

# Voki Lesson Plan



**Lesson title:** Social Studies

**Lesson title:** Vietnamese New Year (Tet)

**Grade Level:** Middle School

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**Objectives:**

Students will learn:

1. How Vietnamese people celebrate Lunar New Year
2. Preparation before Vietnamese Lunar New Year (Tet)
3. Customs and traditions for Vietnamese Lunar New Year (Tet)
4. Similarities and difference between Vietnamese Lunar New Year (Tet) and American traditions

**Materials:**

1. PowerPoint
2. Pictures of Tet
3. Picture of symbolic fruits and plants
4. Voki.com (<http://www.voki.com/pickup.php?scid=7401486&height=267&width=200>)

**Procedure:**

1. Review with your students what a lunar calendar is and the 12 animal zodiacs. Explain to your students that the Vietnamese and the Chinese share the same lunar calendar and 12 animal zodiacs. Tell your students that the Vietnamese zodiac replaces the rabbit with the cat and the ox with a water buffalo.
  - The Vietnamese were influenced by China for many years and therefore Vietnamese New Year (Tet) and Chinese New Year is similar.
2. Ask your students if they know how to say New Year in other languages. Tell your students that another name for Vietnamese New Year is called Tet. Tet is the abbreviation of Tet Nguyen Dan, or “the first morning of the new year”.
3. Explain to the customs for Tết Niên (Before New Year's Eve), Giao Thừa (New Year's Eve), and Tân Niên (the New Year):
  - Before New Year’s Eve – Preparations begin 1 to 2 weeks before Tet

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1. Parents will buy new clothes for their children to wear on Tet.
  2. People will pay off their debt before Tet.
  3. Families will stock up on food and supplies because all cooking and cleaning are avoided during the first 3 days of Tet.
  4. Decorate house with symbolic flowers and fruits, like the kumquat and the hao dao (peach blossom).
  5. Clean the family altar and prepare a tray for offering. It is called Mâm Ngũ Quả, or the plate of 5 fruits. It can include any of the following fruits: bananas, grapefruit, “Buddha’s hand”, lemons, oranges, tangerines, apples, or persimmons.
  6. A week before Tet, the family present offerings to the Kitchen God, who returns to heaven and reports to the Jade Emperor about the events that took place in the house over the past year.
- New Year’s Eve
    1. At 12:00 a.m. of Giao Thừa, Buddhist temples ring bells and chant prayers.
    2. The owner of the house will leave the house for a few minutes and return home at midnight. By performing this ritual, the Vietnamese believe that it will bring blessings and good luck to the family.
    3. Incense sticks are burnt and prayers are said to worship their ancestors.
  - Tân Niên
    1. Children will receive lucky money from elders.
    2. Children will wear new clothes and greet their elders.
    3. Vietnamese never enter any house on the first day of Tet without being invited. They believe that the first visitor of the year will determine their fortune for the rest of the year.
    4. Families gather together to greet each other and give good wishes.
    5. Do not sweep the floor during Tet. They believe that it will sweep the luck away.
    6. Families and friends visit each other during Tet. The second day of Tet is usually reserved for friends and the third day is usually reserved for teachers.

7. Streets will be filled with firecrackers, drums, and lion dances.
4. Ask your students what Tet traditions are similar to American traditions.
5. Split your students into 3 groups and assign one topic to each group. Each group will create a Voki to presenting their research:
  - a. Symbolic Tet plants
  - b. Tet food
  - c. Tet games