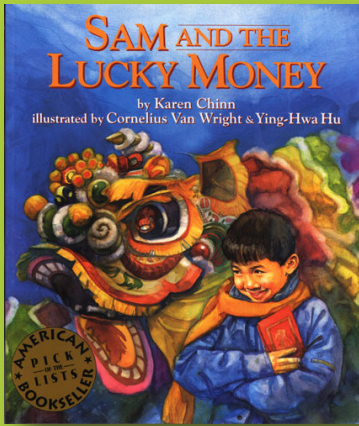


TEACHER'S GUIDE



LEE & LOW BOOKS

Sam and the Lucky Money

written by Karen Chinn

illustrated by Cornelius Van Wright and Ying-Hsaw Hu

About this Book

Genre: Realistic Fiction

***Reading Level:** Grade 3

Interest Level: Grades K–3

Guided Reading Level: N

Accelerated Reader® Level/

Points: 3.3/0.5

Lexile™ Measure: AD660L

*Reading level based on the Spache Readability Formula

Themes: Holidays and Traditions (Chinese New Year), Poverty and Homelessness, Community, Giving and Generosity, Respect, Spending Money and Financial Awareness, Urban Environments, Chinese-Americans, Families, Childhood Experiences and Memories, Empathy and Compassion, Self-Control and Self-Regulation, Asian/Asian American Interest

SYNOPSIS

Sam can hardly wait to go shopping with his mom. It's Chinese New Year and his grandparents have given him the traditional gift of lucky money – red envelopes called leisees (lay-sees). This year Sam is finally old enough to spend it any way he chooses. Best of all, he gets to spend his lucky money in his favorite place – Chinatown!

But when Sam realizes that his grandparents' gift is not enough to get the things he wants, his excitement turns to disappointment. Even though his mother reminds him that he should appreciate the gift, Sam is not convinced – until a surprise encounter with a stranger.

With vivid watercolor paintings that celebrate the sights and sounds of festive Chinatown streets, *Sam And The Lucky Money* tells the affecting story of a child who discovers that sometimes the best gifts come from the heart.



BACKGROUND

Chinese New Year

This is a time of much celebration that marks the end of the harvest season and the beginning of spring. Because it is based on the lunar calendar, it does not take place on the exact same day every year. It is a time when family and friends reunite to usher in the New Year and to bring closure to the old, a time to garner good luck for the upcoming year.

Many preparations are made for the celebration. A thorough housecleaning is undergone to flush out the misfortunes of the past and to welcome the New Year. Red strips of paper expressing propitious wishes are hung for good luck. Firecrackers are shot, in part to ward off evil spirits. Debts are finalized. New clothes are purchased as are gifts for family members and friends. A feast, usually consisting of such foods as dumplings, fish, and cake, is prepared for the New Year's Eve dinner.

On New Year's Day, people rest, exchange presents, enjoy friends and families and various activities. One of the gifts that children receive from grandparents and older generations are money-filled red envelopes called leisees, that are usually decorated with symbols of luck (the color red itself being an example). Whereas a feast takes place the prior evening, on New Year's day, a fast of sorts takes place to accommodate a self-purification as well as to allow rest – namely, no meat is eaten nor is lard used for cooking. No cleaning is done lest amassed good luck be swept away. Doors are closed to seal-in accumulated good luck and keep bad spirits out; sharp objects are avoided lest good luck be severed.

Homelessness in the United States

Sam and the Lucky Money is especially timely today. In 2017, the National Alliance to End Homelessness estimated that 553,742 people were homeless,

which is roughly 17 out of every 10,000 people in America. Many types of people are homeless: individuals constitute the largest homeless population at 67%, and families constitute the remaining 33% (<https://endhomelessness.org/homelessness-in-america/homelessness-statistics/state-of-homelessness-report/>). For every person involved, homelessness is devastating as safety, support, and stability are threatened.

The Coalition for the Homeless lists more data about homelessness. Read more about how homelessness affected people in New York City, and different ways children and adults can get involved in taking action (<http://www.coalitionforthehomeless.org/take-action/volunteer/>)

Discussing Homelessness with Students

The purpose of talking about homelessness with students is to enable them to care for others, build compassion, and strengthen character.

Explain that being homeless means that a person or family does not have a place to live. They might be homeless for a day or two or for many weeks or months. A homeless person or family might live in a shelter with a lot of other people, or in a car, or have no structure surrounding them.

Help students understand that being homeless does not mean that a person is bad or that he or she did something wrong. Homelessness is not an illness, and it isn't anything someone wants. It is something that happens to some people who are having a very difficult time and is sometimes caused by bad luck paired with larger economic factors. Also point out that homelessness is not necessarily permanent and often people just need some help to get settled again. You might consider using *Sam and the Lucky Money* as an introduction to a volunteerism unit or a community service day.

NOTE: Be cognizant of the students in your



VOCABULARY

(Reading Standards, Craft & Structure, Strand 4)

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

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

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. Encourage a variety of strategies to support students' vocabulary acquisition: 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, create a specific action for each word, list synonyms and antonyms, and write a meaningful sentence that demonstrates the definition of the word.

CONTENT SPECIFIC:

Chinatown, leisees, mandarins, dragon, cymbals, firecrackers, char siu bao, egg tarts, coconut pastries, luck

ACADEMIC

slithering, dusty, reluctantly, blizzard, startled, gleaming, exploding, centipede, teased, sniffed, bouquet, fanfare, lunge, pounded, dispersed, wailing, siren, complained, scrunched, scolded, worthless, appreciate

classroom and aware of students' living circumstances prior to reading *Sam and the Lucky Money*. Would this text be triggering for any students who have been homeless or are currently homeless? School on Wheels, a nonprofit dedicated to working with students who are homeless, has a unit on humanizing homelessness and how it affects all different people that can be used prior to engaging with *Sam and the Lucky Money* (https://www.schoolonwheels.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/HumanizingLesson0430_f.pdf). Consider providing a definition as mentioned in the Background Information to give students context to homelessness and a framework for the reading of *Sam and the Lucky Money*.

Sam and the Lucky Money received many honors, including:

- Notable Books for a Global Society, International Literacy Association
- “Choices,” Cooperative Children’s Book Center (CCBC)
- Marion Vannett Ridgeway Award Honoree
- “Outstanding Merit,” Bank Street College of Education
- “Pick of the Lists,” *American Bookseller*
- Story Pick, Storytime PBS

The story is also available in both Chinese (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/sam-and-the-lucky-money-chinese>) and Spanish (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/sam-y-el-dinero-de-la-suerte>) editions.

BEFORE READING

Prereading Focus Questions

(Reading Standards, Craft & Structure, Strands 5 and 6 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 asking questions such as:

1. Take a look at the front and back covers. Take a picture walk. 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?
2. Describe what you know about Chinese New Year. What customs are associated with the holiday? Who celebrates it?



3. Have you ever received money? If so, was it as a gift, for allowance, or for hard work? What did you decide to do with it? What should someone think about in how use or spend money? What advice do you have for someone your age if they receive money?
4. What is the difference between a need and a want? Can you give some examples and explain the reasoning behind your thinking?
5. How can you help others in your community? What does it mean to support someone else? Have you ever helped people in your neighborhood? What did you do, and how did it make you feel? What motivated you to help someone?
6. What does it mean to be “home”? What does home mean to you? Why do you think that? What do you think home could mean to other people? Why?
7. How can financial hardship affect someone?

Exploring the Book

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas & Details, Strands 1 and 2, Craft & Structure, Strands 5 and 6, and Integration of Knowledge & Ideas, Strand 7)

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

Talk about the title of the book. Read the title aloud. Then ask students what they think this book will most likely be about and whom the book might be about. What do they think might happen? What information do they think they might learn? What makes them think that?

Take students on a book walk and draw attention to the following parts of the book: front cover, reviews/about the author and illustrators page, title page, dedication page, and illustrations.

Setting a Purpose for Reading

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

Have students read to find out:

- what Sam does with his lucky money
- how Sam’s perspective on his leisees changes
- what the Chinese New Year celebration involves
- what Sam learns about family and what’s important during the Chinese New Year
- how financial hardship affects people
- why it’s important to think of others and be a helper in times of need

Encourage students to consider why the author, Karen Chinn, would want to share this story with young people.

Students can also write one or two questions of their own that they think the story might answer.

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, Strands 4 and 6)

1. Where do Sam and his mother go? Why?
2. What gift does Sam receive? Why was he especially excited about receiving this gift this year?
3. What are leisees? What color are they?
4. How much money do Sam’s grandparents give him?



5. What are some symbols of luck during the Chinese New Year?
6. What are some of the sights and sounds of the Chinese New Year?
7. What does Sam see after he kicks the piles of paper?
8. What are some of the foods Sam sees for the New Year?
9. What does Sam want to buy with his money?
10. Sam initially is interested in honey-topped buns, but then he loses his appetite. Why?
11. What shape are the New Year's Eve cookies?
12. What surprise encounters does Sam have in Chinatown?
13. What is the festival lion? What does it eat? Why?
14. Sam and the old man both face a problem of scarcity. What did Sam want? What did the old man want and/or need? How are their problems of scarcity different?
15. After Sam kicks the stranger's foot, the stranger cries out, "Aiya!" What do you think this means?
16. What is celebrated during the Chinese New Year? What are some traditions?
17. What happens at the toy store? What advice does his mother give?
18. Why does Sam give his money to the stranger?
19. With whom does Sam celebrate the Chinese New Year?
20. What is the symbolism of the lion?
21. Why does Sam get angry when he sees the price tag of the basketball? Why do the leisees seem worthless?
22. How do the images contribute to the mood of the story?
23. When Sam pulls on his mother's sleeve, he pulls harder than he intends. Why do you think this is the case?
24. Why does Sam give his money to the man? Do you think Sam made the right decision? Why or why not?
25. How do you think Sam felt after he gave his money to the man? How do you think the man felt? What evidence from *Sam and the Lucky Money* supports your belief?
26. Describe the homeless man in this story. Why do you think Sam couldn't stop thinking about him?
27. What do you learn about Sam? How does he change and develop throughout the story?
28. What do you think of Sam's reaction to the homeless man? Has this story affected your view of the homeless? Why?
29. Do you come from a bilingual home? Do you see this as an advantage or disadvantage in your life? When Sam went to the bakery, the woman who worked there spoke to him in Chinese and he could not understand her. What expectations do people have of you, based on the way that you look or where you live?
30. How do you think this story would change if it was told from the man's perspective? Why?
31. In what ways is this story realistic? In what ways it is unrealistic? Why do you think that?
32. Why do you think this story is set during the Chinese New Year? Why are the holidays

Extension/Higher Level Thinking

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

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

1. Why does the stranger have bare feet?



★ “The artists” vibrant watercolors embellish this story, which reaches across ethnic boundaries to reaffirm a universal truth.”

—*American Bookseller*

★ “The traditional message that it is better to give than to receive is handled in a genuine, thoughtful manner that will be realistic to children.”

—*School Library Journal*

★ “A beautifully told story for all ages about the gift of giving.”

—*Creative Classroom*

popular times for people to help their communities and give back?

15. Does this book prove the saying “it is better to give than to receive”? Why or why not? Do you agree with that sentiment? Why or why not?
16. What do you notice from the illustrations in the story about the meaning behind *Sam and the Lucky Money*? How do they add to the story and message?
17. Do you think the ending is satisfying? Why or why not?
18. Do you think that Sam’s family approved of the way Sam spent his lucky money? Do you think it is important to get the gift giver’s approval on how a gift is used?
19. By the end of the story, Sam says he knows that he is the lucky one. What makes him lucky?
20. Do you think Sam would have made a different decision if this was money he had earned himself rather than a gift from his grandparents? Why or why not?
21. Why do you think the story ends with a wordless image of Sam with his family?
22. What do you think Sam learned from his experience? Why? What did you learn?

Reader’s Response

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

Use the following questions and writing activities to help students practice active reading and personalize their responses to the book. Suggest that students respond in reader’s response journals, essays, or oral discussion. You may also want to set aside time for students to share and discuss their written work.

1. What is one big thought that you have after reading this book? Think about Sam’s decision process about how he would spend his money. What is your takeaway from this book? What would you tell a friend about this book?
2. What do you think is the author Karen Chinn’s message to the reader? Think about possible motivations behind Chinn’s motivations and intentions to write the book. What do you think she wanted to tell her readers? Why?
3. Have students make a text-to-self connection. What kind of connections did you make from this book to your own life? What do Sam’s experiences, thoughts, and feelings mean to you? Sam made an important decision by himself. What kinds of important decisions have you had to make by yourself? Do you like making decisions? Do you like getting advice? Who do you go to for advice?
4. Have students make a text-to-text connection. Did you think of any other books while you read *Sam and the Lucky Money*? Why did you make those connections?



5. Have students make a text-to-world connection. What kind of connections did you make from this book to what you have seen in the world, such as on television or in a newspaper? Why did this book make you think of that?
6. What Social and Emotional Learning skills does Sam exhibit over the course of the book? (some examples include problem-solving, empathy, and perspective taking) How do they influence his character? Why was it important for him to demonstrate those skills? Next, encourage students to think about Social and Emotional Learning skills they have used to do something constructive in their community. How does it relate to how Sam made a decision to spend his gift money?

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*)

These strategies might be helpful to use with students who are English Language Learners.

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. Spanish-speaking students may read the story in Spanish while an English-speaking student could read the English version.
2. Have each student write three questions about the story. 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 illustrations in order and have students summarize what is happening on each page, first orally, then in writing.

- Have students work in pairs to retell either the plot of the story or key details. Then ask students to write a short summary, synopsis, or opinion about what they have read.
4. Have students give a short talk about which moment in the story they connect with the most and reminds them of something in their lives.
 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.
 6. Make an audio recording of the book and invite students to listen to it as they follow along with the text.
 7. If you have any students who speak Chinese, have them read the Chinese words aloud and share their knowledge of Chinese New Year.
 8. Read *Sam and the Lucky Money* in Chinese (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/sam-and-the-lucky-money-chinese>) or in Spanish (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/sam-y-el-dinero-de-la-suerte>).

Social and Emotional Learning

(*Reading Standards, Key Ideas & Details, Strands 1-3, Craft & Structure, Strand 4, and Integration of Knowledge & Ideas, Strand 7*)

(*Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1 and 2, and Presentation of Knowledge & Ideas, Strands 4 and 6*)

Social and emotional learning involves being aware of and regulating emotions for healthy



development. In addition to understanding one's own feelings, strong socio-emotional development allows individuals to develop empathy for others and to establish and maintain relationships.

Use the following activities to help students study the socio-emotional aspects of *Sam and the Lucky Money*:

1. **Circle of Control.** In *Sam and the Lucky Money*, Sam becomes frustrated when he can't buy what he wants with his money. The prices of the basketball and other toys are outside of his circle of control, and they are more than the \$4 he has. However, he can control what's inside his circle of control, which is what he does with the \$4—he chooses to give it to the homeless man so the man can buy socks. Have students identify scenarios that are both outside and inside their circles of control.
2. **Elaborating Feelings.** Divide the class into five groups and assign each group one of the following feelings: surprised, happy, sad, angry, and fearful. Each group should find an example page and scenario from the story that fits their assigned feeling. Then, the group should elaborate on how that scenario fits the feeling. For example, the group that gets fearful could say that Sam was scared and anxious when he saw the stranger's bare feet because it startled him, and he wanted to run away because he wasn't sure what to do.
3. Have students chart Sam's emotions over the course of the story. How does he feel when he's interacting with the adults around him? How does he feel when he is in the bakery and toy store? Use the illustrations as a visual reference and way to tap into students' visual literacy skills.
4. **Socio-Emotional Growth.** Sam changes his attitude from the beginning to the end of the story. Challenge students to describe different ways Sam grows in his understanding of the world to improve his socio-emotional well-being. This could include a discussion on empathy. Explain that empathy is the ability to understand the feelings of another person. It is not the same thing as sympathy, which is when one feels sorry for someone else. Sam experiences empathy in the book when he realizes the stranger needs money more than he needs a new toy.
5. **Talk about respect.** One component of socioemotional development is being respectful. In what ways do the characters in *Sam and the Lucky Money* show respect to one another? How do you show respect to others?
6. **Create a problem-solving chart.** As a class, identify some of the problems characters faced in *Sam and the Lucky Money*, and write them on a chart. These could include frustration, unmet desires, and lack of access to resources. Then, have students discuss productive ways of solving problems by evaluating how the characters navigated these problems in *Sam and the Lucky Money*. When appropriate, add these potential solutions to the chart. Challenge students to come up with additional possible actions to solve these problems.
7. **Bust Degrading Language.** One of the themes of *Sam and the Lucky Money* is seeing a person's humanity and dignity. Help students use humane language to describe people and share different ways of talking about others and situations. For instance, the man on the street is never given a name in the story but the author makes sure to call him "the man," rather than refer to him as "the homeless man." What are some instances where they have been called or have called others using degrading or minimizing language, and how can they change that language for future interactions? Have they ever called someone a



criminal—how about saying a person who is incarcerated instead?

8. Have students in an essay argue whether the character Sam is a role model for young people or not. What evidence can students find in the text that demonstrates Sam’s character and whether the author encourages young people to emulate him or draw caution from him.

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

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

(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1–3 and Presentation of

Language Standards, Knowledge of Language, Strand 3, Vocabulary Acquisition & Use, Strands 5 and 6)

1. **Write an Opinion Piece.** Do you think people have an obligation to help others in the community? Why or why not?
2. **Compare and Contrast.** Compare and contrast the interactions between Sam and the stranger in *Sam and the Lucky Money* with Tim and Mr. Peters from *The Can Man* (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/the-can-man>). How are they the same? How are they different? What do both boys learn from these interactions, and how are their actions in the books similar?

3. **Mini Unit.** Read *Sam and the Lucky Money* in conjunction with *The Can Man* (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/the-can-man>) and *A Shelter in Our Car* (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/a-shelter-in-our-car>). Have students discuss how these books approach and describe homelessness. How did students feel after reading these books? What did they learn from each of the books? What resonated with them the most, and why? How were the books similar and how were they different? Students can write their reactions in writing or conduct small group discussions after reading both texts.
4. **Good News!** Find some newspaper or TV news examples of students helping others. Have students read the clippings and/or watch the news reports. Then ask students to pick the news story that was most interesting and create a short narrative story based on the news.
5. **Read other books on kindness and compassion.** Some great titles include *Lend a Hand* (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/lend-a-hand>), *Destiny’s Gift* (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/destiny-s-gift>), *Step Right Up: How Doc and Jim Key Taught the World About Kindness* (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/stepright-up>), and *Raymond’s Perfect Present* (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/raymonds-perfect-present>). Once students have read multiple titles about kindness and compassion, hold a discussion to elicit some ideas about what kindness and compassion mean, look like, and how students can show kindness and compassion in their lives.

Social Studies/Geography

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas & Details, Strands 1–3, Integration of Knowledge & Ideas, Strand 9, and Range of Reading of Text Complexity, Strand 10)

(Writing Standards, Text Types & Purposes, Strand 2, Research to Build & Present Knowledge, Strands 7–9, and Range of Writing, Strand 10)

(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1-3)



1. **Traditions.** Learn more about the different traditions for Chinese New Year. If possible, display leisees, watch a lion dance (one such video can be found at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uWmIKQO5QLU>), and offer some of the customary cuisine. If possible, let students view one or more of these videos to see a real parade. Have students describe the excitement, preparation, and festivities of the parade.
2. **History.** Learn about the history of Chinese Americans. When did they first immigrate to the U.S.? What were the reasons they left their homeland? What cities did the Chinese settle in? What were the origins of Chinatowns? What challenges did Chinese people and Chinese Americans face in the United States? One place to learn more is the timeline of Chinese in America from the Museum of Chinese in America (<http://www.mocanyc.org/learn/timeline>).
3. **Geography.** Have students locate China on a map or globe and tell students that China is one of the largest countries in the world. Have students mark the capital of China, as well as their location in the United States. On what continent is China? Which countries border China? What are some major rivers in China? What seas and ocean border China?
4. **Compare and Contrast.** Have students study other Lunar New Year celebrations around the world and in their communities. What other communities or cultures celebrate the Lunar New Year? How do these festivities, foods, and symbols compare to what's in the Chinese New Year? Encourage students in small teams to research and display their findings in a visual poster.
5. **Volunteer.** After reading this story, students may find themselves wanting to help out in

their community. With students' caretakers' permission, you might see if students might volunteer in the local soup kitchen, organize a food drive, or do a park or street clean up. A great place for a single student to look for volunteer opportunities is DoSomething.org (<https://www.dosomething.org/us>), an organization that creates volunteer opportunities that do not cost anything and do not require a car.

Science

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas & Details, Strands 1–3, Integration of Knowledge & Ideas, Strands 7 and 9, and Range of Reading of Text Complexity, Strand 10)

(Writing Standards, Text Types & Purposes, Strand 2, Research to Build & Present Knowledge, Strands 7–9, and Range of Writing, Strand 10)

(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strand 1 and Presentation of Knowledge & Ideas, Strand 4 and 6)

1. For the New Year, Chinese children are given red envelopes with brand-new money inside. Make a solution of 1/2 cup white vinegar and 1/4 cup salt in a nonmetal bowl. Let students drop pennies into the solution, wait a few minutes, then remove and dry the coins with a paper towel. Students will have shiny “new” pennies to wrap in red paper and give as gifts to their friends and families.
2. **Calendar time.** The Chinese New Year is based on the lunar calendar as opposed to the solar calendar. Have students investigate the two calendars and compare them using a Venn diagram. Why does the Chinese New Year fall on a different date each year? Show the students how the sun, moon, and earth move.

Math

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas & Details, Strands 1–3, Integration of Knowledge & Ideas, Strands 7 and 9, and Range of Reading of Text Complexity, Strand 10)

(Writing Standards, Text Types & Purposes, Strand 2 and Range of Writing, Strand 10)

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



1. **Explore budgeting.** Give catalogs, supermarket pamphlets, and other similar materials to students. Set a common theme, e.g., gifts or a family meal, and ask the students to spend a certain amount of (imaginary) money for the items necessary. Ask them to compare costs of different items, to add up the amounts, and factor in discounts when appropriate. Consult different lesson plans for more information and resources about teaching students how to budget efficiently (<https://www.incharge.org/financial-literacy/resources-for-teachers/financial-literacy-for-kids/>).
2. **Write Chinese Numbers.** Students may enjoy learning how to write the Chinese characters for the numerals 1 through 10. You can find them at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/primarylanguages/mandarin/numbers/>

Art

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas & Details, Strands 1–3, Integration of Knowledge & Ideas, Strands 7 and 9, and Range of Reading of Text Complexity, Strand 10)

(Writing Standards, Text Types & Purposes, Strand 2, Production & Distribution of Writing, Strand 4, and Range of Writing, Strand 10)

1. **Make red envelopes (leisees), a traditional Chinese New Year gift for children.** Use the pattern here (https://www.firstpalette.com/tool_box/printables/redenvelope.html) with a red piece of paper and cut it out. Follow instructions for pasting and folding. Students can draw symbols of luck such as a fish (a good harvest), two peaches (a long life), coins (good fortune), and bamboo leaves (peace).
2. **Have your own parade.** Provide students with construction paper, tissue paper, colored cotton balls, crayons, safety scissors, glue, and other art supplies to make their own lanterns, masks, flags, and other items for a Chinese Lunar New Year Parade. Several students may even wish to work together to make a lion or a dragon. Let students carry their creations

and hold their own parade. You may wish to download some Chinese music to play during the festivities.

3. **3. Make a Chinese New Year Sign.** Use a paintbrush to paint Chinese characters in gold paint. Then cut out the circles and paste on 4 squares of red construction paper. See the illustration below on how to punch holes and use 3” pieces of red yarn to tie squares accordingly.

School-Home Connection

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

(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1–3)

1. **Celebrate.** Students can describe a New Year’s celebration that they spent with their families. What kind of activities took place and how did they participate?
2. **Traditions.** Students can explain some of the traditions they learned about the Chinese New Year with their families, and then their families can discuss some of the traditions they follow and why. After the family discussion, students can share all the different traditions with the class.
3. **Be Thankful.** Students can think about the best gift they have ever received, and tell that person, if possible. Students can ask each person in their family what the best gift they ever received was.
4. **Volunteer and/or donate.** If applicable, students and their families can volunteer at a soup kitchen or another community organization that assists people who are homeless. Consult different directories to find homeless shelters or organizations (<https://www.homelessshelterdirectory.org/> or <https://www.voa.org/homeless-people>). Consider donating used toys, clothes, books, and other materials if possible.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Karen Chinn (1959–2003) was born in Seattle, Washington, and received a bachelor’s degree in Communications from the University of Washington. She lived in Seattle, WA with her husband and daughter. *Sam and the Lucky Money* was her first picture book.

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

Cornelius Van Wright and **Ying-Hwa Hu** have illustrated dozens of award-winning books. Their illustrations have been praised by Kirkus Reviews as “bright, detailed and dynamic, vividly depicting . . . characters’ facial features and personalities.” Cornelius Van Wright and Ying-Hwa Hu have been illustrating books together since 1989. Other books illustrated by the couple for Lee & Low Books are *Zora Hurston and the Chinaberry Tree* and *The Legend of Freedom Hill*. They live in New York City, and are continuously looking to bring stories to life for children through pictures.

To learn more about Van Wright, Hu, and their work, visit their website at <http://www.pencilmoonstudio.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:

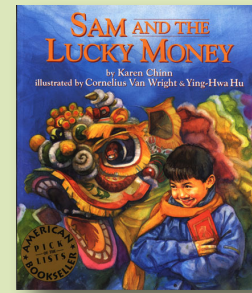
<https://www.leeandlow.com/contact/ordering> (general order information)

<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/sam-and-the-lucky-money> (secure online ordering)

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

By Mail: Lee & Low Books, 95 Madison Avenue, NY, NY 10016

Book Information



\$10.95, Paperback (Also available in Spanish and Chinese)

ISBN 9781880000533

*Reading Level: Grade 3

*Reading level based on the Spache Readability Formula

Interest Level: Grades K-3

Guided Reading Level: N

Accelerated Reader® Level/

Points: 3.3/0.5

Themes: Holidays and Traditions (Chinese New Year), Poverty and Homelessness, Community, Giving and Generosity, Respect, Spending Money and Financial Awareness, Urban Environments, Chinese-Americans, Families, Childhood Experiences and Memories, Empathy and Compassion, Self-Control and Self-Regulation, Asian/Asian American Interest

RESOURCES ON THE WEB

<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/sam-and-the-lucky-money>

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