

DAY 1 New Year’s Day

Date	January 1 (different for some religions)
Level	intermediate
Age	all ages
Time	Ex 1 20–30 minutes Ex 2 15 minutes Ex 3 15 minutes
Grammar	Ex 2 <i>going to</i> for future intentions
Vocabulary	celebrate, greetings card, resolutions, give up, predictions, calendar, shrine, temple, spring, pocket money, lump of coal, disguise, Pope, Jewish, Druids

1 New Year celebrations

Listening 1

- Hand out photocopies and begin by playing the song *Auld Lang Syne* (roughly translated: for old times’ sake). Find out if anyone has heard it before or recognises the tune. It is sung at midnight on Hogmanay, the Scottish last day of the year. Scotland celebrates New Year’s Eve much more extensively than the rest of the UK. The version of the song sung today was made famous by the Scottish poet Robert Burns, though he was not the original author. When singing *Auld Lang Syne*, it is traditional for everyone to link arms in a circle, as in the illustration.
- Students then read the texts, and discuss what their New Year has in common with New Year in Iran and Vietnam, and whether the first day of spring might be a more sensible time for the New Year to begin.

Listening 2

- Students are going to hear a studio-recorded talk show, where the guest is a Scottish woman comparing the New Year in Scotland with New Year celebrations in China and Japan. Focus students’ attention on the table. They can either answer the questions in relation to their own country, or, in preparation for listening, try and guess some of the answers for Scotland, China and Japan.
- Play the recording and point out that not all the table can be filled in.

	SCOTLAND	CHINA	JAPAN
1	Jan 1	varies	Jan 1
2	?	no–agricultural	yes (shrines/ temples)
3	1 day	5 days	3 days
4	? (no, only at Christmas)	?	yes
5	?	?	?
6	first footing	pocket money new clothes	pocket money
7	?	?	?
8	?	?	yes
9	? (yes)	?	yes
10	<i>Auld Lang Syne</i>	?	ring a gong

000

- A Welcome to *One World*, which tonight comes to you from Edinburgh in Scotland. First let me introduce our guest, Fiona Macdonald, who’s going to be talking about New Years’ Festivals in Japan and China. So do they have anything in common with what goes on here in Scotland?
- B Well, in Scotland we only celebrate for one day, whereas in Japan they basically eat, drink and visit shrines for three days, and the Chinese have five days’ national holiday.
- A Five days? But not in January?
- B The Japanese have the same calendar as us, so they start on January the first. But in China they use the lunar calendar, so it varies from year to year. It’s actually called a *spring festival* and was the time when farmers and peasants used to rest physically and spiritually before sowing the seeds.
- A I’ve heard that in Japan nearly everyone sends cards at New Year, whereas we generally send our cards at Christmas. Is that true of China too?
- B I’m not sure that they do, actually. But one thing both countries have in common is that they give their children pocket money. Many Chinese also wear new clothes as a way of leaving behind the old year and all its misfortunes.
- A So it’s a kind of ritual to bring good luck?
- B Of course in Scotland we have the tradition of ‘first footing’, you know, when the first person to visit your house in the New Year should be handsome and dark haired.
- A And a man.
- B Yes, not a woman, because in some communities they were thought to bring bad luck. And this man was supposed to bring a lump of coal, a lump of bread and a bottle of whisky.
- A What about resolutions? This year I’ve decided to give up smoking, like I do almost every year. Do the Chinese and Japanese go in for this kind of thing?
- B Not really, no, but they do make predictions for the future. For instance, at the Japanese shrines and temples you can find out your fortune from some little bits of paper. Then at 12 o’clock they ring a gong in a temple 108 times, to send away the 108 evil desires in the Buddhist religion.

DAY 1 New Year’s Day

1 New Year celebrations

Auld Lang Syne
Should auld acquaintance be forgot,
and never brought to mind?
Should auld acquaintance be forgot,
and days o’ lang syne?

For auld lang syne my dear,
for auld land syne:
We’ll tak’ a cup o’ kindness yet,
for auld lang syne.

Then here’s a hand my trusty fiere ¹,
and gie’s a hand o’ thine.
We’ll tak’ a right guid-willie waught ²,
for auld lang syne.

For auld lang syne my dear,
for auld lang syne:
We’ll tak’ a cup o’ kindness yet,
for auld lang syne.
Robert Burns



Scots celebrate the New Year by singing *Auld Lang Syne*.

¹ friend
² drink

New Year in Iran is called Nowruz and it always begins on the first day of spring. Nowruz celebrates the death of the old year and the rebirth of the new: Good versus Evil. A few weeks before the New Year, we clean our houses. We make new clothes and cook delicious foods. People disguise themselves with make-up, wear brightly coloured clothes, and sing and dance in the streets. We visit all our friends, and we send cards to those Iranians who live in other countries.
(Sorayah Parsi, Iran)

The Tet, our Vietnamese New Year, is the most important celebration in Vietnam. Many people are superstitious and we make predictions for the new year depending on what animal noise we hear first, or on who is the first person to visit our house. We light candles to our guardian gods and they make reports on us in heaven.
(Ngo Dai Len, Vietnam)

	Your country	Scotland	China	Japan
1 When is it?				
2 Is it a religious festival?				
3 How long do celebrations last?				
4 Do people send greetings cards?				
5 Is it a time for visiting relatives?				
6 What do people do to bring good luck?				
7 What typical foods are eaten?				
8 Do people dance/drink a lot?				
9 Do they make predictions or resolutions?				
10 What happens at midnight on New Year’s Eve?				

DAY 1 New Year's Day

2 Resolutions

- Tell students that in Britain people make resolutions on New Year's Eve about what they plan to do or give up in the coming year. Tell the class one of your own resolutions (e.g. This year I'm really going to listen when my children/husband/partner talk(s) to me).
- Hand out photocopies. Students first do the listening exercise and then answer the questions at the top of their page.

Listening 3

- Students hear four teenagers' resolutions for the New Year. They should simply note down what the resolutions are. After listening, elicit which construction is used to make resolutions – *going to*.

- Boy 1: give up chocolate;
Girl 1: be more organised;
Boy 2: stop lying to parents, and stop eating beefburgers;
Girl 2: give up junk food and eat more healthily.



- A Well, I think this year I'm going to try and give up chocolate.
B Are you?
A Yeah, because I eat so much of it. And you know, it might make me fat or spotty or something, so I think I should, you know, see if I can give it up.
B I'd never be able to do that.
A What about you, what are you going to do?
B I'm definitely going to become more organised from 12 o'clock tonight, definitely.
A I'll believe that when I see it.
B It's true.
C I've got two. I'm going to try, the first one I'm going try and stop lying to my parents, because I'm constantly lying to them, all the time. And the second, I've got to stop eating beefburgers. [Why?] I can't stop eating them.
D I always I always find that I eat too much junk food and and like McDonald's and beefburgers and things like you say. I've got to start giving up that and eat more more healthily, and eat more fruit and vegetables and stuff like that. I always say I'm going to do that, never do.

3 Which New Year?

- In multinational groups ask students to discuss what system their calendar follows and when their New Year is.
- Focus attention on the calendar for October 1582. Ask students what they notice about it and get them to hypothesise on what happened to the missing ten days. Then do the listening task.

Listening 4

Students hear an explanation for October 1582. They also hear about the different days on which New Year

has been celebrated in England, and, finally, about when different countries adopted the Gregorian Calendar.

- 2 Druid Nov 1, Anglo-Saxon Dec 25, Middle Ages Mar 25
3 England 1752, Greece 1923, Russia 1918, Scotland 1600
4 **Do you know ...?** A year is exactly 365.242199 days long, i.e. 365 days, five hours, 48 minutes and 46 seconds.



In England the New Year hasn't always begun on January 1st. Halloween was the Druids' New Year's Eve festival, so what is now our November 1st would have been their New Year. The Anglo Saxons then fixed the beginning of the year to coincide approximately with the sun's rebirth on around December 25th. Then most of Europe switched their New Year to the beginning of spring. So, for many years, March 25th was New Year's Day.

In fact most of Europe had been following the Julian calendar, which had been designed under the instructions of the Roman emperor Julius Caesar. But this calendar was too long by over 11 minutes a year, and after a number of centuries this amounted to 10 days. So in the 16th century Pope Gregory the 13th had a new calendar designed which revised the concept of leap years and set the beginning of the year to January 1st. Most of Europe then adopted this new calendar in around 1582, even though it meant cancelling 10 days. The Scots changed to the Gregorian calendar in 1600, as it was obvious that any trading with other countries would be chaotic if they kept to the old Julian calendar. But the English held out until 1752 since they resented a Catholic pope telling them what to do. The Russians waited till 1918, and the Greeks till 1923. Eastern Orthodox churches and the Ethiopians still use the Julian calendar, which is why they celebrate Christmas and Easter approximately two weeks later than other Christians.



While most countries of the world have adopted the western Gregorian calendar for commercial purposes, some have still retained their old calendars for religious uses. Let's imagine that in the West we are in the year 2000. The Hindu calendar is then in the year 2056. The Muslim calendar is based on lunar years and begins in 622, the year when the Muslim prophet travelled from Mecca to Medina, so that our 2000 is their 1421. The Jewish system is based on the year the world was created, which was 3761 years before the beginning of the Christian era. Their year lasts from 354 to 385 days, thus they are in the year 5771.

2 Resolutions

- 1 Did you make any resolutions last year? What were they? Did you keep them?
- 2 What do you regret (not) having done last year?
- 3 What were the best/worst things that happened to you last year?
- 4 What three important things are going to happen to you in the coming year?
- 5 Is it important to make resolutions, and to have aims and ambitions in your life?

3 Which New Year?

- 1 Look at this calendar for October, 1582. What do you notice?

1582		OCTOBER					1582
M	T	W	T	F	S	S	
1	2	3	4	15	16	17	
18	19	20	21	22	23	24	
25	26	27	28	29	30	31	

- 2 New Year hasn’t always begun on January 1. Complete the table.

New Year’s Day	
Modern New Year	January 1
Druid New Year	
Anglo-Saxon New Year	
New Year in the Middle Ages	

- 3 In which year did the following countries change over to the Gregorian calendar?

Catholic Europe	1582
England	_____
Greece	_____
Russia	_____
Scotland	_____

- 4 Do you know exactly how long a year is? How many days, hours, etc?

DAY 2 Martin Luther King Jr’s Birthday


Date	January 15
Level	intermediate
Age	all ages, especially teenagers
Time	Ex 1 15 minutes Ex 2 15 minutes
Advice	Political: some students may have problems talking about racism.
Vocabulary	seats, drinking fountains, non-violence, boycott, car pool, segregation, march, demonstrations, arrest, speech, dream, racism


1 Martin Luther King Jr’s life

- Brainstorm to see what students know about MLK, the American human rights activist. What do they know about other similar leaders, e.g. Gandhi, Nelson Mandela? What were the differences between them?
- Hand out the photocopies and focus students’ attention on the photos – in groups students try to work out what is happening and in what order the pictures should be (as preparation for the listening).

Listening 1

- Ask students to put the six pictures in order on the basis of what they hear in the listening passage.

 The correct order is 3 4 2 1 5 6.



Martin Luther King junior was born on 15 January 1929 in Atlanta, Georgia. He was a precocious child and was often top of his class. One day while on the bus to school, some white passengers got on. There were no seats free and the driver forced Martin and his friends to give up their seats. ‘I don’t think I have ever been so deeply angry in my life,’ King later recalled. At that time there were not only separate bus seats for blacks and whites, but also separate drinking fountains, bathrooms and seats in restaurants.

While King was studying theology at university, he was impressed by the teachings of Mahatma Gandhi. King was convinced that the only way to fight against injustice was non-violence and non-resistance. Just before receiving his degree he became a pastor, like his father, of a Baptist church in Alabama.

In 1955 an African-American woman was arrested for refusing to give up her bus seat to a white person. King organised a year-long boycott of the buses and formed a car pool of 300 cars to take black people to work. Soon King was imprisoned for conspiracy to boycott a business. Some months later the Supreme Court of the United States freed King – his formula of passive resistance had won.

After this incident King travelled and delivered speeches demanding equal treatment for all peoples of the United States. King founded a movement which secured black people’s right to vote, and ended the segregation of public facilities in the South. He went on to organise the massive march on Washington, where he gave his famous ‘I have a dream’ speech on August 28, 1963. The following year King became the youngest person to win the Nobel Peace Prize.

Early in 1968, King began to plan a multi-racial poor people’s march on Washington to demand an end to all discrimination. But he was assassinated in Memphis, Tennessee on 4 April 1968, perhaps by the paid agent of FBI conspirators or white extremists. Riots and demonstrations in 125 cities protested against his killing – 46 people died and over 20,000 were arrested.

- For more advanced students, after the picture ordering activity, dictate the following questions, or display them on an OHP, and ask students to write a summary which includes answers to the questions:

- Where and when was MLK born?
 - What happened to MLK at school?
 - What job did his father do?
 - What did MLK study at university?
 - What do you think a car pool is?
 - Why was MLK sent to prison?
 - Where and in which year did he give his ‘I have a dream’ speech?
 - What was particular about him winning the Nobel Peace Prize?
 - When was he assassinated and by whom?
 - How many people died and were arrested in the riots which followed his killing?
- Lower level students could just answer the questions.

Song


- King’s birthday was made a federal holiday in 1983 after consistent campaigning by, among others, Stevie Wonder, who dedicated a song to MLK, Happy Birthday on his CD Master Blaster.

Follow-up

- Students discuss which political figure in their country (past or present) they think should be honoured with a public holiday or at least with a song!

2 I have a dream

- In pairs, students read the extract from MLK’s speech, and fill in any of the gaps they feel sure of with one or more words. They should then choose appropriate words from the box to fill in any remaining gaps. Play **Listening 2** for students to check their answers.

-  1 friends 2 difficulties 3 dream 4 American 5 day
6 meaning 7 created equal 8 red hills 9 together
10 injustice 11 freedom 12 four children
13 color of their skin 14 hands

DAY 2 Martin Luther King Jr's Birthday

1 Martin Luther King Jr's life



2 I have a dream

I say to you today, my _____¹, so even though we face the _____² of today and tomorrow, I still have a _____³. It is a dream deeply rooted in the _____⁴ dream.

I have a dream that one _____⁵ this nation will rise up and live out the true _____⁶ of its creed: "We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are _____⁷."

I have a dream that one day on the _____⁸ of Georgia, the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slaveowners will be able to sit down _____⁹ at the table of brotherhood.

I have a dream that one day even the state of Mississippi, a state, sweltering with the heat of _____¹⁰, sweltering with the heat of oppression, will be transformed into an oasis of _____¹¹ and justice.

I have a dream that my _____¹² will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the _____¹³ but by the content of their character. I have a dream today.

I have a dream that one day down in Alabama, with its vicious racists, with its governor having his lips dripping with the words of interposition and nullification, one day right down in Alabama little black boys and black girls will be able to join _____¹⁴ with little white boys and white girls as sisters and brothers. I have a dream today.

American	dream	injustice
color of their skin	four children	meaning
together	freedom	created equal
day	friends	red hills
difficulties	hands	