

This activity contributes to the following badges:



Beaver Creative Activity Badge



Beaver My World Challenge Award



Cub International Activity Badge



Cub Our World Challenge Award



Scout International Activity Badge

The activity could also help towards:



Scout World Challenge Award

Beavers | Cubs | Scouts

# Make a New Year tree

Chinese New Year, 5 February A creative way for young people to reflect

**Time: 45–60 minutes**

**Equipment**

- Branches or long twigs – could be foraged if they have already fallen, or bought from a florist – or you could use a large potted plant with sturdy stems
- Red paper
- Pens
- Scissors
- Hole punch
- String or thin gold cord
- Gold spray paint or similar (optional)

**Instructions**

**1** Discuss with your young people some of the principles and traditions of Chinese New Year. For example, it's an opportunity to sweep out the old and celebrate the new. Red is used to symbolise good luck and happiness. Money is traditionally given in red envelopes and tied to a tree.

**2** Help the young people to create their own Chinese New Year tree, but explain that this one will be for messages, not money. Branches could be sprayed gold, which is traditional.

**3** Hand out the red paper, scissors and pens. Ask the young people to cut pieces of red paper big enough to write on and to punch a hole near the edge. They can then write their own 'Chinese proverbs' – e.g. 'Dig the well before you are thirsty' (plan ahead). These are messages of wisdom or goodwill. The young people could write down things like the Scouts values, wishes for the next year, or something they are grateful for. It could be a reflection on the activities they have done.

**4** You could search online for some simple Chinese symbols and their meanings –

like 'happiness' or 'luck' – and help the young people to copy these onto their messages.

**5** Encourage the young people to share their messages with the group and to talk about why they wrote them, if they feel comfortable. The messages could also be kept anonymous.

**6** Next, they can tie them to the tree using the string or gold cord. The messages can be added to throughout the year, and the young people can look back at their messages to see if their feelings have changed or if they have achieved the goals they hoped for.

**Take it further**

On Founder's Day (22 February), the young people can reflect on the messages they wrote and think about the impact of Scouting around the world.

Step 2



Step 3



Step 6



This would be a great activity for Explorer Scout Young Leaders to run.