Activities Include:
- The Story of the Twelve Zodiac Animals
- Chinese Animals Coloring Sheet
- Chinese New Year Word Search
- Chinese New Year Boggle Board
- Tangrams
- Make a Chinese Lantern
- Explanation with Years for each Chinese Animal
- Learn Mandarin and Traditions from China for New Year
- and Writing Prompt Page.

Frames and Background by Tracee Orman!
How the 12 years of the Chinese Zodiac got their names

Many people have wondered over the years how it was that the rat, the smallest of all the creatures, was given the honor of having the first year of the Chinese Zodiac named after him. This is the story...

A very long time ago, the Jade Emperor, who ruled the heavens of China, sent a message to all the animals asking them to come together so that he could give each of them a year, which would make it easier for the people of China to keep track of time. The cat and the rat were good friends and decided to travel to meet the Jade Emperor together.

When it came time to leave, however, the cat was taking a nap. The rat, realizing that he would have to use all his cunning to be noticed by the Jade Emperor, left his friend sleeping, and set off on his own. This is why there is no year named after the cat, and also why cats have hated rats ever since.

When the rat arrived, the Jade Emperor welcomed him and the other animals and told them that they should all take part in a swimming race. Once again, the rat realized that he would have to be very clever if he wanted to win the race. He found the largest, strongest animal, which was the ox, and pleaded with him to let him ride on its head. The ox was kind and strong, and agreed that they would swim across together. The rat travelled safely across the river on the ox’s back, but, just before they reached the other side, climbed over the ox’s head, jumped onto land, and reached the finish line first. The rat had proved its cunning, and the Jade Emperor named the first year after the rat and the second year after the ox.
Animals of the Chinese Zodiac
Chinese New Year Word Search

Lucky Fireworks Red
Moon Lantern Zodiac
China Gift Holiday
Red
Tangrams are an ancient Chinese puzzle which is still mind-bending and intriguing today!

Directions: Color in the shapes. Cut them out and see how many different things you can create using all of the shapes.
Chinese New Year Boggle Board

How many words of 3 letters or more can you find using the letters below? Words are formed from adjoining letters. Letters must join in the proper sequence to spell a word and may join horizontally, vertically, or diagonally, to the left, right, or up-and-down. No letter square, however, may be used more than once within a single word. You may use plurals if available. Score 1 point for each 3 letter word, 2 points for 4 letter words, 3 points for 5 letter words and so on. Score an extra 2 points for every Chinese New Year word that you discover!
Directions: Cut out both pieces along the solid lines. Cut slits along the dotted lines. Fold the larger piece in half and unfold it. Then glue one side of the larger piece to the other side. Attach the smaller piece to the top as the hanger.
Rat - Charming


**Personality:** Quick-witted, clever, clairvoyant, short-tempered, ambitious and manipulative. They are charming and attractive to the opposite sex, loyal and generous to people that they considers part of their pack. They are resourceful and eager to seek knowledge.

Ox - Patient


**Personality:** Calm, diligent, modest, honest, straight-forward, easy-going but sometimes can be stubborn. A born leader, the ox has a tendency to inspire confidence in others. They hate failure and don't like to be challenged.

Tiger - Sensitive


**Personality:** Thoughtful, rebellious, sensitive, success-oriented, humanitarian, impatient and aggressive. Tigers are embodiment of lordliness and power. They are respected by other people, though they sometimes act anti-authoritarian and get into conflict with authority or elder people.

Rabbit - Articulate


**Personality:** Popular, amiable, affectionate, sincere, and opportunistic. Rabbits enjoy being surrounded by family and friends. Sometimes they tend to get sentimental, but rarely lose temper. Being cautious and conservative, they are said to be financially lucky and will be successful in business.

Dragon - Healthy


**Personality:** Energetic, intelligent, gifted, healthy, charismatic, noble and brave. The dragon is a popular and respected individual. A natural born leader, the dragon tends to inspire trust and confidence, and is good at giving orders, though sometimes they can be tactless and brash.

Snake - Isolated


**Personality:** Smart, intuitive, sympathetic, analytical, cautious, introverted and insecure. Snakes prefer to be loners, relying strongly on their own intuition and judgment, and have little faith in other’s judgment. They hold a stingy attitude towards money. Being financially lucky, they seldom worry about money.
Horse - Popular


**Personality:** Sharp-witted, cheerful, agile, open-minded, talkative and talented. Horses enjoy traveling, entertainment and large crowds. An independent thinker, the horse does not like to hear other peoples’ suggestions. They sometimes tend to talk too much and become impatient.

Goat - Elegant


**Personality:** Gentle, calm, shy, creative, understanding, insecure and pessimistic. They worry a lot and like to complain. Appearance and material comfort are very important to them. They need lots of support, love, care, and reassurance.

Monkey - Clever


**Personality:** Upbeat, clever, inquisitive, sociable and flexible. They are good at solving problems and making decisions. Monkeys can be loose cannons because they lack self-control and give up easily.

Rooster - Good Thinkers


**Personality:** practical, meticulous, conservative, alert, shrewd and opinionated. Roosters do not get along very well with others because they seem boastful and emotionally cold. They like dreaming and bravado. Firm in sticking to their own decisions, they often speak their mind.

Dog - Loyal


**Personality:** Loyal, trustworthy, faithful, amicable and unpretentious. They excel in business, but have trouble finding mates. Dogs have a sharp tongue and tend to find faults with many things. Dogs often feel guilty of telling white lies, and sometimes are too sensitive and moody.

Pig - Chivalrous


**Personality:** Polite, obliging, tolerant, sociable, naïve and perfectionist. Pigs make a wonderful companion. Though they tend not to make lots of friends, they keep a few real and loyal friends. They like helping others, but also expect the same from others. Pigs have good taste and enjoy fine things. When they face a problem, they solve it with fortitude and honesty.
Learn some phrases in Mandarin:

**Chun Jie Kuai Le** (Choon G ah Kuai Le) - Happy New Year

**Ni Hao** - Hello

**Yi, Er, San, Si, Wu, Leo, Chi, Ba, Jiu, Shi** - 1, 2, 3, 4...

**Peng You** (Pung Yo) - Friend

**Jiaoze** - Dumpling

Traditions in China:

- **Spring Festival** - Chinese New Year is actually called Spring Festival in China.
- Red envelopes—Instead of gifts children are given red envelopes filled with money to grant them a prosperous new year.
- **Dumplings**— During the New Year festival it is lucky to eat dumplings.
- Fireworks - On the first day of Spring Festival people begin shooting fireworks at 4pm and do not finish until 4am the next day.
- **Spring Festival Gala** - An important broadcast is given every year and features famous Chinese singers, actors and comedians. Everyone watches it and it is talked about all year. It is similar to the Macy's Thanksgiving Parade.
- **Traveling** - Everyone in China travels to their hometown for the month of Spring Festival. It is called one of the biggest migrations of people in the world. Think about over one billion people traveling at the same time!!
What is your animal year?

Writing Prompt:
What is your Chinese animal? Look at the personality explanation. Do you think it accurately describes you? Why or why not?

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