

Disclaimer: Activities with children must always be risk assessed, including for allergies or choking. Children must always have adequate supervision. Resources and materials must always be appropriate for children's age and stage of development.

Activity: Year of the Snake

This year's lunar New Year is the year of the Snake. Celebrate with children by watching a short video of the great race before creating their own individual snakes.

Learning aims

- Explore a cultural celebration
- Express own ideas
- Discuss similarities with personal celebrations.

Resources

- Video (optional), or Chinese New Year book
- Paint, paper and brushes
- Junk modelling, glue
- Clay, playdough.



Activity outline

The date of the lunar New Year always falls between January 21 and February 20 and each year is associated with an animal. In 2025, the lunar New Year begins on January 29 and is the year of the snake.

- Show children images of the 12 Chinese zodiac animals (rat, ox, tiger, rabbit, dragon, snake, horse, ram/goat, monkey, rooster, dog and pig). Talk to children about which animal they are, according to their year of birth – you can find information online, such as on the CBBC website
- You can find out how the animals decided who would have which year named after them on the zodiac by sharing books such as *The Great Race* by Christopher Corr or watching videos such as <https://www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/watch/chinese-new-year>
- Talk about some of the traditions that happen at lunar New Year in family homes and discuss the similarities with other celebrations. Traditions include giving out red money packets to bring luck, cleaning and decorating houses, wearing lucky colours of red and gold and eating lucky food such as rice dumplings
- Look at the image of the snake and ask children what they know about snakes, how they move, where they live, what they eat, etc.
- Invite the children to create their own lunar zodiac snake with their chosen resources, paint, junk models, or malleable materials
- Encourage the children to create a lunar New Year display.

Disclaimer: Activities with children must always be risk assessed, including for allergies or choking. Children must always have adequate supervision.

Resources and materials must always be appropriate for children's age and stage of development.

Extension ideas

Teach children how to say happy New Year in Chinese – *“Kung Hei Fat Choi”*