

Topic 1: Celebrating the New Year

Welcome! Please introduce yourselves if you don't know each other. Please tell about one thing you did during the semester break.

Background:

The New Year is celebrated at different times in different countries around the world. Today let's talk about how your home country celebrates the New Year.

Discussion Questions:

1. When is the New Year celebrated in your home country? What determines when the New Year is celebrated? (moon, sun, equinox, etc.)
2. What is the New Year celebration called? For how many days is the celebration held?
3. Do people generally make New Year's Resolutions (goals)? Do you? Please tell us about your goals, if you're comfortable doing so.
4. Are there any traditions or special customs associated with the New Year? For example, In the southern U.S. states, people have a tradition to eat black-eyed peas for good luck at the New Year meal. Please explain any customs in your home country.
5. Do family and friends get together to hold celebrations for this holiday? If yes, what activities do they do together?
6. Do people have the time off work and school for these celebrations? Please explain.
7. Do people give gifts and/or send greetings to their friends and family for this holiday? What would be a typical gift to a family member, supervisor or classmate?
8. Do people eat special foods for this celebration? If so, what are some of the special foods for this day? Please explain.
9. Is this a religious holiday or a holiday everyone celebrates regardless of religion? Is attending a mosque, temple, church or other place part of the celebration?

Vocabulary:

lunar calendar, solar calendar, vernal equinox, autumnal equinox, varies, tradition, superstition, celebration, making a resolution, etc.