



Vocabulary: New Year's resolutions and promises 词汇: 新年决心与期许

Happy New Year! For many in the UK, if the New Year means anything, it means starting with a **clean slate** and **turning over a new leaf**. And to do this, many of us make New Year's **resolutions** – a list of ways that we intend to **improve** ourselves in the year ahead. We **reflect on** our past **transgressions** and **resolve** not to do them again. **Refraining from** smoking is ever popular, as is a **vow** to take up more exercise or spend more time with family. But where does the idea of a New Year's resolution come from?

The answer might lie 4,000 years ago in ancient Babylonia, according to History.com. The Babylonians are believed to be the first to hold recorded **celebrations** for the New Year. The 12-day-long celebration, Akitu, allowed them not only to **reaffirm** their loyalty to the king, or crown a new one, but also to **pledge** to the gods to pay their debts and return borrowed objects. For their 'good behaviour', they believed the gods would bestow favour upon them for the year to come. If not, there would be divine consequences!

The Romans too had similar traditions. New Year's Day was a time when senators would **swear** they had upheld the laws and city leaders and soldiers would **take an oath** of loyalty to the emperor. Incidentally, the month of January, is named after the Roman god Janus. He is the god of beginnings, transitions and time, among other things and is depicted as having two faces – one looking to the past and the other facing forward to the future.

The Romans may be long gone, but their legacy lives on. Come the turn of the year, our eyes turn inwards. We look at **self-improvement**, **review** our past mistakes, confess our **wrongdoings**, seek **atonement** and try to sharpen up in general. Ultimately, much like the Babylonians and Romans, we seek to reaffirm the best parts of ourselves, while leaving the dross behind.

Whether you're looking at a quick behavioural tweak, or a huge personality overhaul, you're taking part in a tradition that goes back centuries. I wish you all the best sticking to your resolutions. Happy New Year!

词汇表

a clean slate	从头开始、既往不咎
turn over a new leaf	翻开新篇章，改过自新
resolution	决心
improve	提高、改善
reflect on	反省、回想
transgression	罪过
resolve	下决心
refrain from	忍住不…
vow	誓言
celebration	庆祝活动
reaffirm	重申
pledge	保证
swear	发誓
take an oath	宣誓、立下誓言
self-improvement	自我提高、自我改善
review	回顾
wrongdoing	过错、不当行为
atonement	弥补（过失、过错）

测验与练习

1. 阅读课文并回答问题。

1. True or False? *New Year is associated with starting fresh.*
 2. What did the Babylonians believe good behaviour during Akitu would bless them with?
 3. What distinguishing physical feature does the Roman god Janus have?
 4. In what way are contemporary people much like the Babylonians and Romans?
 5. Which phrasal verb used in the article means 'remove problems or find solutions'?
2. 请在不参考课文的情况下完成下列练习。选择一个意思合适的单词填入句子的空格处。

1. A person who is genuinely sorry can be forgiven for their _____. Just say sorry!

resolution	vow	pledge	transgression
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2. Please _____ from smoking within hospital grounds.

refrain	reaffirm	reflect	review
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3. Young man, I suggest you go to your room and _____ on your bad behaviour!

celebrate	reflect	swear	pledge
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4. If you give me one more chance, I promise I'll _____.

clean slate	turn over a new leaf	take an oath	self-improvement
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5. Thank you all for coming to my wedding. It's a _____ of our love for each other.

improve	celebration	oath	review
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答案

1. 阅读课文并回答问题。
 1. True or False? *New Year is associated with starting fresh.*
True. If the New Year means anything, it means starting with a clean slate and turning over a new leaf.
 2. What did the Babylonians believe good behaviour during Akitu would bless them with?
They believed it would bless them with good favour for the year ahead.
 3. What distinguishing physical feature does the Roman god Janus have?
Janus has two faces - one looking to the past and the other facing forward to the future.
 4. In what way are contemporary people much like the Babylonians and Romans?
We seek to reaffirm the best parts of ourselves, while leaving the dross behind.
 5. Which phrasal verb used in the article means 'remove problems or find solutions'?
'Iron out'. "The idea of using the New Year to iron out our flaws and improve ourselves is not a new one."
2. 请在不参考课文的情况下完成下列练习。选择一个意思合适的单词填入句子的空格处。
 1. A person who is genuinely sorry can be forgiven for their **transgression**. Just say sorry!
 2. Please **refrain** from smoking within hospital grounds.
 3. Young man, I suggest you go to your room and **reflect on** your bad behaviour!
 4. If you give me one more chance, I promise I'll **turn over a new leaf**.
 5. Thank you all for coming to my wedding. It's a **celebration** of our love for each other.