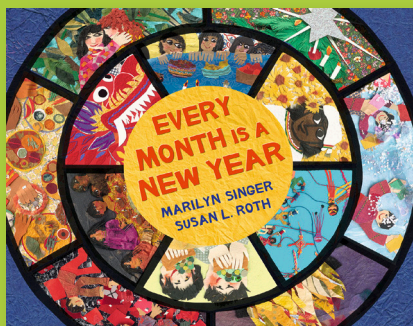


TEACHER'S GUIDE



Every Month is a New Year

written by Marilyn Singer, illustrated by Susan L. Roth

About the Book

Genre: Poetry

*Reading Level: Grade 4

Interest Level: Grades 1–8

Guided Reading Level: T

Accelerated Reader® Level/

Points: N/A

Lexile™ Measure: N/A

*Reading level based on the
Spache Readability Formula

Themes: New Year's
Celebrations, Cultural/
Regional/Religious
Traditions, Calendars, Global
Perspective, Geography,
Cultural Diversity, Poetry

SYNOPSIS

In many places around the globe, the new year starts on January 1. But not everywhere! Chinese New Year is celebrated in January or February. Iranians observe Nowruz in March. For Thai people, Songkran occurs in April. Ethiopians greet the new year at Enkutatash in September. All these diverse cultural, regional, and religious observances, and many others, have deep-rooted traditions and treasured customs.

Acclaimed poet Marilyn Singer has created a lively poetry collection that highlights sixteen of these fascinating festivities, some well-known and some less familiar. Together with Susan L. Roth's captivating collage illustrations, the poems take readers to the heart of these beloved holidays. Every month of the year, somewhere in the world people celebrate with joy and good wishes for a happy new year.



BACKGROUND

Author's Introduction: “Happy New Year! All around the world, people celebrate New Year’s Day beginning at midnight when December 31 becomes January 1. They ring out the old year and ring in the new with a variety of festivities that include eating and drinking holiday foods and beverages, shooting off fireworks, blaring horns, beating drums, giving gifts, dancing, making resolutions, or actually ringing bells.

“But January 1 is not the only day that the new year is celebrated. Chinese New Year, also known as the Spring Festival, falls sometime in January or February. Nowruz, the Iranian New Year, begins in March, when spring begins in the Northern Hemisphere. In Thailand, festivities for Songkran are held from April 13 to 15. The Jewish New Year, Rosh Hashanah, occurs in September or October, and it begins at sunset. Diwali, celebrated in parts of India, starts at sunrise on a day in October or November. The date of the Islamic New Year varies from year to year, but it always begins at the first sighting of a crescent moon.

“Some of these celebrations are secular, not religious. Others are religious. And still others have religious roots but are combined with secular traditions. Iranians set a table with seven special dishes with names that begin with the letter s (seen) in Persian. Thai people hold what is perhaps the world’s biggest water fight. Hindus light lamps and bonfires. Muslims spend the day quietly in prayer. Jews go to synagogue to worship, and some practice tashlich, casting away sins (in the form of pebbles or bits of bread) into a body of water. Spaniards eat twelve grapes for good luck.

“No matter how they celebrate or on what date, people everywhere find a time to wish one another, ‘Happy New Year.’”

Calendars: For millennia, civilizations have marked the beginning of a new year with celebrations. The earliest recorded festivities date back four thousand years to the Babylonians, who celebrated the new year in March at the first new moon after the spring equinox in the Northern Hemisphere. Later civilizations developed and followed different calendars, so the date of New Year’s Day depended on which calendar was being used. New Year’s Day was formally celebrated for the first time on January 1, 45 BCE, after the Roman emperor Julius Caesar introduced a solar calendar based on Earth’s revolution around the sun. The calendar, which became known as the Julian calendar, consisted of 365 days and one leap (extra) day every four years, because it takes the earth approximately $365\frac{1}{4}$ days to revolve around the sun. The days were divided into twelve months of 30 or 31 days each. The month of January was named for Janus, the Roman god of gates and doors, beginnings and endings, whose two faces look backward and forward.

The Gregorian calendar, created in 1582 during the time of Pope Gregory XIII, corrected the mathematical formula used to calculate the leap year and inserted the extra day according to a different rule. A main reason for this reform was to prevent Easter Sunday from falling too far from the spring equinox in March. The Gregorian calendar is internationally the most common civil calendar in use today.



Other cultures and groups, such as Jews, Chinese, and Hindus, use a twelve-month lunar calendar, based on the cycle of the moon, to determine when the new year begins. These calendars generally add a thirteenth month every few years to align with the seasons. Although New Year's Day is on a different date each year, that date generally falls within the same few months for each group. The Islamic calendar is a purely lunar calendar. It consists of 354 or 355 days and twelve months of 29 or 30 days. Each month begins when the new crescent moon is sighted, and those sightings vary from region to region due to cloud cover, sky brightness, and other factors. Because this calendar is shorter than the Gregorian calendar, the first month, Muharram, begins 10 or 11 days earlier than it did the previous year. This means that in some years, New Year's Day will be celebrated in May, as in this book.

About the Celebrations: Please refer to the backmatter of the book for a brief history and explanation of each New Year's celebration highlighted in the poems.

Additional LEE & LOW Titles to Teach Poetry

A Full Moon is Rising written by Marilyn Singer, illustrated by Julia Cairns
<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/a-full-moon-is-rising>

Water Rolls, Water Rises/El agua rueda, el agua sube written by Pat Mora, illustrated by Meilo So
<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/water-rolls-water-rises-el-agua-rueda-el-agua-sube>

Tan to Tamarind written by Malathi Iyengar, illustrated by Jamel Akib
<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/tan-to-tamarind>

Amazing Faces written by Lee Bennett Hopkins, illustrated by Chris Soentpiet
<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/amazing-faces>

Amazing Places written by Lee Bennett Hopkins, illustrated by Chris Soentpiet & Christy Hale
<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/amazing-places>

Poems in the Attic written by Nikki Grimes, illustrated by Elizabeth Zunon
<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/poems-in-the-attic>

Marti's Song for Freedom/Martí y sus versos por la libertad written by Emma Otheguy, illustrated by Beatriz Vidal
<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/marti-s-song-for-freedom-marti-y-sus-versos-por-la-libertad>



VOCABULARY

(Language Standards, Vocabulary Acquisition & Use, Strands 4–6)

The story contains several content-specific and academic words and phrases that may be unfamiliar to students. Based on students' prior knowledge, review some or all of the vocabulary below.

Content Specific

Times Square, Hogmanay, Auld Lang Syne, First Footer, Grandfather Frost, Snow Maiden, Babushka, “Gong hey fat choy,” dumplings, Nowruz, haft seen, sabzeh, seer, Songkran, Buddas, stupas, Muharram, Prophet, masjid, mosque, Matariki, Little Eyes, We Tripantu, ¡Wiñoi Tripantu!, rewe, Wep Ronpet, Nile, Akhet, Sopdet, Nowruz, Navroze, pulao, ghee, haft seen, agiary, sandalwood, Enkutatah, Queen of Sheba, King Solomon, shofar, Diwali, Rangoli, diya, Año Viejo, effigies, papier-mache, Noche Vieja, ¡Feliz Año Nuevo!, ¡Buena suerte!

Academic

fir, pistachio, banish, deeds, solemn, crescent, heralding, sacred, dawn, fertile, strife, luminous, pomegranates, lurking, fate, peal

BEFORE READING

Prereading Focus Questions

(Reading Standards, Craft & Structure, Strand 5 and Integration of Knowledge & Ideas, Strand 7)

(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1 and 2)

Before introducing this book to students, you may wish to develop background knowledge and promote anticipation by posing questions such as the following:

1. Ask students what traditions mean to them. What are traditions? Why are traditions important? What are some traditions you (or, you and your family) follow each year?
2. Ask students how they celebrate the new year. When do you celebrate New Year's Eve/Day? What do you do to celebrate the holiday?
3. Ask students why they celebrate the arrival of a new year. Why is it important to you (or, you and your family) to celebrate New Year's Eve/Day? What does a new year mean to you? To other people in your family?
4. Ask students what they know about different New Year's celebrations around the world. Do you know of any other new year festivities or traditions other than the ones in which you (and your family) participate? What do you know about these other new year traditions?
5. Ask students why it's important to acknowledge traditions and festivities different from their own. Why do you think it's important to learn about different holidays and New Year's celebrations and traditions around the world, even if you don't celebrate or if the festivities are different from your own?

Exploring the Book

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas & Details, Strand 1, Craft & Structure, Strand 5, and Integration of Knowledge & Ideas, Strand 7)

(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1 and 2)

1. Book Title Exploration. Talk about the title of the book, *Every Month is a New Year*. Then ask students what they think this book will most likely be about and whom the book might be about. What do you think might happen? What information do you think you might learn? What makes you think that?
2. Read Marilyn Singer's Biography. Read about poet Marilyn Singer on the book jacket back flap, as well as her website at marilysinger.net. Why do you think she decided to create



a collection of poems about New Year's celebrations around the world?

3. Read Susan L. Roth's Biography. Read about illustrator Susan L. Roth on the book jacket back flap, as well as her website at susanlroth.com. Susan L. Roth is known for her three-dimensional, mixed-media collage illustrations. How do you think she researched the different New Year's celebrations in the book to make sure her collages reflected the celebrations accurately?
4. Encourage students to stop and jot in their reading notebooks during the read-aloud of each poem when they: learn new information, see a powerful image, have an emotional reaction or an idea, have a question, or hear new words.
5. Have students quickly write a feeling in their notebook during the reading of each poem. After reading, ask students why they wrote that feeling down and have them write a journal entry about it.
6. Have students read the corresponding information in the "About the Celebrations" section before reading each poem in *Every Month is a New Year*. This information is available in the backmatter of the book. The information will provide students with background knowledge to ground their thinking while they engage with the poems.
7. Ask students to make a prediction: Do you think this book will be fiction or nonfiction? What makes you think so? What clues does the author and illustrator give to help you know whether this book will be fiction or nonfiction?

Setting a Purpose for Reading

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas & Details, Strands 1–3)

Have students read to find out:

- how and why the new year is celebrated around the world
- which New Year's celebration occurs in each month of the year

- what traditions accompany each New Year's celebration
- why traditions are important for each New Year's celebration
- why it's important to acknowledge and learn about different New Year's celebrations all over the world

Encourage students to consider why the author, Marilyn Singer, would want to share this poetry collection of traditions about different new year's celebrations with young people. Also encourage students to consider why the illustrator, Susan L. Roth, formatted the illustrations the way she did.

AFTER READING

Discussion Questions

After students have read the book, use these or similar questions to generate discussion, enhance comprehension, and develop appreciation for the content. Encourage students to refer to passages and/or illustrations in the book to support their responses. **To build skills in close reading of a text, students should cite evidence with their answers.**

Literal Comprehension

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas & Details, Strands 1–3)

(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1–3; and Presentation of Knowledge & Ideas, Strand 4)

For each poem, consider asking students:

1. Who do you think is the narrator of the poem? How can you tell? How does the language and context of the poem help you figure out who might be telling about the celebration? What visual clues does the illustrator give to help you determine who is the narrator?
2. In which month or time of year does the New Year's celebration take place? Does it occur on the same date every year? How is it decided when the New Year's celebration will take place?
3. Why is the New Year's celebration observed during that month or time of year? How/Why is that time of year important in the region of the world where the poem is set?



★ “This celebration of new year’s celebrations around the world is itself worth celebrating. . . . This complete package is an illuminating and respectful appreciation of both of our global uniqueness and our commonality.”

—**Booklist**

★ “A visually and sonically stunning introduction to the importance of appreciating time and the change of seasons throughout the world: a multicultural gem.”

—**Kirkus Reviews**

★ “Closing notes thoroughly explore the holidays Singer introduces, closing out a lovely collection that both looks back a tradition and forward to new beginnings, wherever one might live.”

—**Publishers Weekly**

4. What kinds of traditions are associated with the New Year’s celebration? How do the narrator and other people in the poem celebrate their new year?
5. What are specific names and events associated with the new year? What do the names and events mean, and why are they important for the New Year’s celebration?
6. What do you notice in the illustration for the New Year’s celebration? What kinds of things do you see in the collage illustration? What kinds of objects and materials do you think the illustrator used in the collage?

Extension/Higher Level Thinking

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas & Details, Strands 1-3; and Craft & Structure, Strands 4 and 6)

(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1-3; and Presentation of Knowledge & Ideas, Strand 4)

1. What does the title *Every Month Is a New Year* mean to you after reading the poems? Why do you think the author chose this particular title? Do you think it is an accurate title? Why or why not?
2. Why does the author use a different narrator for each poem in the book?
3. How are all the New Year’s celebrations similar? What are some elements of the New Year’s celebrations have in common? What makes you

think that? What evidence can you provide to prove that they’re similar?

4. How does each New Year’s celebration convey hope and optimism?
5. Do you celebrate more than one new year in your family? If so, why? Why do you think families might celebrate multiple New Year’s celebrations? Why are they meaningful to people?
6. How are the New Year’s celebrations different from one another? What are some elements you notice in the poems that show how the celebrations differ? What are some elements in the New Year’s celebrations that are different?
7. Why is it important to acknowledge and learn about different New Year’s celebrations? How did reading these poems make you think about how New Year’s celebrations are typically taught in school?
8. Why are New Year’s celebrations important to people living in the countries where the poems are set? Or to people who observe the religion of the region? Why do you think having a New Year’s celebration matters?
9. What kinds of choices do you think the author and illustrator made in creating this book? How is this book different from other picture books or books of poems you have read? What makes



it different? How do the design choices add to the book's intentions?

10. How can you use the illustrations to help you understand the poem? How do the illustrations convey the feelings and emotions of the New Year's celebrations?
11. Why do you think the book was designed to be held and read vertically instead of horizontally, like most books? Why do you think each poem is set against a background of a grid? What does the vertical format and grid remind you of?
12. Why do you think the author uses figurative language in the poems? How would the book be different if it was a nonfiction picture book about New Year's celebrations? Does the poem format add to your interpretation of the New Year's celebrations? Why or why not?
13. How does this book teach about tolerance and universality/commonality?
14. How are children active participants in the New Year's celebrations? How may even young people have a role in their culture's festivities?
15. If an outer space alien were to visit Earth and had never experienced a New Year's celebration, how would you describe the celebration to the alien? What are the universal characteristics of a New Year's celebration, if there are any?
16. Why do you think so many different cultures and religious groups around the world all have New Year's celebrations? How does the start of a new year make people feel? How does a new year give people an opportunity to reflect?

Reader's Response

(Writing Standards, Text Types & Purposes, Strands 1–3 and Production & Distribution of Writing, Strands 4–6)

1. What is one big thought you have after reading this book? Think about how you celebrate the new year and how the new year is celebrated around the world. What is your takeaway from the book? What would you tell a friend about

the book? What is one big thing you learned from the book?

2. What do you think is the overall message the author, Marilyn Singer, gives to readers? Think about possible motivations behind the author's intentions in writing the book. What do you think she wanted to tell her readers?
3. Have students make a text-to-self connection. What kind of connections did you make from the book to your own life? What poems did you relate to and how did the poems affect the way you think of your own New Year's celebrations?
4. Have students make a text-to-text connection. Did you think of any other books or poems while you read the poems in *Every Month Is a New Year*? Why did you make those connections?
5. Have students make a text-to-world connection. What kind of connections did you make from the book to what you have seen happening in other parts of the world (online, on television, in a newspaper, etc.)? Why did the book make you think of those situations?
6. What does a new year and New Year's celebrations mean to students after reading? After reading *Every Month Is a New Year*, what does the start of a new year mean to you? Why? How did the meaning of a new year and the festivities surrounding it change for you after reading *Every Month Is a New Year*?

ELL Teaching Activities

(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1–3 and Presentation of Knowledge & Ideas, Strands 4–6)
(Language Standards, Vocabulary Acquisition & Use, Strands 4–6)

1. Assign ELL students to partner-read the story with strong English readers/speakers. Students can alternate reading between pages, repeat passages after one another, or listen to the more fluent reader.
2. Have each student write three questions about a poem of their choosing. Then let students pair up and discuss the answers to the questions.



3. Depending on students' level of English proficiency, after the first reading:
 - Review the poems and illustrations in order and have students summarize what is happening in each poem, first orally, then in writing.
 - Have students work in pairs to tell what they learned about one of the New Year's celebrations. Then ask students to write a short summary, synopsis, or opinion about what they have read.
4. Have students give a short talk about one celebration and what they most liked learning about and why. Students may also share their experiences of celebrating one of the traditions featured in the book.
5. The book contains several content-specific and academic words that may be unfamiliar to students. Based on students' prior knowledge, review some or all of the vocabulary. Expose English Language Learners to multiple vocabulary strategies. Have students make predictions about word meanings, look up and record word definitions from a dictionary, write the meaning of the word or phrase in their own words, draw a picture of the meaning of the word, list synonyms and antonyms, create an action for each word, and write a meaningful sentence that demonstrates the definition of the word. Have students refer to the Glossary and Pronunciation Guide in the back of the book throughout reading.
6. Have students consult the map at the beginning of the book when they are reading the poems, or present a world map to the whole class. Identify the country where each of the New Year's celebrations takes place. Have students identify where their school or local library is on the map to provide context.
7. Display a calendar showing an entire year. As your students read the poems in the book, have a volunteer shade in the general time of the year (day/weeks/month) when each New Year's celebration takes place and label the shaded area with the name of the celebration

(perhaps using a color that matches in the book). Have students reflect on this question: Is there a time of year that is more popular than others for New Year's celebrations? Why or why not?

INTERDISCIPLINARY ACTIVITIES

(Introduction to the Standards, page 7: Students who are college and career ready must be able to build strong content knowledge, value evidence, and use technology and digital media strategically and capably)

Use some of the following activities to help students integrate their reading experiences with other curriculum areas. These can also be used for extension activities, for advanced readers, and for building a home-school connection.

English Language Arts

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas and Details, Strands 1-3; Craft and Structure, Strands 4-6; Integration of Knowledge & Ideas, Strands 7-9; Range of Reading of Text Complexity, Strand 10)

(Writing Standards, Text Types & Purposes, Strands 1-3; Production & Distribution of Writing, Strands 4 and 6; Research to Build & Present Knowledge, Strands 7-9; Range of Writing, Strand 10)

(Speaking and Listening Standards, Comprehension and Collaboration, Strands 1-3; Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas, Strands 4-6)

1. Before reading the book, have students share a word or two that summarizes what the start of a new year means to them. Encourage students to come up with several words. Then create a word cloud (<https://www.wordclouds.com/>) to display students' words. After students have read the poems in *Every Month Is a New Year*, ask each student to share a different word about something she or he learned during the reading. Create a second word cloud with students' new words and compare and contrast the word clouds. What did students learn about the book that made them think differently about New Year's celebrations?
2. Have each student select a poem and write her or his reactions to the poem. Why did the student choose that poem? What stood out to him or her? What resonated with the student? What did she or he learn about the New Year's



celebration chosen? How did the poem make the student feel?

3. Have students create Venn diagrams after writing their reactions and compare the New Year's celebration chosen from the poems to the one each of them celebrates at home. What are some similarities that both celebrations share? How are the celebrations different? Then have students write compare and contrast essays based on their findings.
4. Conduct a figurative language study with students. Have students go on a figurative language scavenger hunt among the poems in *Every Month Is a New Year*. Refer to Read Write Think's "Figurative Language Resource Page" as a tool for students to use during their search. (http://www.readwritethink.org/files/resources/lesson_images/lesson79/figresource.pdf). Have students keep track of their findings in their reader's notebooks.
5. Have students learn about different poetry forms. For example, each verse in the September poem, "Daisies," is a haiku. Have each student select a poem from the book and find out what form of poem it is, and then try writing a poem in the same form. What are the features of the poem chosen? Use the resource from Read Write Think to refer to different poetry forms. After students examine the poems in the book in more detail, have each student write a poem in a form of their choosing about how they celebrate the new year. (http://www.readwritethink.org/files/resources/lesson_images/lesson417/poetry-forms2.pdf)
6. Encourage students to learn more about Marilyn Singer's work and conduct an author study with her other title from LEE & LOW, *A Full Moon is Rising* (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/a-full-moon-is-rising>). Have students look at both *Every Month Is a New Year* and *A Full Moon is Rising* to examine her poetry. What do they notice is similar about her poetic style in both? What is different? Then have each student write a poem with her or

his observations about Marilyn Singer's style in mind.

7. Consider having *Every Month Is a New Year* serve as an anchor text for the entire school year and read the poems at the beginning of their respective months. Students may research more about each month's specific culture or religion and New Year's celebration during the month as part of an ongoing project. Students may also take the opportunity to discuss other holidays or celebrations that occur during that month and keep track of them on a larger classroom calendar.
8. On the chalkboard, write the first poem in the book, "The Year Turns," and the last poem, "Turning the Year," or provide students with printed copies. Have students read the two poems aloud with partners or in groups. Then have students talk about what they notice about the poems. Let students know that these two poems are written in a form called "reverso," meaning that the second poem, "Turning of the Year," starts with the last line of the first poem, "The Year Turns," and contains the same words but in the opposite order. See Marilyn Singer's article about reverso poetry at: <http://www.readbrightly.com/reverso-poetry-writing-verse-reverse/>. Have students experiment with writing their own reverso poems and then share their poems with the class. Students may also wish to accompany their poems with their own collages in the style of Susan L. Roth.

Social Studies/Geography

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas and Details, Strands 1–3; Craft and Structure, Strands 4–6; Integration of Knowledge & Ideas, Strands 7–9; Range of Reading of Text Complexity, Strand 10)
(Writing Standards, Text Types & Purposes, Strands 1–3; Production & Distribution of Writing, Strands 4 and 6; Research to Build & Present Knowledge, Strands 7–9; and Range of Writing, Strand 10)

1. Have students individually or in groups select a poem and conduct a research study about the New Year's celebration featured. Students may refer to the "About the Celebrations" and "Authors' Sources" sections in the back of the



book to begin their projects. Whether working individually or in groups, student may choose a different medium to present their work: through a slide presentation, a physical poster, a movie, and more. In their presentations, students should share additional information they learned about the holiday chosen and provide more details about specific traditions, ceremonies, and customs that are typically observed during the New Year's celebration.

2. After students conduct the research project above based on celebrations depicted in *Every Month Is a New Year*, have students try to find another New Year's celebration that wasn't featured in the book. Students can see if there is another New Year's celebration in the same month as their chosen poem, or near that month, in a different part of the world.
3. Have students design their own New Year's celebration. Students should reflect on the characteristics of the New Year's celebrations highlighted in the book. When would their new year be celebrated? What would the festivities involve? What foods would they have? What do students think they need to include to make a celebration that honors the start of a new year? Why? Students can write and sketch their ideas for their new celebration.
4. Encourage students to choose a country that they're interested in and find out how that country typically celebrates the new year. In the chosen country, how is the arrival of a new year typically celebrated? What New Year's celebrations are typically notable? Do some countries celebrate more than one new year? Why? How are the celebrations distinct? Students can share their findings with images, creative writing, videos, and more.
5. Have students investigate secular versus religious New Year's celebrations. Students can investigate which New Year's celebrations in *Every Month Is a New Year* are religious and which celebrations are secular. What religion is associated with each religious New Year's celebration? Why is the celebration important in that religion? Which celebrations are not

religious? How/why are the festivities important to that region and culture?

Science/STEM

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas and Details, Strands 1-3; Craft and Structure, Strands 4-6; Integration of Knowledge & Ideas, Strands 7-9; Range of Reading of Text Complexity, Strand 10)
(Writing Standards, Text Types & Purposes, Strands 1-3; Production & Distribution of Writing, Strands 4 and 6; Research to Build & Present Knowledge, Strands 7-9; and Range of Writing, Strand 10)
(Speaking and Listening Standards, Comprehension and Collaboration, Strands 1-3 and Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas, Strands 4-6)

1. Assign a group of students to Identify locations on a large world map in the classroom. The groups of students can locate each of the places mentioned in *Every Month Is a New Year* and mark the location on the classroom map.
2. In the same groups, have students conduct a "location study" for each of the New Year's celebrations. Have students examine different geographical qualities of each country: What is the climate during the time of year the new year is celebrated? What are the physical features of the country? What are that country's resources and most popular exports (today and historically)? Have students create posters or other visual representations of the information they have learned and display the posters around the classroom or school. Additionally, students may use their research to write an essay to answer this question: How might the country's geography make it attractive to other people who live or want to move there?
3. Encourage students to investigate different types of calendars and how they were scientifically created (<https://www.worldatlas.com/articles/calendars-used-around-the-world.html>). Divide students into different calendar groups. Ask each group to identify: the characteristics of the calendar; the countries, cultures, and/or religions that follow the calendar; and why the calendar might be preferable to others. Students can present their findings with photographs, videos, and other media, whatever presentation format suits their information best.



Arts/Performing Arts

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas and Details, Strands 1-3, Craft and Structure, Strands 4-6, Integration of Knowledge & Ideas, Strands 7-9, Range of Reading of Text Complexity, Strand 10)

(Writing Standards, Text Types & Purposes, Strands 1-3, Production & Distribution of Writing, Strands 4 and 6, Research to Build & Present Knowledge, Strands 7-9, and Range of Writing, Strand 10)

(Speaking and Listening Standards, Comprehension and Collaboration, Strands 1-3, Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas, Strands 4-6)

1. Have students create a paper collage illustration that represents how they celebrate the new year or the New Year's celebrations they have with their families. Students can study Susan L. Roth's style and arrange paper as best they see fit to encapsulate the ways they celebrate the new year. Students may create collages to accompany their own New Year's celebration poems using materials such as construction paper, old newspapers, magazines, cloth, and other recycled materials.
2. Consider having students conduct an illustrator study about Susan L. Roth. Other LEE & LOW titles Susan L. Roth has illustrated include: *Parrots Over Puerto Rico* (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/parrots-over-puerto-rico>), *The Mangrove Tree* (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/the-mangrove-tree>), and *Prairie Dog Song* (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/prairie-dog-song>). Display the books for students to examine the illustrations, and have students brainstorm how Susan L. Roth's work is similar across the books, and how they differ per book.
3. Invite students to examine Susan L. Roth's techniques and her highly visual and technical art form of collage. What materials does Susan L. Roth use to make her collages? How does this technique help convey each poem's meaning and story about the New Year's celebration?

Home-School Connection

(Reading Standards, Integration of Knowledge and Ideas, Strands 7 and 9)

(Writing Standards, Text Types & Purposes, Strands 1-3, Production & Distribution of Writing, Strand 4, and Research to Build & Present Knowledge, Strands 7-9, Range of Writing, Strand 10)

(Speaking and Listening Standards, Comprehension and Collaboration, Strands 1-3, Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas, Strands 4-6)

1. Encourage students to interview family members about how they celebrate the new year. What are students' favorite New Year's traditions with their friends and family? Consider having students, if comfortable, share their findings with a partner, a small group, or the whole class.
2. Let students bring home *Every Month Is a New Year* to share with other family members. Ask students to start a discussion about what their family learned about the different New Year's celebrations.
3. Provide students with a classroom copy or list of either Marilyn Singer's LEE & LOW title, *A Full Moon is Rising* (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/a-full-moon-is-rising>), or Susan L. Roth's LEE & LOW titles, *Parrots Over Puerto Rico* (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/parrots-over-puerto-rico>), *The Mangrove Tree* (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/the-mangrove-tree>), and *Prairie Dog Song* (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/prairie-dog-song>). Encourage students to conduct an author or illustrator study at home with their families, and have their families think about what they notice across either Marilyn Singer's or Susan L. Roth's books. What themes do these books have in common? What topics do these books share? How are they different? What do you think their messages are for young readers across their books?
4. Encourage students to investigate what New Year's celebrations and festivities are happening in their town throughout the year. Check out the local or regional paper for times and locations of festivals related to different New Year's celebrations. Student volunteers may share their experiences and observations with the class.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Marilyn Singer recipient of the 2015 NCTE Award for Excellence in Poetry for Children, is the author of more than one hundred award-winning books for young readers, including Lee & Low's *A Full Moon Is Rising*. She has enjoyed a variety of New Year's celebrations—watching midnight fireworks in a city park, receiving red envelopes at a favorite Chinese restaurant, and eating honey cake with family on Rosh Hashanah. Singer and her husband live in Brooklyn, New York, and Washington, Connecticut. Her website is marilysinger.net.

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

Susan L. Roth's vibrant mixed-media collage illustrations have appeared in numerous outstanding picture books, including *Parrots Over Puerto Rico*, winner of the Robert F. Sibert informational Book Medal. About the illustrations in *Every Month Is a New Year* Roth says, "Every celebration dictated its own special collections of colors and textures, no two the same, but each reflecting the hopes and joys of its own particular festivities." Roth and her husband live in New York. You can find her online at susanlroth.com.

ABOUT LEE & LOW BOOKS

LEE & LOW BOOKS is the largest children's book publisher specializing in diversity and multiculturalism. Our motto, "about everyone, for everyone," is as urgent today as it was when we started in 1991. It is the company's goal to meet the need for stories that children of color can identify with and that all children can enjoy. The right book can foster empathy, dispel stereotypes, prompt discussion about race and ethnicity, and inspire children to imagine not only a world that includes them, but also a world where they are the heroes of their own stories. Discover more at leeandlow.com.

ORDERING INFORMATION

On the Web:

www.leeandlow.com/contact/ordering (general order information)

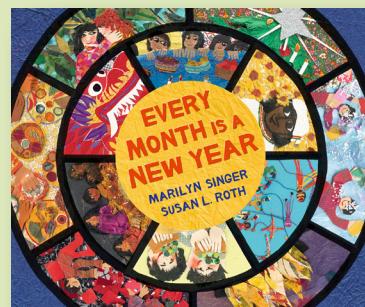
<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/every-month-is-a-new-year> (secure online ordering)

By Phone: 212-779-4400 ext. 25 | **By Fax:** 212-683-1894

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Book Information for

Every Month is a New Year



\$16.95, HARDCOVER

978-1-62014-162-5

56 pages, 9-1/4 X 11

*Reading Level: Grade 4

Interest Level: Grades 1–8

Guided Reading Level: T

Accelerated Reader® Level/
Points: N/A

Lexile™ Measure: N/A

THEMES: New Year's Celebrations, Cultural/Regional/ Religious Traditions, Calendars, Global Perspective, Geography, Cultural Diversity, Poetry

RESOURCES ON THE WEB:

<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/every-month-is-a-new-year>

All guided reading level placements may vary and are subject to revision. Teachers may adjust the assigned levels in accordance with their own evaluations.