

New Year Traditions Answer Key

A strong response should include:

- Recognition that both Japan and Scotland celebrate with **family, community, and traditions focused on renewal and good fortune**.
- Mention that Japan's customs focus on **spiritual cleansing and inner reflection**, while Scotland's highlight **hospitality and social celebration**.
- Explanation that both share themes of **fresh beginnings, connection, and positivity** for the year ahead.

Example summary:

Both Japan and Scotland celebrate New Year's with traditions that welcome good luck and bring people together. In Japan, the ringing of temple bells and the cleaning of homes focus on spiritual renewal. In Scotland, singing and first-footing show the importance of friendship and generosity. Though their customs differ, both cultures value hope, connection, and new beginnings as the year turns.

Teacher's Guide

Implementation Tips:

- Begin with a brief class discussion on how different families or countries celebrate the New Year.
- Read the passages aloud, emphasizing tone and imagery.
- Model how to organize a comparison paragraph (topic, similarities, differences, conclusion).

Differentiation Strategies:

- **Grades 6-7:** Provide sentence frames ("In both Japan and Scotland...", "However, in Japan...").
- **Grades 8-10:** Encourage use of transition words such as *similarly*, *on the other hand*, *in contrast*, and *both emphasize*.
- **For ELLs:** Pre-teach key cultural vocabulary (e.g., *mochi*, *Hogmanay*, *first-footing*).