Read the text and think of the word which best fits each gap.

NEW YEAR AROUND THE WORLD

New Year's Day is the first day of the calendar year. It is celebrated **(1)** _____ a holiday in almost every country in the world. It **(2)** _____ a time of gaiety, sharing **(3)** _____ friends, remembering the past, and hoping **(4)** _____ good things in the future. In the United States, thousands of people jam Times Square in New York City **(5)** _____ welcome the New Year **(6)** _____ midnight. The transition **(7)** _____ New Year's Eve and New Year's Day is **(8)** _____ exciting one. In Times Square, people count **(9)** _____ the seconds to welcome the new day as the New Year ball slowly descends and lights **(10)** _____ the area.

(11) _____ all countries **(12)** _____ cultures celebrate New Year on January 1st. The Chinese, Egyptian, Jewish, Roman, and Mohammedan years all **(13)** _____ different start dates.

The Chinese New Year starts **(14)** _____ a different day each **(15)** _____. The Chinese Lunar Calendar is 2,640 years older **(16)** _____ ours and never begins on January 1st, nor **(17)** _____ it begin on the same date each year. **(18)** _____ can begin **(19)** _____ time between January 21st and February 18th, **(20)** _____ on the date of the New Moon in Aquarius. Each year is named for an animal. **(21)** _____ twelve years this cycle begins again. The Chinese say **(22)** _____ the animal ruling the year you were **(23)** _____ will influence **(24)** _____ life.

According **(25)** _____ Chinese folklore, every person has personality traits that are the **(26)** _____ as their animal birth sign. The different animals are: The Rat, The Ox, The Tiger, The Rabbit, The Dragon, The Snake, The Horse, The Sheep/Goat, The Monkey, The Rooster, The Dog and The Pig.

Thousands of years **(27)** _____, the Egyptians celebrated their New Year about the middle of June. That **(28)** _____ the time **(29)** _____ the Nile River usually overflowed.

January 1st was recognized **(30)** _____ New Year's Day in the 1500's **(31)** _____ the introduction of the Gregorian calendar. The Julian Calendar places the New Year on January 14th. The Jewish New Year, a feast day, is celebrated about the time of the autumn equinox, in late September.

In ancient Rome, the first day of the New Year honoured Janus, the god of gates, doors, beginnings and endings - the month of January, named **(32)** _____ Janus, was originally called 'Januarius'. Janus had two faces - one which looked ahead to see **(33)** _____ the new year would bring, and the **(34)** _____ looked backward to see what happened during the past year. Ancient Romans celebrated the New Year **(35)** _____ giving gifts to friends and family members - some **(36)** _____ gave gifts to Senators **(37)** _____ exchange for favours!

In England, Druid priests celebrated their New Year on March 10th. They gave branches of mistletoe to people for charms. Later, English people followed the custom **(38)** _____ cleaning their chimneys on New Year's Day. The English believed this brought good luck to the household for the coming year. The expression "cleaning the slate" came **(39)** _____ this custom. It means **(40)** _____ resolutions to correct faults and bad habits. People resolve to make themselves better in the New Year. It is still customary even today to make a list of New Year's resolutions for the coming year.

Source: http://www.apples4theteacher.com/holidays/new-years-day/about.html

LIVEWORKSHEETS