INSTRUCTIONS: Skim the article. Which of these phrases could be a good title?

- **THE BEST NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS**
- **HOW TO HOST A NEW YEAR'S PARTY**
- **NEW YEAR'S TRADITIONS AROUND THE WORLD**

Out with the Old, In with THE NEW

It's midnight on New Year's Eve. Clocks are striking twelve as people welcome in the coming year and say goodbye to the old. It's a time when people wish for good luck in the future and forget bad things in the past. Around the world, people do different things to help their wishes come true. Some of them might surprise you.

Food is often central to New Year's customs. In Ireland, they hit the walls and doors of their houses with loaves of bread. They hope this will make good luck enter the house and bad luck leave it. The Spanish and the Mexicans eat twelve grapes in twelve seconds – one for luck in each of the coming months. Eating grapes so fast isn't easy, but it's fun and often messy!

Colors are important, too. Brazilians, for example, choose their clothes very carefully – for peace they wear white, yellow might bring success, and red means love is in the air! The Chinese believe red brings good luck, so they like to dress in this color, too. They also paint the front door of their houses red and give family members and friends red envelopes containing money.

Some people destroy things on New Year's Eve because they want to forget the past. In Ecuador and Colombia, people make a dummy and fill it with sawdust, newspaper, or old clothes. They dress it, put a mask on it, and name it after someone famous or a friend or family member. Then they burn it.

And some customs have no reason at all; they just develop over time. On New Year's Eve in Germany, several TV stations show a short black-and-white movie called *Dinner for One*. It's a comedy in English, starring English actors. Nobody knows why they do this, not even the Germans!

INSTRUCTIONS: Read the article. Check true or false for each sentence about New Year's customs. Then correct the false ones.

	True	False	
1. In Ireland, people eat loaves of bread for good luck.	☐	☐	
2. They eat apples for good luck in Spain.	☐	☐	
3. In China, people change the color of their doors.	☐	☐	
4. In Colombia, they burn a doll with old things inside.	☐	☐	
5. In Germany, people watch *Dinner for One* because it's about New Year's Eve.	☐	☐	

INSTRUCTIONS: What do the underlines words refer to? Write the correct word.

1. them _____
2. this _____
3. one _____
4. They _____
5. they _____

INSTRUCTIONS: Read about holidays in the United States.

EVENT		DAY	HOW PEOPLE CELEBRATE IT
	Martin Luther King Jr. Day	3rd Monday in January	People honor the life and work of the civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr.
	Valentine's Day	February 14th	People give chocolates, flowers, and gifts to the ones they love.
	April Fools' Day	April 1st	This is a day when people play tricks on friends. Websites sometimes post funny stories or advertise fake products.
	Mother's Day	2nd Sunday in May	People honor their mothers by giving cards and gifts. They may also have a family gathering.
	Father's Day	2nd Sunday in June	People honor their fathers by giving them cards and presents. They may also have a family gathering.
	Independence Day	July 4th	Americans celebrate their country's independence from Britain. There are parades and fireworks.
	Labor Day	1st Monday in September	People honor workers and celebrate the end of summer. Many people have barbecues with friends and family.
	Thanksgiving	4th Thursday in November	People celebrate the fall season by eating a big dinner, often with turkey, with family members and friends.

	Americans give gifts on:	Americans don't give gifts on:
Martin Luther King Jr. Day	☐	☐
Valentine's Day	☐	☐
April Fools' Day	☐	☐
Mother's Day	☐	☐
Father's Day	☐	☐
Independence Day	☐	☐
Labor Day	☐	☐
Thanksgiving	☐	☐