



Journey with Newspapers In Education and Wing Luke Museum to learn how different Asian Americans celebrate the New Year.

One of the most important celebrations for Asian Americans is the New Year. The Chinese New Year is calculated by the lunar calendar, so it is often called the Lunar New Year. This year, Chinese New Year falls on February 19.

Chinese New Year is a time for seeking good fortune for the upcoming year. Families prepare by cleaning their homes, sweeping out any bad luck from the past year and making special foods so they won't have to cook on New Year's Day. Many Chinese Americans enjoy gathering with family and friends, paying respects to their elders and relaxing.

For children, Chinese New Year is especially exciting because they often receive lucky red envelopes from their elders. The envelopes can contain gifts of money as a symbol for a lucky year; or candy as a promise of sweet words and cheerfulness for a positive new year.

In the community, there are often lion dances accompanied by firecrackers and drumming to scare away last year's bad luck. The lion is believed to bring great fortune to homes and businesses and so it is thanked with an offering of lettuce and money wherever it visits.

THIS IS THE YEAR OF THE SHEEP!

According to the animal zodiac, each year is named after one of 12 animals and is influenced by the characteristics of that animal. It is believed that people will behave in ways that are like the animal of the year in which they were born. (Korean, Japanese, Tibetan and Vietnamese myths also include the animal zodiac, although the cat replaces the rabbit in Vietnamese folklore.)

Use the animal zodiac chart on the right to find your animal and a sampling of your best traits!



Lion Dancer – Wing Luke Museum collections

WHAT IS THE LUNAR CALENDAR?

The Lunar Calendar is based on the phases of the moon that occur as the moon orbits the earth. This is different from the Western or Gregorian Calendar, which is based on the earth's orbit around the sun. Therefore, Lunar New Year is sometimes in January and sometimes in February.

ANIMALS OF THE CHINESE ZODIAC

The Chinese lunar calendar is divided into 12-year cycles, with an animal representing each year in a cycle. Find the year you were born and the animal that matches that year.

Rat	1972, 1984, 1996, 2008 Charming, funny, clever and curious.
Ox	1973, 1985, 1997, 2009 Successful, reliable and a good listener.
Tiger	1974, 1986, 1998, 2010 Ambitious, warm-hearted and a caring friend.
Rabbit	1975, 1987, 1999, 2011 Lucky, popular, peaceful, and sociable.
Dragon	1976, 1988, 2000, 2012 Energetic, imaginative, and a good leader.
Snake	1977, 1989, 2001, 2013 Hard-working, smart and good with money.
Horse	1978, 1990, 2002, 2014 Cheerful, self-reliant and likes to travel.
Sheep	1979, 1991, 2003, 2015 Creative, thoughtful and helpful.
Monkey	1968, 1980, 1992, 2004 Fun-loving, active and has a good memory.
Rooster	1969, 1981, 1993, 2005 Practical, busy and a loyal friend.
Dog	1970, 1982, 1994, 2006 Trustworthy, lively and a natural leader.
Boar	1971, 1983, 1995, 2007 Strong, optimistic and likes to learn new things.

Lion Dancer



MAKE A LION DANCER PUPPET!

Directions:

1. Enlarge the template and copy onto cover stock.
2. Cut out all shapes; punch out all holes.
3. Color with crayons, colored pencil or felt pens.
4. Attach center holes of arms and legs to tail piece with paper fasteners (brads).
5. Attach arms and legs to body with paper fasteners.
6. Pull tail to make the lion dance!

Courtesy of Bettie Luke and Cynthia Rekdal, from "Jing Ho Hauk Ho #1" (out of print.) The full Lion Dancer Puppet template is available at seattletimes.com/nie and wingluke.org/2015newyear.

This article is geared for grades K–5. The lessons in the Teacher's Guide will include lesson plans for grades 6–8.

**LUNAR NEW YEAR
OPENING CELEBRATION**
Wing Luke Museum
8th Ave S. and S. King St.
wingluke.org/2015newyear

**Saturday, Feb. 7
11 a.m. – 3 p.m.**

Featuring lion dance (11 a.m.) and family-friendly activities including story-time, stuffed animal petting zoo, and a kids' scavenger hunt with prizes (11 a.m. – 3 p.m.)

**SEATTLE CHINATOWN – INTERNATIONAL DISTRICT
ANNUAL LUNAR NEW YEAR FESTIVAL**
Hing Hay Park
Maynard Ave S. and S. King St.
cidbia.org/events

**Saturday, Feb. 21
11 a.m. – 4 p.m.**

Learn more about The Wing's current *New Years All Year Round* tour featuring Chinese, Korean and Cambodian New Year celebrations; an interactive and fun experience for Pre-K through 5th grade. For more information, including other tour options for all ages, email tours@wingluke.org.

