds the same as the word for “to arrive” (到, dào). So an upside down fú is a fun way of saying “good luck arrives!”

Follow the instructions below to learn how to write 福. Write it on a piece of red paper and hang it upside down on your door to bring fortune to your home for the New Year!



LUCK!

1.		2.		3.	
4.		5.		6.	
7.		8.		9.	
10.		11.		12.	

Activities provided by

student activity 2

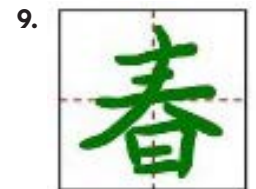
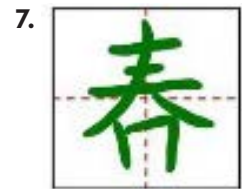
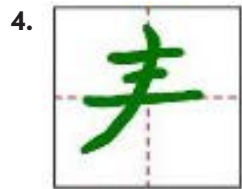
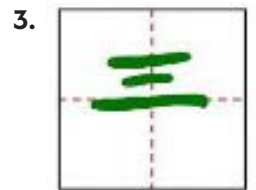
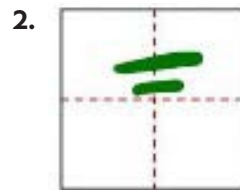
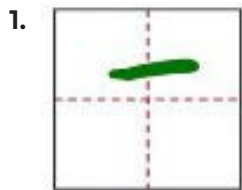
Name _____ Date _____

Learn How to Write the Character 春

The character chūn (春), meaning the Spring season in Chinese, symbolizes the beginning of a year.

The Lunar New Year is called “Spring Festival” “春节” in Chinese. From the ancient agricultural period to now, Spring has been an important season for many Chinese people as an entire year’s work is related to a good start in the spring.

Follow the instructions below to learn how to write 春. Write it on a piece of red paper and hang it on your door or window to wish for a successful New Year!

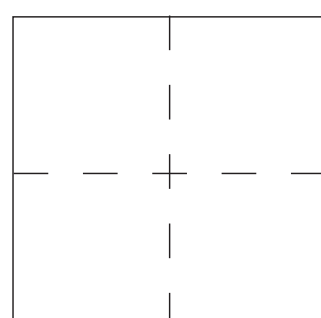
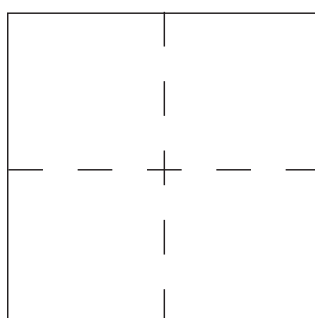
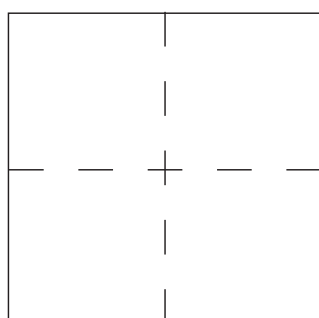
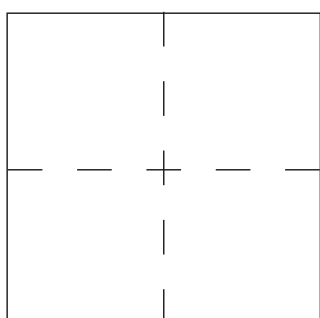
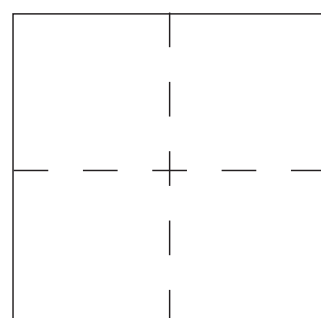
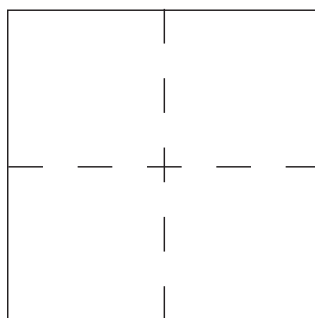
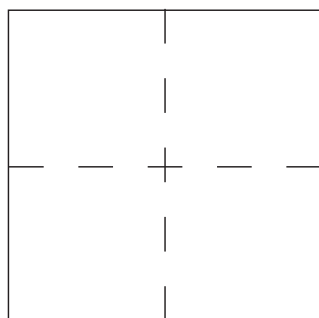
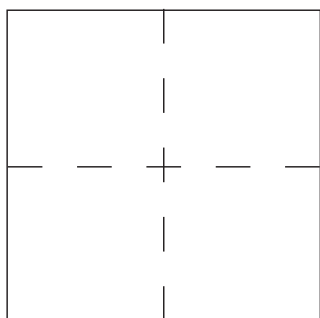
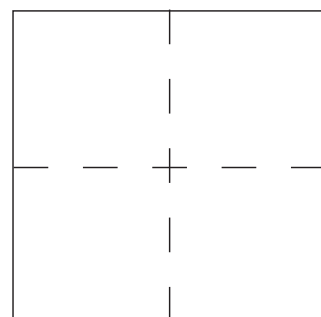
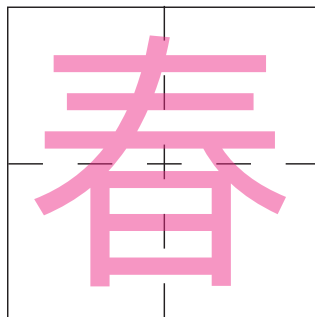
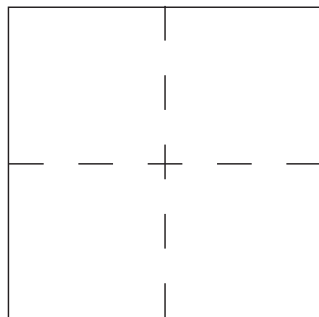
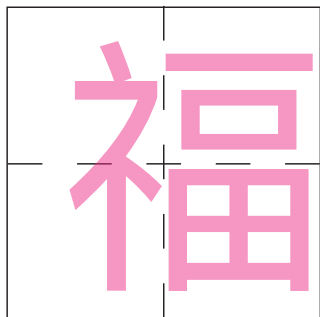


student activity 2

Name _____ Date _____

Writing the Characters 福 & 春

Print this page to practice writing 福 & 春 below. When you're ready write your best 福 & 春 on the red squares on the next page and cut it out to hang above your door!



student activity 2

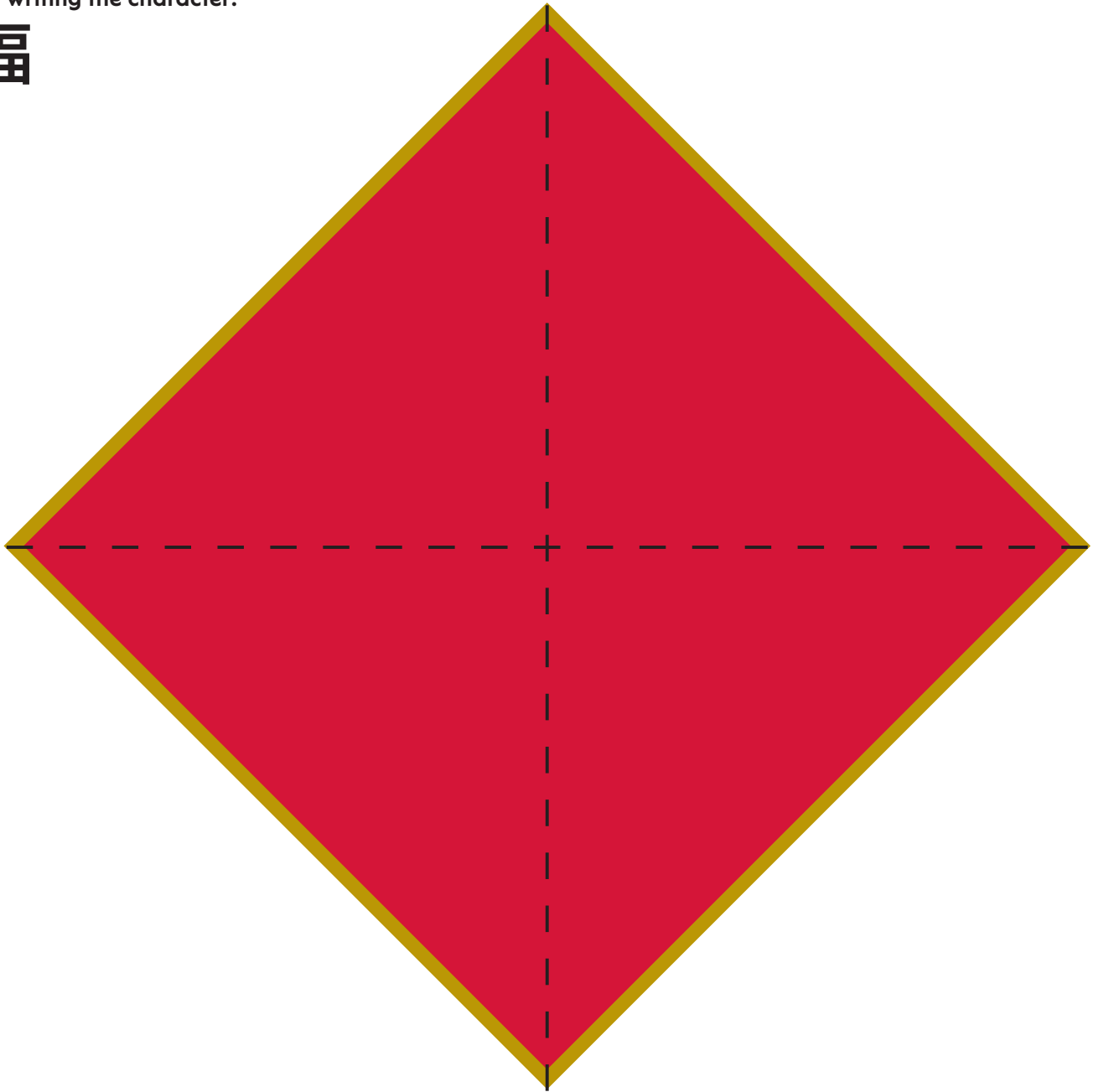
Name _____ Date _____

Writing the Characters 福 & 春

When you're ready write your best 福 or 春 on the red squares and cut it out to hang above your door!

Try writing the character:

福



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student activity 2

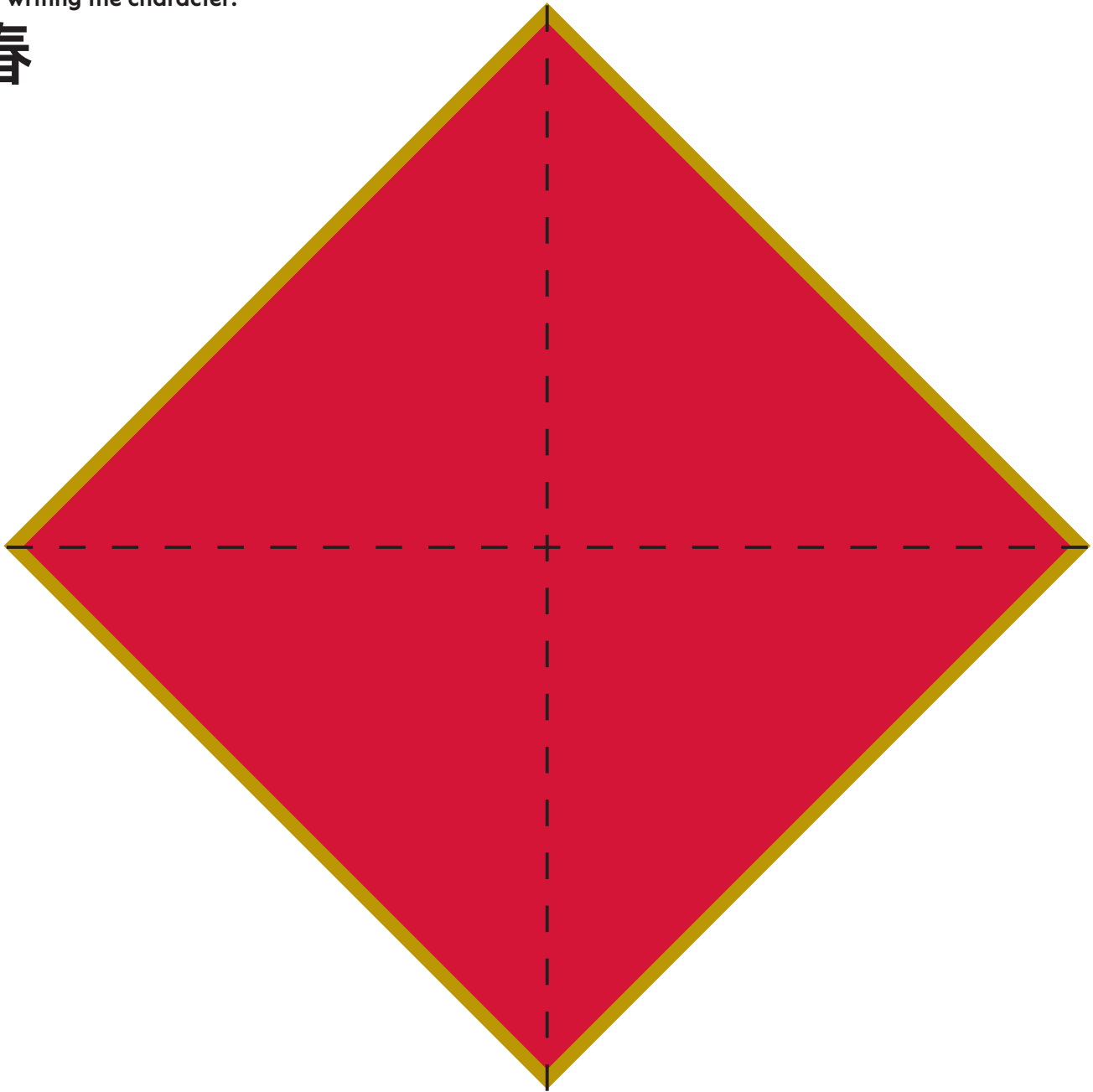
Name _____ Date _____

Writing the Characters 福 & 春

When you're ready write your best 福 or 春 on the red squares and cut it out to hang above your door!

Try writing the character:

春



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Name _____ Date _____

Cooking: New Year Cake

As with any holiday, people love to eat delicious food at Chinese New Year. Popular specialties include dumplings (饺子, jiǎozi), spring rolls (春卷, chūnjuǎn), glutinous rice balls (汤圆, tāngyuán) and New Year rice cake (年糕, niángāo). Certain foods have special meanings. For example, eating long noodles are thought to bring you a long life and dumplings will bring you wealth because they look like an old form of gold and silver pieces. Oranges symbolize sweetness and luck.

Here you can make your very own New Year cake. The word for “cake” (gāo) sounds the same as the word for “high,” so eating this cake will make sure you rise taller in the coming year!

Follow the recipe below with adult supervision to make your own new year cakes!



Recipe & photo from kirbiecravings.com/chinese-new-year-cake/

New Year Rice Cake 年糕 (niángāo)

Ingredients

- 3 cups, 2 tablespoons of glutinous rice flour
- 2 cups, 3 tablespoons of dark brown sugar
- About 2 cups of water

Instructions

1. Bring water to a boil and stir in brown sugar until it is completely dissolved.
2. Add in rice flour and stir until smooth.
3. Grease an 8-inch round cakepan. Fill with batter.
4. Steam about 1 hour or until sides begin to pull away from the cake and the cake becomes solid and sets. You can eat the cake as is.
5. To store, place in an airtight container in your refrigerator. To reheat, slice into squares and pan fry with some oil or dip in egg and flour and deep fry.

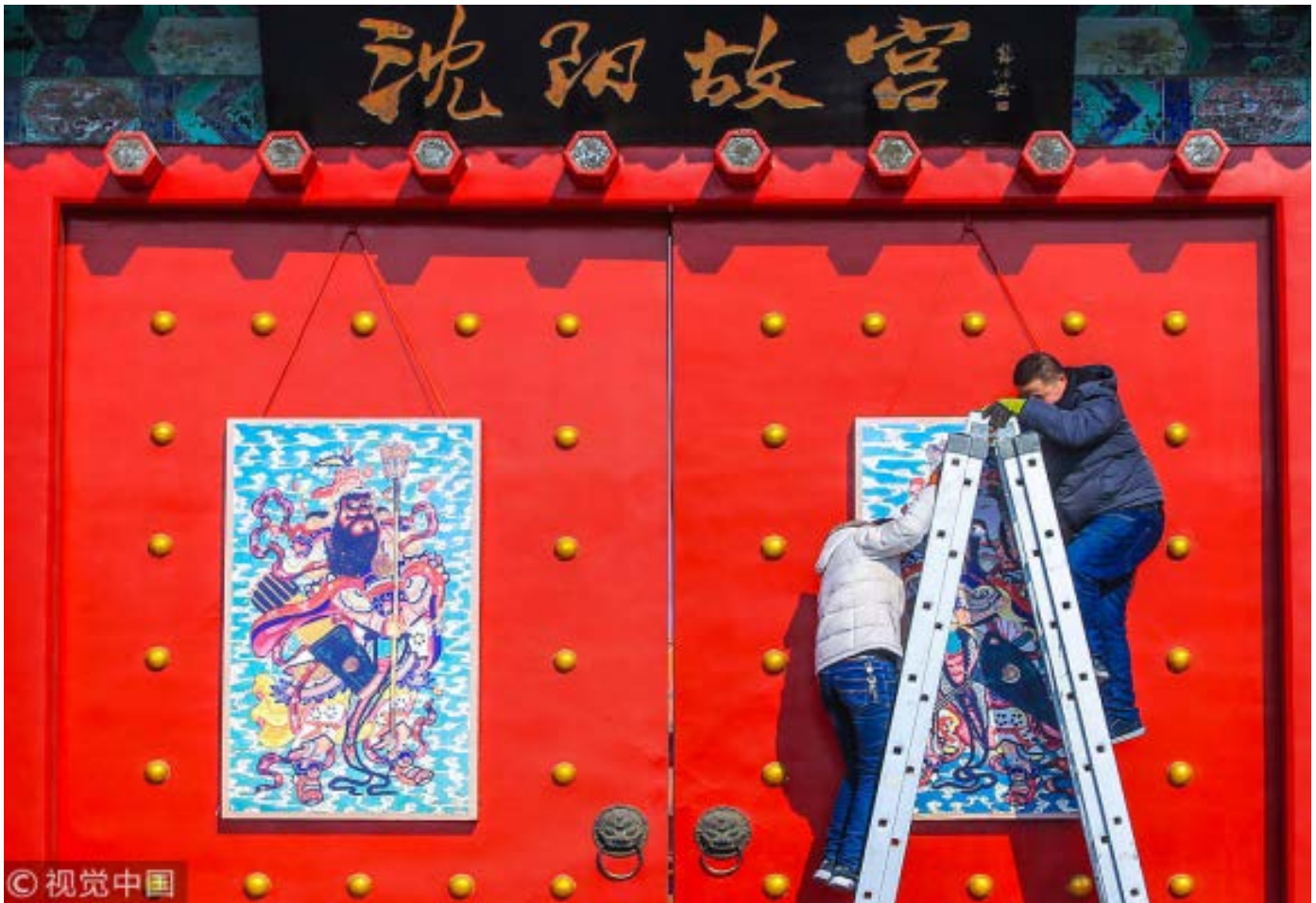
student activity 4

Name _____ Date _____

Coloring: Door Gods

Door Gods are legendary, mythical, sometimes historical figures that keep evil spirits from entering a home. The paintings of these gods are pasted onto the main door of a home. There are always two gods and they should be facing each other. Their expressions are fierce and they hold weapons in order to protect the home and ward off evil.

Color in the drawings of the Door Gods on the next two pages and display them on either side of your door to protect your home for the New Year!



Workers hanging Door Gods on the doors of Shenyang Palace Museum,

student activity 4

Name _____ Date _____

Coloring: Door Gods

Color in the drawings of the Door Gods below and display them on either side of your door to protect your home for the New Year!

Art by Kunpeng Wang



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Name _____ Date _____

Coloring: Door Gods

Color in the drawings of the Door Gods below and display them on either side of your door to protect your home for the New Year!

Art by Kunpeng Wang



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Name _____ Date _____

Chinese New Year Fun Facts Quiz

Answer the following questions below.

1. In 2022, Chinese New Year falls on February 1. What is the other name for this important holiday?

2. How many days does the Chinese New Year celebration traditionally last? _____

3. Each Chinese New Year is defined by an animal sign, in a cycle of 12. What is the animal sign for 2022?

4. In Chinese culture, what are some of the celebrated qualities of Tiger? _____

5. Chinese New Year Day changes every year because it follows a lunar calendar. Is Chinese the only culture that celebrates the lunar New Year?

6. There are 12 animal signs in the Chinese New Year cycle. Which animal is NOT included?

a. Rabbit

c. Lion

b. Ox

d. Rooster

7. What are some popular foods for Chinese New Year?

8. When did the Chinese start to celebrate Chinese New Year? _____

student activity 5

Name _____ Date _____

Chinese New Year Fun Facts Quiz

Answer the following questions below.

9. Which of the following is a traditional Chinese New Year tradition?
- a. Eating moon cakes
 - b. Giving out red envelopes
 - c. Having a dragon boat competition
 - d. Displaying floating river lanterns

10. Why are oranges a special part of Chinese New Year celebrations?

11. A traditional (Mandarin) greeting for Chinese New Year is: _____

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Founded in 1926 by Chinese reformers Hu Shi (胡適) and Kuo Pingwen (郭秉文) and American educators John Dewey and Paul Monroe, China Institute is the oldest bicultural, non-profit organization in America to focus exclusively on China.

Learn more about China Institute online at: chinainstitute.org

student activity 5

Name _____ Date _____

Chinese New Year Fun Facts Quiz: Answer Key

Answer key to the previous questions.

1. Spring Festival, 春节(chūnjié)
2. For 15 days, until the Lantern Festival (元宵节, yuánxiāo jié) — that’s February 15 this year!
3. It is the Year of the Tiger 虎 (hǔ)!
4. Due to the role of the Tiger in Chinese culture, the Tiger is seen as brave, competitive, unpredictable, and confident.
5. No. Many Asian cultures celebrate the Lunar New Year including Japan, Korea, Laos, Singapore, Nepal, Vietnam, and more.
6. c. Lion
7. Popular new years food includes dumplings, 饺子(jiǎo zi); spring rolls, 春卷 (chūn juǎn); glutinous rice ball, 汤圆(tāngyuán); New Year rice cake, 年糕 (niángāo)
8. We don’t know the exact year, but surely before the Han Dynasty (206 B.C to 220 A.D). That’s more than 2,000 years ago!
9. b. Giving out red envelopes
10. The sound and look of the word “orange” in Chinese, 柑桔 (gān jú), symbolizes sweetness and luck! Who doesn’t want a sweet and lucky new year?
11. 恭贺新禧 (gōng hè xīn xǐ): Wishing you a happy and auspicious new year.

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