



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

## **NEW YEAR'S EVE IN TIMES SQUARE**

Times Square is in New York City. It is a famous intersection known for its bright lights, stores and restaurants. There are also many theatres and other attractions in Times Square.

Over 1 million people attend the New Year's Eve celebration at Time Square each year. The festivities include performances by popular musicians and celebrities. Many people have party hats, balloons and noise makers. At home, at least 500 million people watch the New Year's Eve celebration, televised from Time Square. It is a very popular way to ring in the New Year.

The first Times Square celebration was held in 1904. It was hosted by the New York Times newspaper to inaugurate their new headquarters in Times Square, and to celebrate the square being renamed. It had been called Longacre Square. The first celebration was a rooftop celebration, featuring fireworks.

Today, one of the most notable parts of the New Year's Eve celebration in Times Square is the ball drop. At 11:59 p.m. on New Year's Eve, the large crystal ball is lowered slowly on a pole, reaching the bottom at exactly midnight. The first ball drop was held in 1907, and has been held every year since, except 1942 and 1943. The celebration was suspended in 1942 and 1943 due to World War II. People did gather at Times Square during those two years, and marked the new year with a minute of silence to remember our soldiers.

The ball drop has become a worldwide symbol of the turn of the New Year. A special guest is chosen each year to push the button that causes the ball to lower. The ball was created by the famous Waterford Crystal Company. It is about six feet in diameter and weighs just over 1000 pounds. The exterior of the ball is covered with crystal triangles, and the inside is a combination of lights and mirrors that shine through the crystal, shedding light on the crowds below.

Each year has a special theme, to commemorate the events of the previous year and express hope for the coming year. The 2002 ball crystal ball was engraved with the names of those lost in the World Trade Center attack on September 11th. New Year's Eve is a special holiday, and the celebration at Times Square is a delight for the world every year.

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## NEW YEAR'S EVE IN TIMES SQUARE

### Comprehension Questions

1. The purpose of this passage is to.....
  - a. persuade
  - b. inform
  - c. entertain
  - d. none of the above
  
2. What new name was given to Longacre Square? \_\_\_\_\_  
Why? \_\_\_\_\_
  
3. Name 3 activities that take place on New Year's Eve in Times Square.
  1. \_\_\_\_\_
  2. \_\_\_\_\_
  3. \_\_\_\_\_
  
4. Which of the following statements IS true?
  - a. The New Year's Celebration is held in Central Park in New York City.
  - b. More people attend the celebration than watch it on television.
  - c. The mayor of New York City always pushes the button to lower the ball.
  - d. none of the above.
  
5. The first Times Square celebration was held in...
  - a. 1941
  - b. 2002
  - c. 1904
  - d. 1942

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6. Why was there no ball drop during the years of 1942-43?

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7. Describe the crystal ball. \_\_\_\_\_

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8. The 2002 Crystal Ball...

- a. was the only one created by Waterford Crystal.
- b. had the names of all the governors of New York engraved on it.
- c. had the names of the people lost in the World Trade Center engraved on it.
- d. weighed over 2000 pounds.

9. How long does it take for the ball to drop? \_\_\_\_\_

10. Why do you think the New Year's Eve ball drop in Times Square has become such a huge symbol of ringing in the new year? Include at least one example from the text.

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## **NEW YEAR'S EVE IN TIMES SQUARE**

### **Comprehension Questions**

#### **KEY**

1. b. Purpose is to inform
2. Times Square; to celebrate the new headquarters of the New York Times.
3. Should include 3 of:
  - Crystal ball drop
  - Performances by musicians and celebrities
  - Program of celebration televised from Time Square
  - ` People enjoy party hats, balloons and noise makers.
4. d. None of the above.
5. c. 1904
6. Because World War II was going on; to honor the soldiers.
7. Should include
  - 6 feet in diameter      - weighs over 1000 pounds
  - exterior is covered with crystal triangles
  - lights and mirrors on inside
8. c. Had the names of the people lost in the World Trade Center engraved on it.
9. exactly one minute.
10. Answers will vary.