

# THIDA MEP Newsletter

## December 2013



## Christmas



By: Teacher Jade

In the western world, most countries celebrate the holiday of Christmas on December 25th. Christmas was originally a holiday celebrated by the Pagans to mark the winter solstice (the shortest day of the year) on December 21st, but was later adopted and changed by the Christians to mark the day they believed to mark the birth of Jesus Christ.

Today, in the west, many people celebrate Christmas whether they're a Christian or not. To many people, Christmas is a time for family and visiting friends. The holiday has been adopted more as a celebration for coming together than that of only a religious day, therefore most people observe this day no matter what they believe.

Many families come together to decorate Christmas trees with shiny ornaments and blinking lights, exchange gifts wrapped in colorful paper, and eat large meals of traditional dishes. For most people this is a time to travel to visit friends and family, or invite them into their home.

As the tradition goes, children are told the story of Santa Claus (or Saint Nick), who travels around the world bringing gifts to those who have not been "naughty." According to the story, Santa Claus travels around the whole world in one night, on a sleigh pulled by flying reindeer!

## P2: Letter Writing



By: Teacher Cat

"Dear December,"

This month in MEP 2/1 we have been focusing on letter writing. The inspiration came from Chapter 9 in our student book. In this chapter, holidays and corresponding activities are discussed. One of these activities is sending cards.

After writing Father's Day cards, I wanted to take this further by having the students write letters. To get inspired, we watched a short episode of the animated series, Arthur, in which Arthur writes to a pen pal who lives in Turkey. I told the students that they would be writing to people who live in America, just as Arthur writes to someone who lives far away as well.

To learn about writing letters, we first looked at some example letters to see what kinds of things to put in our letters. Next, we made mind maps of what we can write in a letter by brainstorming different ideas. After that, we wrote letters to Arthur and his friends thanks to a helpful website that provided good outlined letters. They even wrote us back. Finally, we prepared to write our own letters to people in America by deciding what we wanted to write, making a draft of the letter, writing a final copy and decorating the letter, then finally mailing the letter. We sure do hope we hear back!

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## The New Year!



By: Teacher Eric

January 1st is New Year's Day. It is the beginning of the next calendar year. People celebrate the New Year in many ways. Many people watch fireworks shows or light their own firecrackers at home. Many people stay up until midnight on New Year's Eve (December 31st) so they can celebrate the very first minute of the year! They wear party hats and shake noisemakers. They count down the last few seconds of the old year and then yell and shoot confetti. "10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1, HAPPY NEW YEAR!!"

There are also other traditions on New Year's Day. In America, we like to eat black eyed peas and cabbage for good luck. Many people also make resolutions. This means they decide they will do something new in the next year that is good for them. My resolution for next year will be to write more stories about my life in Thailand.

How will you celebrate New Year's Day 2014? What will your new year resolution be?

## Math Club



By: Teacher Kristin

This semester clubs have been a lot of fun. Some students are learning about stories in reading club, others are learning about different sports, a few are learning about animals, and some are learning about poetry.

In my club, we have been busy working on some challenging math! This club, "Marvelous Math," is for Prathom 1 & 2 students.

Every week, we sharpen our mental math skills by playing a math game in English. The students race to be the first one to answer math problems aloud, earning themselves a turn or points in a game. We always combine our math facts practice with a fun relay or game. The students are starting to get really fast at answering math questions in English!

We also learn about a different math topic every week and the students complete an activity sheet related to that topic. I am really proud of all the students in math club for working so hard. We have had a lot of fun so far this semester and I am looking forward to the activities we have planned for January and February!

## Fun Christmas Facts!



By: Teacher Jade

-Santa Claus is also known as St. Nicholas, Father Christmas, Grandfather Frost and Kris Kringle.

-Santa Claus's 8 reindeer are named: Comet, Cupid, Dasher, Dancer, Prancer, Vixen, Donner, Blitzen.

-Christmas trees are also known as the Yule-tree.

-Christmas trees were first decorated with foods such as apples, nuts and dates.

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