

It's a new year! What do you know about the civil calendar in use around the world, AKA the Gregorian calendar?

1. What is a calendar? Why use one?
2. What defines a day of the year on the calendar?
3. What is a month?
4. What is a year?
5. The civil calendar is a solar calendar. How is a lunar calendar different?
6. Do you know about the origin of the name "January?"



1. **A calendar is a** human invented system of organizing units of time so that we can all be on the same schedule, even over long periods.
2. **A day** is the average time, ~24 hours, for the Earth to complete one rotation on its axis, from one midnight to the next.
3. **A month . . .** Dividing the year into smaller parts for convenience, it's the measure of time for the moon to complete one cycle. Each month is approximately the same number of days.
4. **A year** is the time it takes the earth to make one revolution around the sun, ~ 365 days.
5. **A lunar calendar** is a much older timekeeping system based on the monthly cycles of the moon--each month starts with the new moon. Shorter than a solar year, ~354 days, still used by some cultures.
6. **The month name January** recognizes the 2-faced Roman god Janus who was known as the protector of gates and doorways. This symbolizes beginnings, transitions and endings.