

TEACHER'S NOTES



NOTES PREPARED

by Sofia Goodsoul

These notes may be reproduced free of charge for use and study within schools and early childhood settings, but they may not be reproduced (either in whole or in part) and offered for commercial sale.

Copyright © VOLYA PRESS

NIAN, THE LUNAR DRAGON

Type of text: *Picture book*

Author: *Sofia Goodsoul*

Illustrator: *Marina Kite*

Publisher: *VOLYA PRESS*

Price:

Paper cover: \$9.95

Hard cover: \$19.95

E-book: \$8.00

ISBN: 9780994324214(*hardback*)

ISBN: 9780994324221(*paperback*)

ISBN: 9780994324207 (*e-book*)

Publication Date: *November 2015*

Audience: *Children aged 3–8*

Number of Pages: *32*

Illustrations: *26 +2 colouring pages in black & white*

Paper: *Wood-free paper (140 gsm)*

National Library of Australia Cataloguing-in-Publication entry

Creator: *Goodsoul, Sofia, author.*

Title: Nian, the lunar dragon : a famous Chinese legend retold by
Sofia Goodsoul and Marina Kite / Sofia
Goodsoul ; Marina Kite, illustrator.

Target Audience: For pre-school age.

Subjects: Folk literature, Chinese
Dragons--Juvenile fiction.
Chinese New Year--Juvenile fiction.

Other Creators/Contributors:
Kite, Marina, illustrator.

Dewey Number: 398.0951

DESCRIPTION

Nian, the Lunar Dragon is an entertaining, beautifully illustrated rhyming narrative for young readers about the legend behind the traditional Chinese celebration of the lunar new year. According to the lunar calendar, Chinese New Year commences with the new moon (Latin: *luna*) in the beginning of spring.

This book suits readers aged 3–8, and will be cherished by families and recommended by teachers and librarians. It is a wonderful addition to your home or school library.

SYNOPSIS

A long time ago, the dragon named Nian lived in the deep ocean to the east of China. Nian was a strong and ferocious dragon, which no creature could defeat. Once a year, Nian climbed ashore to hunt for cattle and human prey. The people of the nearby villages and towns lived in terror, and each New Year's Eve they had to leave their homes to save themselves. One day, a monk came to the village. He knew a well-kept secret about how to scare Nian away and free the Chinese people from the danger and their fear.

AUTHOR BACKGROUND

Sofia Goodsoul is an author, current emergency kindergarten teacher, publisher and mother. Her poetry writing has grown from a hobby into a great passion. Now she can't live a day without writing poems, riddles and stories for young children. In her rhyming stories Sofia passes vital messages to young readers. The children give themes and inspiration for her books.

NIAN, THE LUNAR DRAGON is Sofia's second rhyming picture book. Sofia lives in one of the south eastern suburbs of Melbourne with her family and pets. She loves going to Zumba classes at Fernwood fitness club and long walks with her husband and a family dog Mack. All her spare time Sofia dedicates to her writing and publishing career. You can find out more about Sofia by visiting her website at www.sofiagoodsoul.com.au

ILLUSTRATION STYLE

The illustration style is rich with colours. There are 13 full colour spreads and 1 black and white spread as children's activity. The colours and style of illustrations attract children's attention and invite to explore pictures in details. The extensive folk, historical costume, hair style and architectural research had been done to support the story with realistic and historically correct illustrations. The illustrations are created by water-colours and ink.

KEY CURRICULUM AREAS

Literacy

Numeracy

Science

Creative Arts

Human Society and Its Environment

THEMES

- Myth and Legends
- Cultural icons

- Hope
- Help
- Creativity
- Solidarity

Aspects of Chinese culture and the arts

- Calligraphy
- Chinese paper-folding (origami in Japanese)
- Building and architecture
- Painting
- Music
- Kites
- Silk
- Chinese tales and mythological creatures
- Chinese calendar and festivals

ACTIVITIES

- Colouring in activity(Creative Arts)

The book itself provides the children with an option to revise the story by colouring the last spread (it is a novel book feature). For the class activity a teacher may photocopy the last spread.

- Calligraphy lesson(Creative Arts + Literacy)

The Chinese people are famous for their calligraphy skills. Our designer used a few 'bamboo fonts' in the book. The students may try to write their names in this kind of fonts.

- Lanterns Paper craft(Creative Arts)

For younger readers we suggest to help decorating a class for the Lunar New Year by making paper lanterns. It's a great eye-hand coordination and cutting activity.

- Origami Paper craft(Creative Arts)

A flower of Lotus is one of the Asian symbols/icons.

For older students we suggest folding origami lotus flowers using pink or yellow paper. Origami instructions can be found via the Internet.

- Chinese drums (Music)

The students may participate in the book reading by helping to 'scare the dragon away' using Chinese drums for children.

- Lantern Riddles (Literacy+Logic)

For older students a teacher may suggest a Lantern Riddle Competition

Guessing the meaning of lantern riddles has been a **unique folk custom** during the Lantern Festival since ancient times.

In ancient China, every family hung colorful lanterns at the gate. Some wrote riddles on pieces of paper, and attached them on the lanterns. The answer had to be guessed from a **word**, a **poem**, or a **phrase**.

- Excursion to The Chinese Museum in Melbourne or Bendigo, Chinese Garden of Friendship in Sydney, China Town in Melbourne or Sydney(Human Society and Its Environment)