

## New Year's Eve worksheet 1

Read about New Year's Eve. Match the descriptions to the pictures.

Four children have written to a magazine about New Year's Eve in their countries, but they've forgotten to send their pictures! Which one goes where?

### Happy New Year from four very different countries!

Gabriel, Robin, Alice, and Calum are telling us how they welcome the New Year in their countries. What about you? Share your New Year with us!

**Gabriel, Brazil**

☐

**Feliz Ano Novo!** (Portuguese)

**Where?** Copacabana Beach, Rio de Janeiro

**What?** We wear white clothes. At midnight, we jump seven waves and throw white flowers on the beach – they are a present for the sea. If you do this, you'll start the New Year with good luck!

**Old Year's best thing** Going to my hip-hop classes

**New Year's resolution** I'd like to read more – one book a month!

**Robin, New Zealand**

☐

**Tau Hou hari!** (Maori)

**Where?** Gisborne, North Island

**What?** My family and I stay with my grandparents for a week and go surfing. For New Year's Eve, we go to a beach party and have fun. Gisborne is the most eastern city in the world: come and watch the world's first New Year sunrise here!

**Old Year's best thing** Going surfing with my friends

**New Year's resolution** I'm going to learn Spanish. One day, I'd like to go to South America!

**Alice, Canada**

☐

**Bonne Année!** (French)

**Where?** Quebec City, Quebec

**What?** Last year, we went to an adventure center in the country near my city. We spent New Year's Eve ice fishing on a frozen lake. And we spent the night in an igloo!

**Old Year's best thing** Learning to make a robot

**New Year's resolution** I'll try to play video games only once a week.

**Calum, Scotland**

☐

**Bliadhna Mhath Ùr** (Scottish Gaelic)

**Where?** Edinburgh

**What?** We call New Year's Eve *Hogmanay*. It means "the last day of the year." Lots of celebrations start before the big night. My favorite one is the Hogmanay Torchlight Procession on December 30th. My family and I follow it, and I carry a torch for part of the way up to Calton Hill! When we get there, we watch amazing fireworks.

**Old Year's best thing** Traveling to South Africa with my family

**New Year's resolution** I need to be more patient with my sister!





# New Year's Eve worksheet 2



**Write about your New Year and draw a picture.**

Name and country .....

"Happy New Year" in your language .....

Where? .....

What? .....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Old Year's best thing .....

New Year's resolution .....





## Level 6

# Teaching notes

### New Year's Eve

- These cultural notes describe both the origins of this festival, as well as its current traditions. You can explain as much as you think is relevant to your class and encourage students to recognize and point to the relevant items on the worksheet.
- New Year's Eve is one of the biggest celebrations worldwide because it marks the last day of the year, December 31st, in the Gregorian calendar, before the New Year. The Gregorian calendar was introduced by Pope Gregory XIII in 1582. Some areas in Europe started to use this calendar right away, whereas other countries, such as the U.S. and U.K. didn't adopt it until 1752. The New Year's Eve celebrations can be traced back to festivities in Europe that were held before the arrival of Christianity. These festivals were combined with Christian beliefs when people in Europe converted to the Christian religion. Eventually, the celebrations evolved into holidays like New Year's Eve and New Year's Day. Some cultures don't follow the Gregorian calendar for New Year's Eve and New Year's Day. Some examples are the Chinese, Jewish, and Islamic cultures, which observe the New Year following their own calendars.
- New Year's Eve is an occasion to celebrate the year that is coming to an end, and to welcome the New Year. Some people have mixed feelings on this day, as they think about what happened in their lives over the past twelve months. This is a good time for many people to start making New Year's resolutions for the oncoming year. Some people celebrate New Year's Eve by getting together in public places, such as Times Square in New York, Trafalgar Square in London, or the Sydney Harbor in Sydney, where they count down the last seconds of the finishing year. Others go to midnight church services, or have parties to say goodbye to the old year and welcome the new one. The themes and sizes of the New Year's Eve festivities can be very different. There are formal as well as informal events, such as costume parties and small home gatherings. Many families have a special meal with their children, and enjoy watching the firework displays, either live or on TV. Children enjoy counting down to New Year's Day in the last minute or seconds before the last night of the year finishes and the New Year starts. Televised countdowns around the world are very popular. When the clock strikes midnight into New Year's Day, most people give each other hugs, kisses, and exchange a "Happy New Year" wish.

### New Year's Eve worksheet 1

- **Pre-activity:** Tell students that they're going to read about New Year's Eve in four different countries: Brazil, New Zealand, Canada, and Scotland. Encourage them to say what they know about those countries and write some of the facts on the board. To recap on the Unit 2 language and theme, you could ask, e.g., *In which continents are they? (In South America, Oceania, North America, and Europe); What language(s) do people speak there? (Portuguese, English and Maori, English and French, English); Do the four countries celebrate New Year's Eve in the same season? (No: it's summer in Brazil and New Zealand; it's winter in Canada and Scotland).*
  - Read the instructions and introduction to the article with students. Individually, students read the four descriptions and look at the pictures. Then they write the correct picture number in its corresponding box.
- Key:** Gabriel 2, Robin 4, Alice 3, Calum 1
- **Optional follow-up activities:** Encourage students to say what they can see in the pictures and help them with new incidental vocabulary.

**Key (possible answers):** 1 They're Vikings. They're wearing helmets and carrying shields and torches. 2 They're jumping the waves. There are also fireworks. 3 The dad's holding the fishing rod. The children are excited. 4 There's a sunrise over a beach.

- Exploit the information in the descriptions in different ways. For example, suggest a competition between two teams. Ask students a number of questions (e.g., ten). The first team to answer gets a point. Students can either scan the texts to find the answers, or answer with their worksheets face down (having taken a few minutes beforehand to memorize the facts). Some example questions are: *How do you say New Year's Eve in (French)?; Who loved dancing in the Old Year?; Who's planning to learn a language in the New Year?; Who visited a different continent in the Old Year?; Why is Gisborne a special city?; Who has problems with their sister?*, etc. Students could also do a variation of this activity in pairs. They each write three questions for their partner. Then they take turns to "test" each other. The student answering the questions has their worksheet face down.
- In pairs, students say which of the four countries they would choose to spend New Year's Eve in and why.

## New Year's Eve worksheet 2

- **Pre-activity:** Write just the last part of your New Year description on the board, namely, the Old Year's best thing for you, and your New Year's resolution. Share them with students. Then say, *Now, it's your turn!*
- Students take some time to think about their favorite New Year's Eve traditions in their country or city / town for the "What?" part of the description. They also think what the Old Year's best thing was for them, and about one New Year's resolution – explain that this can be something they'd like to learn, or get better at / do more often, or something they'd like to do less often or stop doing. Encourage them to use the language in worksheet 1 as a model (*I'd like / I'm going / I'll try / I need / I want to ...*). Students complete their descriptions and draw their pictures.

As students work, circulate around the class, helping them with new vocabulary and ideas as necessary. When students finish, they work in pairs. They swap worksheets and read each other's descriptions. Then they tell each other the thing they liked the most, and comment on each other's drawings.

**Key:** Students' own answers

- **Optional follow-up activity:** As an ending-the-lesson activity, students could say their New Year's resolution. They can sit on the floor in a circle, if space allows. You start: say your New Year's resolution and throw or roll a soft ball to a student. They say their New Year's resolution and pass the ball to another classmate, and so on, until all students have spoken. Did any of the resolutions get repeated? Which one(s)?