

# Poppin' Into a New Year

## The History of the New Year's Eve Ball

Have you ever wondered why the dropping of a large, brightly lit sphere is watched and celebrated by millions of viewers on New Year's Eve? For over one hundred years, this famous event has taken place in the heart of New York City at Times Square.



Alfred Ochs, member of an immigrant family, had a big idea in 1896 with his New York Times for success. Part of his plan was to drop the ball from the top of the Times Building. It was the second-tallest building in the city at the intersection of 7th Ave.

Mr. Ochs was really excited about the celebration party. There were many booths, food, and game booths, for building. When midnight came, the ball lowered to the bottom as a great celebration for over 200,000 party-goers.

This New Year's Eve is a traditional way for New Yorkers to celebrate. By 1907, the celebration was a concern. Alfred Ochs worried that the brightly lit ball lowered at exactly midnight, a tradition that lowered to signal the start of the new year.

Since that time, the celebration of city lights, the New Year's Eve celebration in Times Square in the cold around Manhattan. This event has become a tradition.

Source: <http://www.timesquareball.com>

## The History of the New Year's Eve Ball

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

- The word **banned**, as used in the third paragraph means:
  - circular, stretchy cord
  - did not allow the use of
  - let people use
  - group of musical instruments
- How is this article organized?
  - cause and effect
  - compare and contrast
- What is the author's purpose for writing this article?
- What kind of man was Alfred Ochs? Give two details from the text to support your answer.

## A New Tradition

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Many people celebrate the New Year by watching the ball drop from Times Square. If you could create a new tradition for hundreds of thousands of people, what would it be? Use the boxes below to plan, then write your essay.

### Topic Sentence:

### Supporting Paragraph

(What the tradition would be)

Detail: \_\_\_\_\_

Detail: \_\_\_\_\_

Detail: \_\_\_\_\_

### Supporting Paragraph

(What the tradition would be)

Detail: \_\_\_\_\_

Detail: \_\_\_\_\_

Detail: \_\_\_\_\_

### Supporting Paragraph

(What the tradition would be)

Detail: \_\_\_\_\_

Detail: \_\_\_\_\_

Detail: \_\_\_\_\_

### Closing Sentence

(What the tradition would be)

Detail: \_\_\_\_\_

Detail: \_\_\_\_\_

Detail: \_\_\_\_\_

## My New Year's Goal

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## My New Year's Goal

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Poppin' Into a New Year

My Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_

My Nickname: \_\_\_\_\_

Two goals I have for this year are:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

A book I'd like to read this year is:

\_\_\_\_\_

A place I'd like to visit this year is:

\_\_\_\_\_

I'd like to learn about:

\_\_\_\_\_

A food I'd like to try this year is:

\_\_\_\_\_

READING UNIT & BULLETIN BOARD

Created by: Shelly Rees

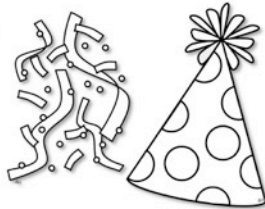
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# Reading Passage

## Informational Reading Comprehension Passage with Questions & Answer Key

### The History of the New Year's Eve Ball

Have you ever wondered why the dropping of a large, brightly lit sphere is watched and celebrated by millions of viewers on New Year's Eve? For over one hundred years, this famous event has taken place in the heart of New York City, at Times Square.



Alfred Ochs, member of a German-Jewish immigrant family, had bought The New York Times in 1896 with his life-savings and a plan for success. Part of this plan included moving the headquarters of the newspaper to downtown Manhattan. The new building was completed in 1904. It was the second-tallest building in Manhattan and was located at the intersection of 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Broadway, and 42<sup>nd</sup> Street.

Mr. Ochs was ready to celebrate. He spared no expense in planning his celebration party. The event included an all-day street festival with many food and game booths, followed by a massive fireworks display set off from his new building. When midnight arrived, the New York Times building was lit from top to bottom as a greeting for the New Year, and a cheerful eruption of noise from over 200,000 party-goers could be heard over thirty miles away.

This New Year's Eve party was such a huge success that it became the traditional way for New York City residents and visitors to welcome in the new year. By 1907, the city had **banned** the fireworks display because of safety concerns. Alfred Ochs was not one to give up easily. He wanted the Times Square celebration to continue on. He made arrangements to have a huge, lighted ball lowered from the top of his building to mark the New Year. At exactly midnight, a 700 pound, illuminated wooden sphere was lowered to signal the end of 1907 and the beginning of 1908.

Since that time, every year from 1908 to 1942 and 1943 due to wartime dimming of city lights, the Times Square Ball has been the center of the New Year's Eve celebration in New York City. Hundreds of thousands of people still gather in Times Square every year to see the famous ball-lowering ceremony. It has become the symbolic way for the world to greet the New Year.

<https://www.timessquarenyc.org/events/new-years-eve/index>

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### The History of the New Year's Eve Ball

#### ANSWER KEY

The third paragraph means:

- ☒ b. did not allow the use of
- d. a group of musical instruments

- b. problem and solution
- ☒ d. chronological order/sequence

For writing this article? Explain how you know.  
Chronological order because it explains several events in the ball in the order they happened. For example, Alfred Ochs bought the Times Square Ball in 1904, then celebrated his new building in 1904, and finally the ball in 1907.

What did Ochs do to support your answer?

Alfred Ochs was a man who did not easily give up. In the text, for the first New York Times "with his life savings and a plan for the fireworks were banned, he did not give up on his bigger and better idea, the New Year's Ball.

What was made of what materials?

- b. wood and steel
- ☒ d. iron and wood

Why was the fireworks display banned from the celebration?

The fireworks display was banned from the celebration because of safety reasons.

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### History of the New Year's Eve Ball

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

What does the word "banned" as used in the third paragraph mean?

- a. stretchy cord
- b. did not allow the use of
- c. use
- d. a group of musical instruments

What is the main idea of the passage?

- a. effect
- b. problem and solution
- c. cause and contrast
- d. chronological order/sequence

What is the author's purpose for writing this article? Explain how you know.

Who was Alfred Ochs?

What evidence from the text to support your answer.

What materials was the New Year's Eve Ball made of?

- a. aluminum
- b. wood and steel
- c. steel
- d. iron and wood

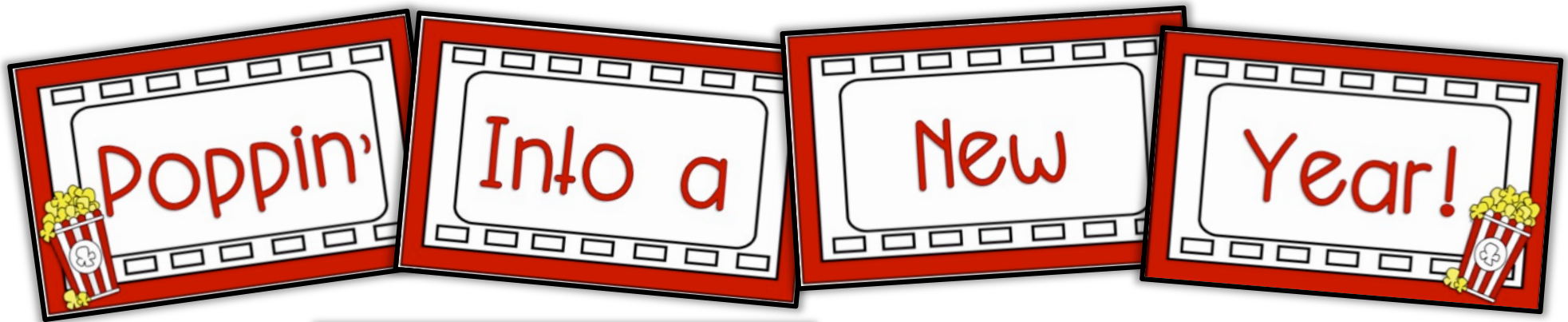
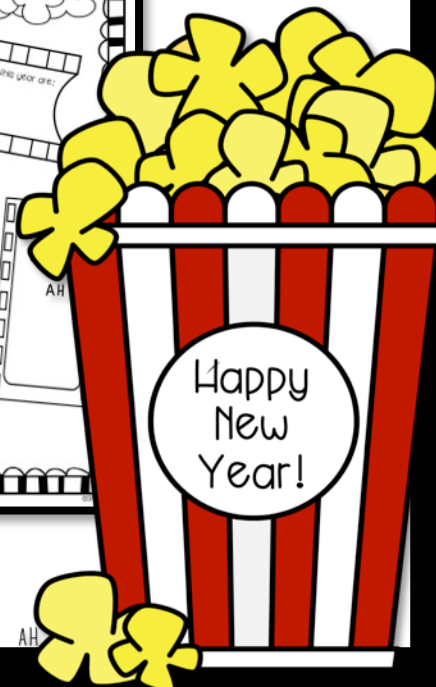
Why was the fireworks display banned from the celebration?

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# Bulletin Board Display

*Display students' New Year's goals.*

Four filmstrip frames arranged in a 2x2 grid. Each frame contains the text 'My New Year's Goal' and a line for a name.A central piece titled 'Student Goal Setting Piece'. It contains the instruction: 'Copy either the filmstrip frames or the popcorn pieces for your students. Have them write their names and a goal for the New Year on the piece. Then, have them scatter on the bulletin board.' Below the instruction are four cloud-shaped templates, each with the text 'My New Year's Goal' and a line for a name.A template titled 'Poppin' Into a New Year'. It contains several prompts for goal setting: 'My Full Name:', 'My Nickname:', 'Two goals I have for this year are:', 'A place I'd like to visit this year is:', 'A book I'd like to read this year is:', 'A food I'd like to try this year is:', and 'I'd like to learn about:'. It also includes illustrations of a clapperboard, a popcorn bucket, and a drink.

# Writing Project

*Takes students from prewriting to finished essay*

**My New Year's Tradition**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**A New Tradition**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**A New Tradition**


Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Many people celebrate the New Year by watching the ball drop from Times Square in New York City. If you could create a new tradition for hundreds of thousands of people to bring in the New Year, what would it be? Use the boxes below to plan, then write your essay on the following page.

**Topic Sentence:**

Supporting Paragraph	Supporting Paragraph
(What the tradition would be)	(What the tradition would be)
Detail: _____	Detail: _____
Detail: _____	Detail: _____
Detail: _____	Detail: _____

Paragraph	Closing Sentence
(What the tradition would be)	
Detail: _____	
Detail: _____	



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