

Korean New Year

Su Min was getting ready for New Years! It was February. What? Yes, February. It wasn't just any New Year's celebration; it was Korean New Year. In Korea, China, Japan, and several other Asian countries, they celebrate not only the New Year on December 31st and January 1st, but also another one, usually in late January to Mid-February.



Long ago, people in some countries had a different calendar. They looked up at the skies and based their years on the cycles of the moon, instead of the sun, like ours. This is a lunar calendar. Each year, the Lunar New Year is celebrated as the beginning of a new year in that calendar. In Korea, this means everyone gets a year older on that calendar's first day, which might be in February or January.

It must have been hard to keep track of birthdays long ago, so a huge celebration for making it through the year was in order for everyone! These days, everyone has cell phones and calendars to keep track of birthdays, but they still remember their Lunar New Year. It sure is a different way to think about things, isn't it?



Just how do they celebrate the Lunar New Year? Well, they eat long foods like noodles, which symbolize long life. They eat round foods like grapes and rice cakes, which symbolize money. Then, they give thanks to their ancestors, too. They set up a table for their relatives that have passed away, putting out special favorite dishes and beverages. Everyone prays or takes a moment of silence to remember those who came before them. It is a happy time, though, because families have gathered from all over to be together, much like our Christmas or Thanksgiving.

Next year, what New Year's celebration will you participate in? Will you use the Solar New Year, like most of us, or will you try the Lunar New Year? You can always do both!



Korean New Year

Use the information in the story to answer the questions below.

1. What holiday was Su Min getting ready for?
 - A. Christmas
 - B. Halloween
 - C. Korean New Year
 - D. Thanksgiving
2. What nationality is Su Min?
 - A. Korean
 - B. Chinese
 - C. Mongolian
 - D. Japanese
3. What months is the Lunar New Year usually in?
 - A. December and January
 - B. January and February
 - C. February and March
 - D. December and February
4. What two types of foods do people usually eat for Korean New Year?
 - A. square and soggy
 - B. round and short
 - C. round and long
 - D. long and short
5. Why do people set up a table of food for relatives who have passed away?
 - A. Ghosts get hungry, too.
 - B. To remember their ancestors
 - C. To waste food
 - D. There is no real reason.

Korean New Year

Use the information in the story to answer the questions below.

1. What holiday was Su Min getting ready for?
 - A. Christmas
 - B. Halloween
 - C. Korean New Year**
 - D. Thanksgiving

2. What nationality is Su Min?
 - A. Korean**
 - B. Chinese
 - C. Mongolian
 - D. Japanese

3. What months is the Lunar New Year usually in?
 - A. December and January
 - B. January and February**
 - C. February and March
 - D. December and February

4. What two types of foods do people usually eat for Korean New Year?
 - A. square and soggy
 - B. round and short
 - C. round and long**
 - D. long and short

5. Why do people set up a table of food for relatives who have passed away?
 - A. Ghosts get hungry, too.
 - B. To remember their ancestors**
 - C. To waste food
 - D. There is no real reason.