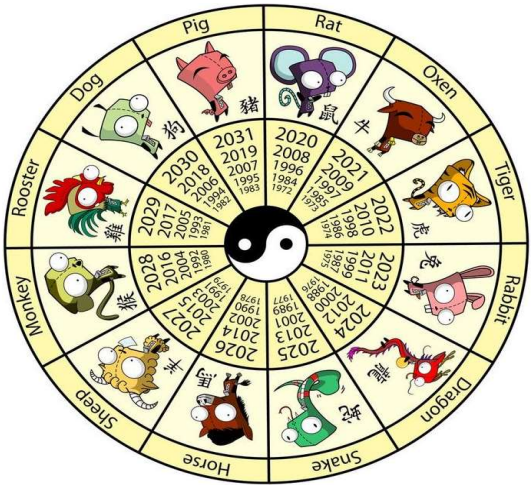
Lunar New Year is one of the most important celebrations of the year among East and Southeast Asian cultures, including Chinese, Korean and Vietnamese communities, among others.

The Lunar New Year celebration typically begins with the first new moon that occurs between the end of January and spans the first 15 days of the first month of the lunar calendar until the full moon arrives.

In 2023, Lunar New Year begins on January 22nd. During this period of welcoming the new year, many traditions are observed, ancestors are honored, families are reunited, feasts are plentiful, and celebrations are epic. Lunar New Year honors the hope for good fortune, endless prosperity, and the presence of happiness for all.

China's Lunar New Year is known as the **Spring Festival** or **Chūnjié** in Mandarin, while Koreans call it **Seollal** and Vietnamese refer to it as **Tết**. Lunar New Year is a festival rich in traditions and customs. Asian countries share many similar traditions, but each also has some unique traditions.



Each year in the Lunar calendar is represented by one of 12 **Zodiac Animals** included in the cycle of 12 stations or "signs" along the apparent path of the sun through the cosmos.

The 12 zodiac animals are the **rat, ox, tiger, rabbit, dragon, snake, horse, goat, monkey, rooster, dog, and pig**. The zodiac signs are the same in most countries, but there are other animals in some countries. The year **2023** is to be the **Year of the Rabbit**. Which zodiac animal are you?

A **red envelope** (**hongbao** in Mandarin) is a gift of money inserted into an red ornate pocket of paper. They are given on some important occasions, such as Chinese New Year, birthdays, and weddings in China and some other Asian countries as a way to send good wishes.

The color red symbolizes energy, happiness, and good luck in Chinese cultures. Traditional red envelopes are often decorated with beautiful Chinese calligraphy and symbols.

Happy Lunar New Year ! from PTA – Multicultural Committee