



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# The Story New Year's Day

New Year's Day is a day full of joy, excitement, and new beginnings celebrated by people around the world. But have you ever wondered about its history?

Thousands of years ago, the ancient Babylonians were among the first people known to celebrate the New Year. For them, the start of the year was during the springtime when crops were planted. They held a big festival called Akitu that lasted for eleven days! During this festival, the Babylonians crowned a new king or reaffirmed their loyalty to the current ruler.

The Romans also played a big role in shaping the New Year's celebration. They celebrated a festival called "Kalends" on the first day of January. This month was named after Janus, the Roman god of beginnings and endings, who had two faces—one looking backward at the old year and the other forward to the new year.

The timing of New Year's Day changed multiple times throughout history. In some places, it was celebrated during the beginning of spring while in others, it was during the fall harvest. It wasn't until Julius Caesar, a famous Roman emperor (ruler), introduced the Julian calendar that January 1st was officially recognized as the start of the New Year.

Different cultures celebrate New Year's Day in various ways. In China, the New Year is marked by the colorful and lively festivities of the Lunar New Year, while in India, people celebrate with Diwali, the festival of lights. In many countries, people gather with family and friends, enjoy special meals, and set off fireworks to welcome the New Year.

Today, New Year's Day is celebrated with parties, fireworks, and resolutions. People make promises to themselves—called resolutions—to improve or change something in their lives during the coming year. It might be learning something new, being kinder, or spending more time with family.

As the clock strikes midnight on December 31st, people all over the world cheer, hug, and wish each other a "Happy New Year!" It's a time when we reflect on the past year's experiences and look forward to new adventures, opportunities, and dreams in the year ahead.

New Year's Day is not just a date on the calendar; it's a symbol of fresh starts and new beginnings. From ancient Babylon to modern-day celebrations, this special day brings people together in hope, joy, and anticipation for what the future holds.

So, as we welcome each New Year, let's remember the rich history behind this celebration and embrace the chance to make our own history in the days to come!





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1. During which season did the ancient Babylonians celebrate the New Year? (paragraph \_\_\_\_)
  - a. Winter
  - b. Spring
  - c. Summer
  - d. Fall
  
2. What was the name of the festival celebrated by the Babylonians? (paragraph \_\_\_\_)
  - a. Akitu
  - b. Kalends
  - c. Lunar New Year
  - d. Diwali
  
3. Which Roman god was associated with the New Year's celebration? (paragraph \_\_\_\_)
  - a. Janus
  - b. Venus
  - c. Mars
  - d. Jupiter
  
4. When did January 1st officially become the start of the New Year? (paragraph \_\_\_\_)
  - a. After the introduction of the Julian calendar
  - b. During the spring equinox
  - c. During the fall harvest
  - d. During the festival of Akitu
  
5. How do people in China celebrate the New Year? (paragraph \_\_\_\_)
  - a. With parties and fireworks
  - b. By lighting candles and exchanging gifts
  - c. By visiting temples and offering prayers
  - d. With colorful and lively festivities of the Lunar New Year





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6. What is Diwali? (paragraph \_\_\_\_)

- a. A festival of lights celebrated in India
- b. The Roman festival of Kalends
- c. The Babylonian festival of Akitu
- d. The celebration of the spring equinox

7. What do people do on New Year's Day? (paragraph \_\_\_\_)

- a. Enjoy special meals with family and friends
- b. Set off fireworks
- c. Make resolutions
- d. All of the above

8. What does New Year's Day symbolize? (paragraph \_\_\_\_)

- a. Fresh starts and new beginnings
- b. The end of the harvest season
- c. The passing of time
- d. The start of winter

9. How does your family celebrate New Year's Eve and New Year's Day? \_\_\_\_\_

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