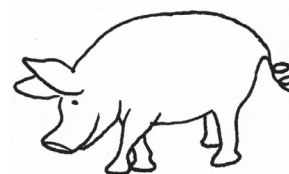


鼠



GUNG HAY FAT CHOY!

猪



牛



The Chinese New Year, like Christmas, Eid and Hannukah, is a very important holiday in China. It is celebrated every year between January 20th and February 21st and the celebrations can last up to fifteen days.

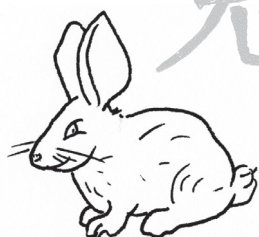
A different animal is chosen every twelve months to represent the year.

虎



Legend has it that the Gods heard twelve animals shouting at each other as to who was the best. The Gods told them to hold a race across the Yangtze River. The first to finish would head the New Year as a prize and the others would follow, depending upon where they finished. The rat won but was soon followed by the ox, the tiger, the hare, the dragon, the snake, the horse, the ram, the monkey, the rooster and the dog. Last of all came the pig.

兔



龙



蛇



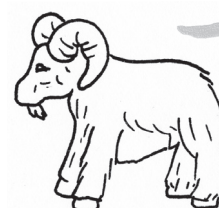
马



猴



羊



Chinese families celebrate this special time in many different ways.

Family and friends eat together and some of the food has a special meaning.

Fish is eaten to bring long life and oranges are eaten to bring money.

Chinese people are often very superstitious. They believe red is a very lucky colour and decorate their homes with red flowers.

They put up red paper decorations and light red candles. Children are given red envelopes with money in them as presents.

People everywhere have street parties. Some people dress up to look like dragons and lions. They dance under the splash of colour from sparkling fireworks and to the beat of Chinese drums.

狗



鸡