Name _____ Date _____



New Year Around the World

Read the text. Then answer the questions.

Who Says "Happy New Year" First?

Earth spins once a day, so the sun lights up only part of it at a time. When it is noon in one place, it is night somewhere else. To keep clocks in step with the sun, the world is split into **time zones**. So the new year does not start everywhere at once. It sweeps around the world, one time zone at a time. Far out in the Pacific Ocean is an imaginary line called the **International Date Line**. Places just west of it are the first to start each new day. The island of Kiritimati (kir-ISS-mass), in the country of Kiribati (KIR-ih-bas), welcomes the new year first. At that moment, it is still 10 in the morning on December 31 in London! The last towns to celebrate are near the date line too, on its east side. American Samoa is one of them. Its neighbor, Samoa, is just across the line, so the two celebrate a whole day apart.

---

1. Which place welcomes the new year first? **American Samoa** **London** **Kiritimati**

2. The new year starts everywhere at the same moment. **true** **false**

3. Why is the world split into time zones?

_____

4. Name one of the last places to welcome the new year.

_____

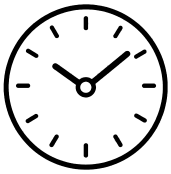
5. Why do Samoa and American Samoa celebrate a whole day apart?

_____

_____

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Name _____ Date _____



New Year Around the World

Midnight moves west. Count the hours to each place.

When it is midnight on January 1, 2027, in Kiritimati, here is the time in seven other places. Count the hours from that time to midnight. The first one is done for you.

Place	Its time then	Hours later
Auckland, New Zealand	11:00 p.m., December 31	**1**
Sydney, Australia	9:00 p.m., December 31	
Tokyo, Japan	7:00 p.m., December 31	
London, England	10:00 a.m., December 31	
New York City, USA	5:00 a.m., December 31	
Honolulu, Hawaii	midnight, December 31	
Pago Pago, American Samoa	11:00 p.m., December 30	

1. How many hours after Sydney does London reach midnight? **3** **11** **14**

2. How many hours after London does New York City reach midnight? **14** **5** **19**

3. Pago Pago is the last place on the list. Why?

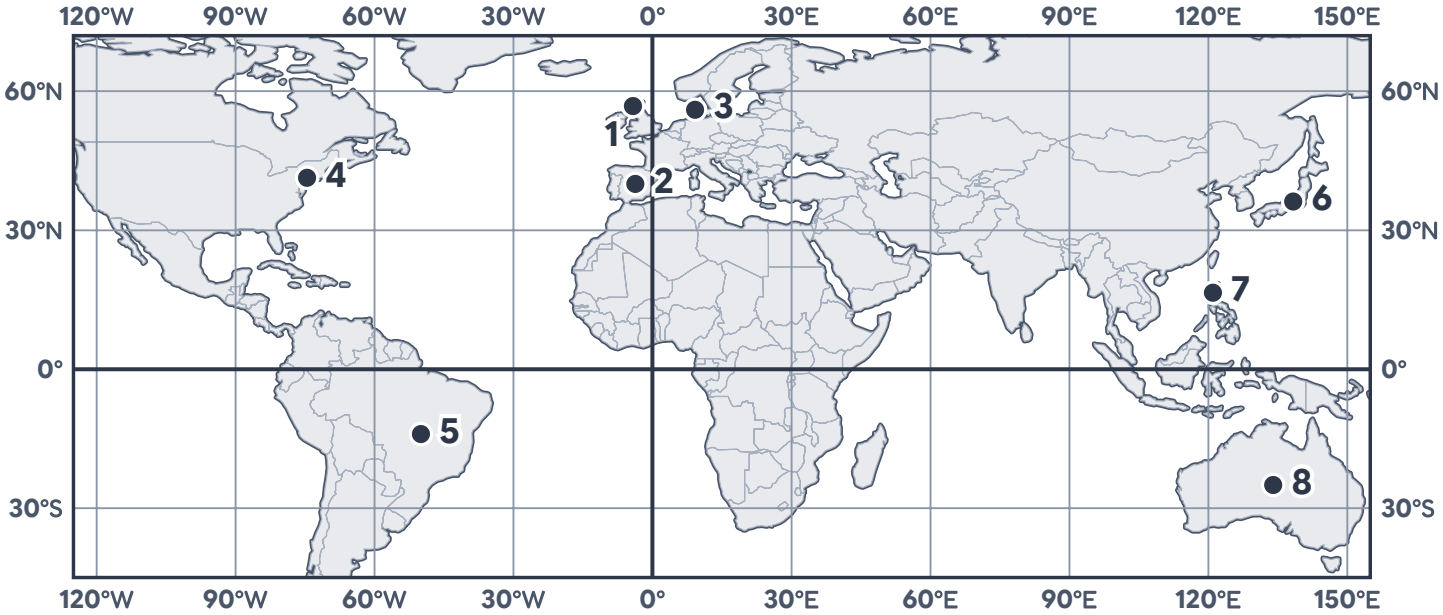
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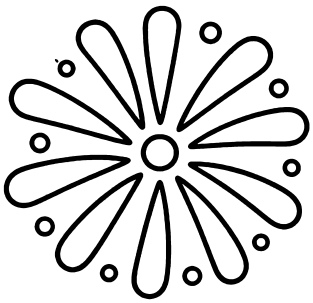
Name _____ Date _____

New Year Around the World

Find the eight places on the map. Each has a number.



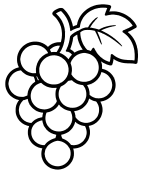
1. **Scotland** first-footing and "Auld Lang Syne"
2. **Spain** twelve grapes at midnight
3. **Denmark** jumping off chairs at midnight
4. **The United States** the ball drop in Times Square
5. **Brazil** white clothes and fireworks on the beach
6. **Japan** long noodles for a long life
7. **The Philippines** round fruits and polka dots
8. **Australia** summer fireworks over Sydney Harbour





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Name _____ Date _____



New Year Around the World

Read about Scotland and Spain. Then answer.

1. Scotland

In Scotland, the last day of the year is called **Hogmanay** (hog-muh-NAY). After midnight comes **first-footing**. The first visitor to step into a home in the new year is said to bring luck. A first-footer often brings small gifts, such as shortbread or a lump of coal for the fire. At midnight, people stand in a circle and sing "Auld Lang Syne." In the last verse, they cross their arms and hold hands. The Scottish poet Robert Burns wrote down its words in 1788. The title means "long, long ago."

1. In Scotland, the last day of the year is called ___ **Burns** **Hogmanay** **first-footing**
2. Robert Burns wrote down the words of "Auld Lang Syne" in 1788. **true** **false**
3. What might a first-footer bring?

_____

2. Spain

In Spain, families get ready for midnight with **twelve grapes** each. In Madrid, crowds fill a square called the Puerta del Sol, under a big clock tower. As the clock strikes twelve, people eat one grape with each chime, a grape for each month of the year. Eating all twelve in time is said to bring a lucky year, but it is harder than it sounds! The custom has been popular for more than 100 years.

4. Each of the twelve grapes stands for a ___ of the year. **day** **month** **week**
5. People in Spain eat one grape with each ___ of the clock. **minute** **hour** **chime**
6. Eating all twelve grapes in time is said to bring a lucky ___ **week** **year** **month**

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Name _____ Date _____



New Year Around the World

Read about Denmark and the United States. Then answer.

3. Denmark

In Denmark, many families watch the King's New Year's Eve speech on TV. Just before midnight, people climb onto chairs and sofas. As the clock strikes twelve, they all jump down together, leaping into the new year. In an old custom, some people save chipped plates and cups all year. On New Year's Eve, they smash them on the doorsteps of friends and family. A big pile of broken dishes by your door means you have many friends! After midnight, many share **kransekage**, a tall tower of cake rings made with almonds.

1. In Denmark, a big pile of broken dishes by your door means you have many ____ **pets** **dishes** **friends**

2. In Denmark, people jump down from chairs at midnight. **true** **false**

3. What is kransekage?

_____

4. The United States

In New York City, hundreds of thousands of people crowd into **Times Square** on New Year's Eve. A giant glowing ball sits on top of a tall pole on a building there. A minute before midnight, it begins to slide down the pole, and the crowd counts down the last ten seconds. When the ball reaches the bottom, the new year has begun, and confetti fills the air. The first ball dropped in 1907. It was made of iron and wood and lit with 100 light bulbs. Today's ball sparkles with thousands of crystal pieces and LED lights.

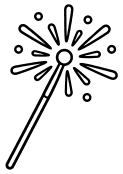
4. When did the first ball drop in Times Square? **1952** **1788** **1907**

5. The ball starts to slide down the pole an hour before midnight. **true** **false**

6. Today's ball sparkles with crystal pieces and LED lights. **true** **false**

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Name _____ Date _____



New Year Around the World

Read about Brazil and Japan. Then answer.

5. Brazil

In Brazil, New Year's Eve is called **Réveillon** (heh-vay-YOHN). It comes in summer, so many people head to the beach. In Rio de Janeiro, more than two million people crowd onto Copacabana Beach. They enjoy music and a huge fireworks show over the sea. Many people in Brazil wear white on New Year's Eve, a color for peace and a fresh start. Some add a bit of another color for a wish, such as yellow for money. A New Year's meal often has lentils, which are said to bring luck.

1. In Brazil, New Year's Eve comes in winter. **true** **false**

2. Many Brazilians wear ____ on New Year's Eve. **black** **green** **white**

3. Why do many people in Brazil wear white on New Year's Eve?

_____

6. Japan

In Japan, the new year is the most important holiday of all. Before the year ends, families clean their homes from top to bottom, so they can start fresh. On New Year's Eve, many eat **toshikoshi soba**. These are long, thin noodles. The name means "year-crossing noodles," and their length stands for a long life. People send New Year cards called **nengajo**. The post office saves them up and brings them all on January 1, so whole stacks arrive that morning. Children often get small gifts of money from their family.

4. Long noodles stand for ____ **a long life** **a long trip** **a long night**

5. Why do so many cards arrive in Japan on January 1?

_____

6. What does the name "toshikoshi soba" mean?

_____

© 2026 Eggroll Games

Name _____ Date _____



New Year Around the World

Read about the Philippines and Australia. Then answer.

7. The Philippines

In the Philippines, round things are a big part of New Year's Eve. Round shapes look like coins, so they are said to bring money in the new year. Many families set out twelve round fruits, one for each month, such as grapes, oranges and melons. People often wear clothes with polka dots too. Some keep coins in their pockets and jingle them at midnight. And at the stroke of midnight, children jump as high as they can. It is said that they will grow taller in the new year!

1. In the Philippines, round things are said to bring money. **true** **false**

2. Why do children in the Philippines jump at midnight?

_____

3. Why are round things said to bring money?

_____

8. Australia

Sydney, Australia, is one of the first big cities to welcome the new year. It is summer there, so people spend the day outside, with picnics at beaches and in parks. More than a million people crowd around **Sydney Harbour** to watch the fireworks. There are two shows. The first, at 9 p.m., comes early enough for young children to see fireworks and still get to bed! The big show at midnight lights up the Sydney Harbour Bridge, with fireworks bursting from the bridge itself.

4. In Sydney, many families with young children watch the 9 p.m. fireworks. **true** **false**

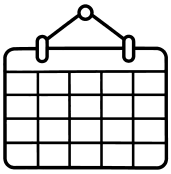
5. It is winter in Sydney on New Year's Eve. **true** **false**

6. Why are there two fireworks shows in Sydney?

_____

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Name _____ Date _____



New Year Around the World

Read the text. Then answer the questions.

How January 1 Became New Year's Day

People have not always started the year on January 1. Long ago, many began it in spring, when crops were planted. The early Roman calendar began in March. That is why September, our ninth month, is named for the Latin word for seven. In 153 BCE, Rome started its year on January 1. Julius Caesar's new calendar, from 45 BCE, kept that day. January was named for Janus, the Roman god of doors and beginnings. He was shown with two faces, one looking back at the old year and one looking ahead to the new. Later, many places in Europe began the year on other days, such as March 25. Scotland moved to January 1 in 1600, and England and its American colonies in 1752.

---

1. The early Roman calendar began in ___ **September** **March** **January**

2. September is named for the Latin word for nine. **true** **false**

3. Why was Janus shown with two faces?

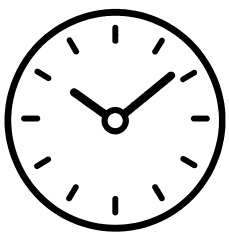
_____

4. Why did many people long ago begin the year in spring?

_____

5. January was named for ___ **Janus** **Rome** **Julius Caesar**

6. In which year did England and its American colonies move to January 1? **1600** **1752** **45 BCE**





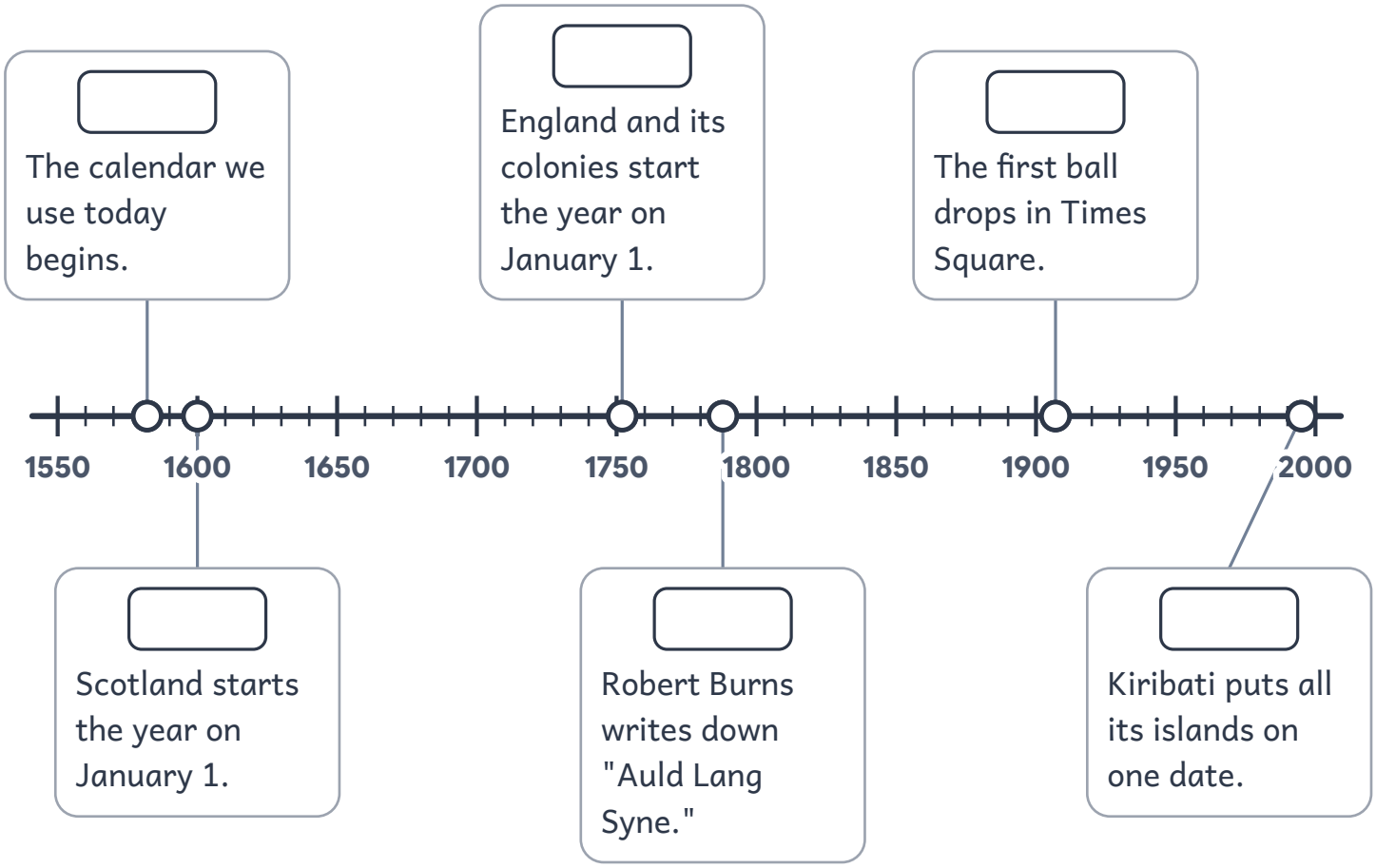
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Name _____ Date _____

New Year Around the World

Write the year of each event. Then answer the questions.

Years: **1582** **1600** **1752** **1788** **1907** **1995**



1. How many years after England moved to January 1 did Robert Burns write down "Auld Lang Syne"? _____ years

2. How many years after the first ball drop did Kiribati put all its islands on one date? _____ years

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Name _____ Date _____



New Year Around the World

Read about three other new years. Then answer.

Lunar New Year

Lunar New Year comes in late January or February, with the new moon. It is the biggest holiday of the year in China. It is also kept in Vietnam, where it is called Tết, in Korea and in many other places. Families clean their homes and share a big dinner. Children get gifts of money, in China and Vietnam in red envelopes. Each year is named for one of twelve animals.

1. Lunar New Year comes in ___ **March** **January or February** **September**

Rosh Hashanah

Rosh Hashanah (rohsh huh-SHAH-nuh) is the Jewish New Year. It comes in September or October. Families share holiday meals. They dip slices of apple in honey, for a sweet new year. They often eat challah, a braided bread, baked in a round loaf for the circle of the year.

2. At Rosh Hashanah, people dip apples in honey for a sweet new year. **true** **false**

Nowruz

Nowruz (no-ROOZ) means "new day" in Persian. It is the new year in Iran, and for many people in Central Asia and other lands too. It begins at the very moment that spring starts, around March 20. Families clean their homes and visit their relatives. In Iran, they also set a special table with seven things. In Persian, the name of each one starts with an S sound. Sprouts and apples are two of them.

3. Nowruz begins at the very moment ___ starts. **spring** **summer** **winter**

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Name _____ Date _____



New Year Around the World

Draw a line from each word to what it means.

time zone ●	● something a group of people usually do, often for a long time
date line ●	● 12 o'clock at night, when one day ends and the next begins
midnight ●	● a promise to yourself to change something in the new year
calendar ●	● an area of Earth where clocks all show the same time
custom ●	● the imaginary line where each new day begins
resolution ●	● a way of dividing time into days, weeks, months and years

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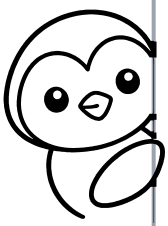
Name _____ Date _____



New Year Around the World

How does your family welcome a new year? Draw and write.

Some families welcome the new year on January 1, and some on another day. How does your family welcome a new year? What do you eat, wear or do?



My family welcomes the new year by

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New Year Around the World

Read the text. Then answer the questions.

Who Says "Happy New Year" First?

Earth spins once a day, so the sun lights up only part of it at a time. When it is noon in one place, it is night somewhere else. To keep clocks in step with the sun, the world is split into **time zones**. So the new year does not start everywhere at once. It sweeps around the world, one time zone at a time. Far out in the Pacific Ocean is an imaginary line called the **International Date Line**. Places just west of it are the first to start each new day. The island of Kiritimati (kir-ISS-mass), in the country of Kiribati (KIR-ih-bas), welcomes the new year first. At that moment, it is still 10 in the morning on December 31 in London! The last towns to celebrate are near the date line too, on its east side. American Samoa is one of them. Its neighbor, Samoa, is just across the line, so the two celebrate a whole day apart.

---

1. Which place welcomes the new year first? **American Samoa** **London** **Kiritimati**

2. The new year starts everywhere at the same moment. **true** **false**

3. Why is the world split into time zones?

To keep clocks in step with the sun.

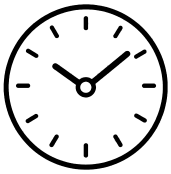
4. Name one of the last places to welcome the new year.

American Samoa.

5. Why do Samoa and American Samoa celebrate a whole day apart?

The International Date Line runs between them, so they are on different days.

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New Year Around the World

Midnight moves west. Count the hours to each place.

When it is midnight on January 1, 2027, in Kiritimati, here is the time in seven other places. Count the hours from that time to midnight. The first one is done for you.

Place	Its time then	Hours later
Auckland, New Zealand	11:00 p.m., December 31	**1**
Sydney, Australia	9:00 p.m., December 31	**3**
Tokyo, Japan	7:00 p.m., December 31	**5**
London, England	10:00 a.m., December 31	**14**
New York City, USA	5:00 a.m., December 31	**19**
Honolulu, Hawaii	midnight, December 31	**24**
Pago Pago, American Samoa	11:00 p.m., December 30	**25**

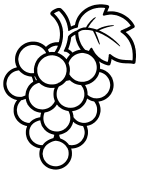
1. How many hours after Sydney does London reach midnight? **3** **(11)** **14**

2. How many hours after London does New York City reach midnight? **14** **(5)** **19**

3. Pago Pago is the last place on the list. Why?

It is just east of the date line, so it starts the new day last.

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New Year Around the World

Read about Scotland and Spain. Then answer.

1. Scotland

In Scotland, the last day of the year is called **Hogmanay** (hog-muh-NAY). After midnight comes **first-footing**. The first visitor to step into a home in the new year is said to bring luck. A first-footer often brings small gifts, such as shortbread or a lump of coal for the fire. At midnight, people stand in a circle and sing "Auld Lang Syne." In the last verse, they cross their arms and hold hands. The Scottish poet Robert Burns wrote down its words in 1788. The title means "long, long ago."

1. In Scotland, the last day of the year is called ___ **Burns** **Hogmanay** **first-footing**

2. Robert Burns wrote down the words of "Auld Lang Syne" in 1788. **true** **false**

3. What might a first-footer bring?

Shortbread or a lump of coal for the fire.

2. Spain

In Spain, families get ready for midnight with **twelve grapes** each. In Madrid, crowds fill a square called the Puerta del Sol, under a big clock tower. As the clock strikes twelve, people eat one grape with each chime, a grape for each month of the year. Eating all twelve in time is said to bring a lucky year, but it is harder than it sounds! The custom has been popular for more than 100 years.

4. Each of the twelve grapes stands for a ___ of the year. **day** **month** **week**

5. People in Spain eat one grape with each ___ of the clock. **minute** **hour** **chime**

6. Eating all twelve grapes in time is said to bring a lucky ___ **week** **year** **month**

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New Year Around the World

Read about Denmark and the United States. Then answer.

3. Denmark

In Denmark, many families watch the King's New Year's Eve speech on TV. Just before midnight, people climb onto chairs and sofas. As the clock strikes twelve, they all jump down together, leaping into the new year. In an old custom, some people save chipped plates and cups all year. On New Year's Eve, they smash them on the doorsteps of friends and family. A big pile of broken dishes by your door means you have many friends! After midnight, many share **kransekage**, a tall tower of cake rings made with almonds.

1. In Denmark, a big pile of broken dishes by your door means you have many ____ **pets** **dishes** **(friends)**

2. In Denmark, people jump down from chairs at midnight. **(true)** **false**

3. What is kransekage?

A tall tower of cake rings made with almonds.

4. The United States

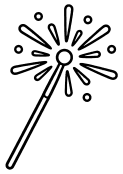
In New York City, hundreds of thousands of people crowd into **Times Square** on New Year's Eve. A giant glowing ball sits on top of a tall pole on a building there. A minute before midnight, it begins to slide down the pole, and the crowd counts down the last ten seconds. When the ball reaches the bottom, the new year has begun, and confetti fills the air. The first ball dropped in 1907. It was made of iron and wood and lit with 100 light bulbs. Today's ball sparkles with thousands of crystal pieces and LED lights.

4. When did the first ball drop in Times Square? **1952** **1788** **(1907)**

5. The ball starts to slide down the pole an hour before midnight. **true** **(false)**

6. Today's ball sparkles with crystal pieces and LED lights. **(true)** **false**

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New Year Around the World

Read about Brazil and Japan. Then answer.

5. Brazil

In Brazil, New Year's Eve is called **Réveillon** (heh-vay-YOHN). It comes in summer, so many people head to the beach. In Rio de Janeiro, more than two million people crowd onto Copacabana Beach. They enjoy music and a huge fireworks show over the sea. Many people in Brazil wear white on New Year's Eve, a color for peace and a fresh start. Some add a bit of another color for a wish, such as yellow for money. A New Year's meal often has lentils, which are said to bring luck.

1. In Brazil, New Year's Eve comes in winter. **true** **false**

2. Many Brazilians wear ____ on New Year's Eve. **black** **green** **white**

3. Why do many people in Brazil wear white on New Year's Eve?

White is a color for peace and a fresh start.

6. Japan

In Japan, the new year is the most important holiday of all. Before the year ends, families clean their homes from top to bottom, so they can start fresh. On New Year's Eve, many eat **toshikoshi soba**. These are long, thin noodles. The name means "year-crossing noodles," and their length stands for a long life. People send New Year cards called **nengajo**. The post office saves them up and brings them all on January 1, so whole stacks arrive that morning. Children often get small gifts of money from their family.

4. Long noodles stand for ____ **a long life** **a long trip** **a long night**

5. Why do so many cards arrive in Japan on January 1?

The post office saves them up and brings them all on January 1.

6. What does the name "toshikoshi soba" mean?

Year-crossing noodles.

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New Year Around the World

Read about the Philippines and Australia. Then answer.

7. The Philippines

In the Philippines, round things are a big part of New Year's Eve. Round shapes look like coins, so they are said to bring money in the new year. Many families set out twelve round fruits, one for each month, such as grapes, oranges and melons. People often wear clothes with polka dots too. Some keep coins in their pockets and jingle them at midnight. And at the stroke of midnight, children jump as high as they can. It is said that they will grow taller in the new year!

1. In the Philippines, round things are said to bring money. **true** **false**

2. Why do children in the Philippines jump at midnight?

It is said that they will grow taller in the new year.

3. Why are round things said to bring money?

Round shapes look like coins.

8. Australia

Sydney, Australia, is one of the first big cities to welcome the new year. It is summer there, so people spend the day outside, with picnics at beaches and in parks. More than a million people crowd around **Sydney Harbour** to watch the fireworks. There are two shows. The first, at 9 p.m., comes early enough for young children to see fireworks and still get to bed! The big show at midnight lights up the Sydney Harbour Bridge, with fireworks bursting from the bridge itself.

4. In Sydney, many families with young children watch the 9 p.m. fireworks. **true** **false**

5. It is winter in Sydney on New Year's Eve. **true** **false**

6. Why are there two fireworks shows in Sydney?

The 9 p.m. show lets young children see fireworks and still get to bed.

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New Year Around the World

Read the text. Then answer the questions.

How January 1 Became New Year's Day

People have not always started the year on January 1. Long ago, many began it in spring, when crops were planted. The early Roman calendar began in March. That is why September, our ninth month, is named for the Latin word for seven. In 153 BCE, Rome started its year on January 1. Julius Caesar's new calendar, from 45 BCE, kept that day. January was named for Janus, the Roman god of doors and beginnings. He was shown with two faces, one looking back at the old year and one looking ahead to the new. Later, many places in Europe began the year on other days, such as March 25. Scotland moved to January 1 in 1600, and England and its American colonies in 1752.

---

1. The early Roman calendar began in ___ **September** **(March)** **January**

2. September is named for the Latin word for nine. **true** **(false)**

3. Why was Janus shown with two faces?

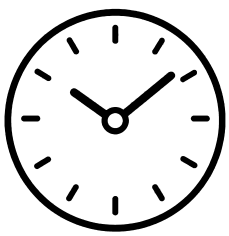
One looks back at the old year and one looks ahead to the new.

4. Why did many people long ago begin the year in spring?

It was when crops were planted.

5. January was named for ___ **(Janus)** **Rome** **Julius Caesar**

6. In which year did England and its American colonies move to January 1? **1600** **(1752)** **45 BCE**



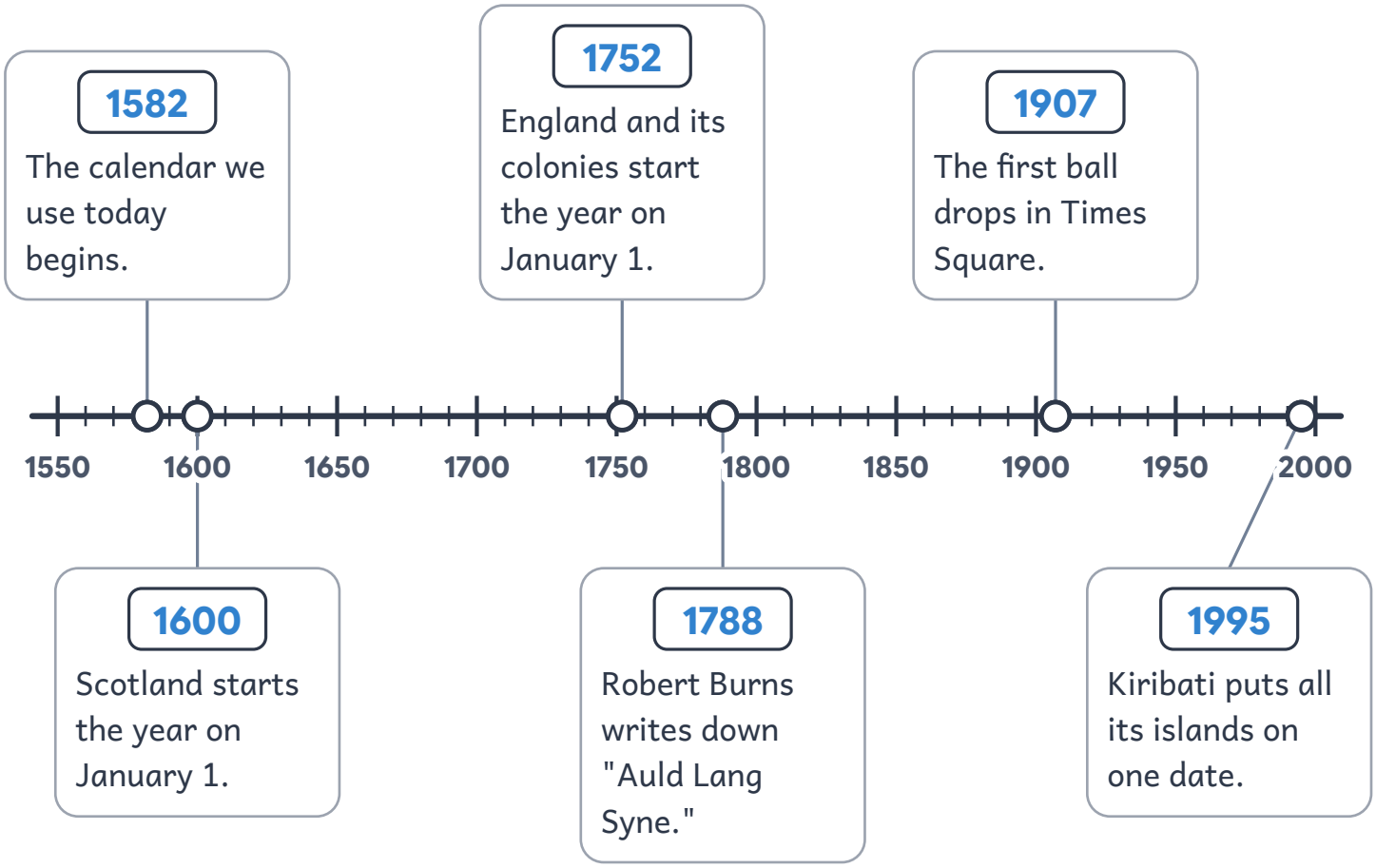


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New Year Around the World

Write the year of each event. Then answer the questions.

Years: 1582 1600 1752 1788 1907 1995



1. How many years after England moved to January 1 did Robert Burns write down "Auld Lang Syne"? **36** years

2. How many years after the first ball drop did Kiribati put all its islands on one date? **88** years

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New Year Around the World

Read about three other new years. Then answer.

Lunar New Year

Lunar New Year comes in late January or February, with the new moon. It is the biggest holiday of the year in China. It is also kept in Vietnam, where it is called Tết, in Korea and in many other places. Families clean their homes and share a big dinner. Children get gifts of money, in China and Vietnam in red envelopes. Each year is named for one of twelve animals.

1. Lunar New Year comes in ___ **March** **January or February** **September**

Rosh Hashanah

Rosh Hashanah (rohsh huh-SHAH-nuh) is the Jewish New Year. It comes in September or October. Families share holiday meals. They dip slices of apple in honey, for a sweet new year. They often eat challah, a braided bread, baked in a round loaf for the circle of the year.

2. At Rosh Hashanah, people dip apples in honey for a sweet new year. **true** **false**

Nowruz

Nowruz (no-ROOZ) means "new day" in Persian. It is the new year in Iran, and for many people in Central Asia and other lands too. It begins at the very moment that spring starts, around March 20. Families clean their homes and visit their relatives. In Iran, they also set a special table with seven things. In Persian, the name of each one starts with an S sound. Sprouts and apples are two of them.

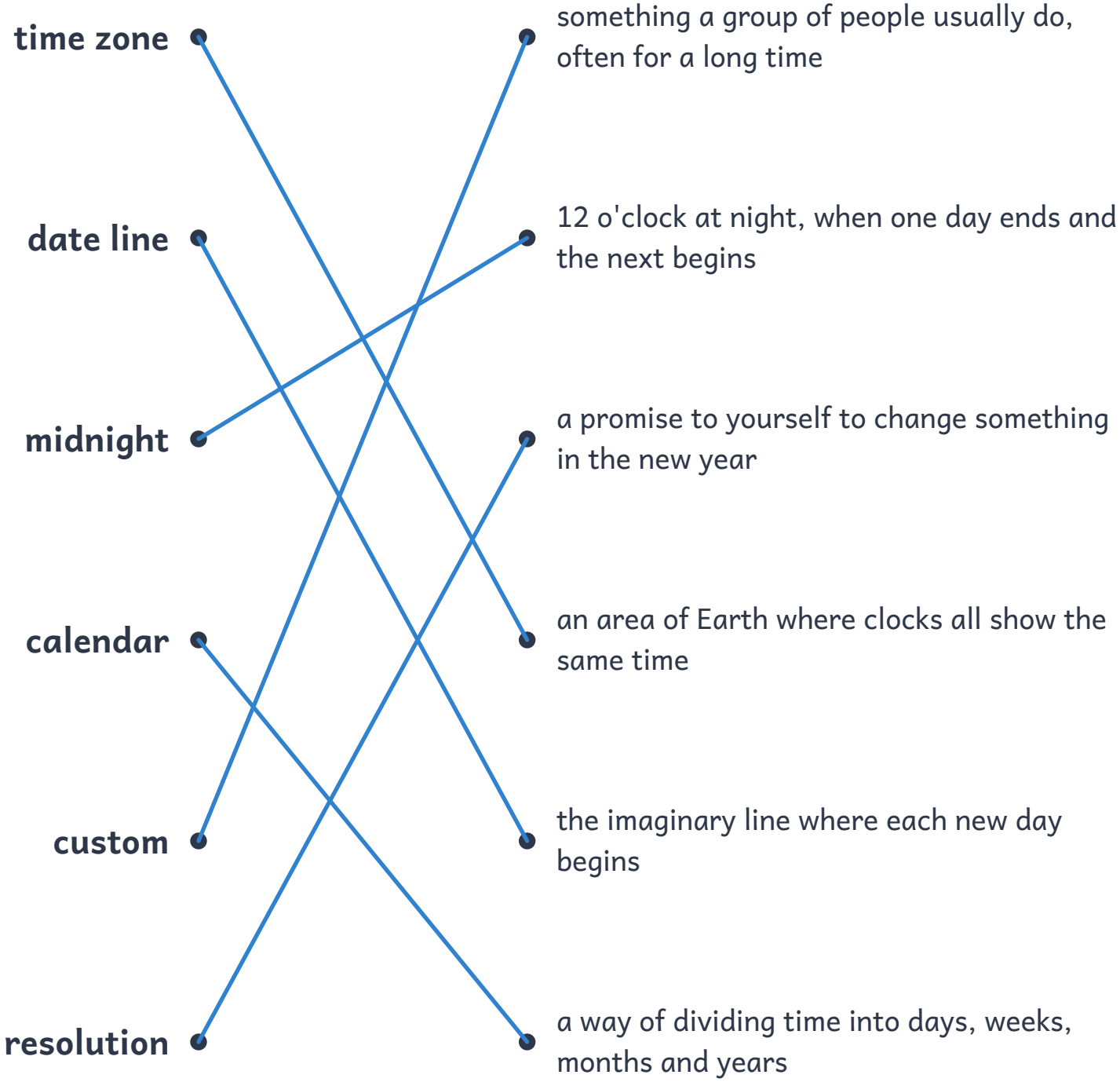
3. Nowruz begins at the very moment ___ starts. **spring** **summer** **winter**

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New Year Around the World

Draw a line from each word to what it means.



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