

— FUN WITH — CHINESE CHARACTERS

The Straits Times Collection ②

Cartoonist: Tan Huay Peng



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PREFACE

This book is for those who enjoy the imaginative and humorous interpretations of Chinese characters seen through the discerning eye of a cartoonist. It is the sequel to *Fun with Chinese Characters Volume 1* which has met with gratifying success.

As in Volume 1, the 153 cartoons first appeared as a regular feature in *The Straits Times Bilingual Page*. They introduce systematically the radical elements and their compounds, together with related or associated characters.

Have more fun, then, with Chinese characters!

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聪 (聰)

CŌNG intelligent clever

THIS character enlarges on 聰 (excitement, haste) by adding the ear radical (耳) to produce 聰, suggesting quickness at hearing or grasping ideas, i.e., intelligent. The simplified form ingeniously combines 耳 (ear) with 总 (general, comprehensive) to convey the idea of cleverness at hearing and comprehending things generally: 聪.



一 丁 下 下 耳 耳 耳 耳 聪 聪 聪 聪 聪 聪

聪慧	cōng huì	bright; intelligent
聪明	cōng míng	intelligent
聪颖	cōng yǐng	bright; clever

Example

他很聪明。

Tā hěn cōng míng.

He is very intelligent.

慧

HUI

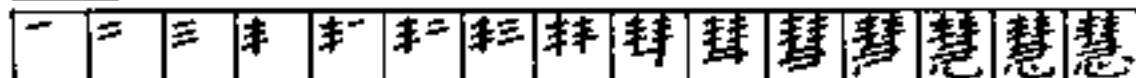
wit;
wisdom



TWO leafy branches (艸) held in the hand (扌) improvise a broom (帚). Broom (帚) placed over heart (心) clears the way, for wit and wisdom. Hence: 慧 - a heart swept clean, ready to receive the proverbial counsel: "Man combs his hair every morning; why not his heart?"



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慧心
慧眼
智慧

huì xīn
huì yǎn
zhì huì

wisdom
mental discernment
wisdom

Example

你的话充满智慧。

nǐ de huà chōng mǎn zhì huì

Your words are full of wisdom.

恶 (惡)

IN the phonetic: 恶 (ugly), the vertical line is doubled to indicate imperfection and deformity. The two horizontal lines (二) signify second or inferior. Photographically, 恶 suggests two hunchbacks facing each other, representing ugliness. 恶 (ugliness) collaborates with the heart (心) to breed evil; 恶, stirring up in the mind the proverbial exhortation: "See no evil; hear no evil; speak no evil; and do no evil."

è or wù

evil



恶



一 丁 卅 卅 卅 卅 恶 恶 恶

恶毒
恶化
恶劣
恶习

è dú
è huà
è liè
è xí

malicious
worsen
harsh; abominable
bad habits

恶心
恶意
可恶

ě xīn
è yì
kě wù

nauseating
ill-will
hateful

Example

他很可恶。
Tā hěn kě wù.

He is very hateful.

恩

ĒN

mercy;
kindness,
grace



因

WHY is a mature man (大) confined in a cell or enclosure (口)? The answer forms the character: 因, meaning cause or reason. The sight of such a confined man may excite pity in the heart (心), and if this feeling leads one to liberate him, that is grace or mercy — the result of tempering reason (因) with sentiment (心).

恩



FAH

一 口 月 冂 囧 囧 因 囧 恩 恩 恩

恩爱

ān ài

conjugal love; loving

恩赐

ān cì

bestow (favours,
charity, etc)

恩德

ān dé

kindness; grace

恩典

ān diǎn

favour; grace

恩惠

ān huì

favour; kindness

恩情

ān qíng

loving-kindness

恩人

ān rén

benefactor

恩怨

ān yuàn

resentment; grievance

恩泽

ān zé

bounties bestowed
by a monarch or
an official

恩将仇报

ān jiāng chóu

requite kindness

bào

with enmity

Example

他们是一对恩爱的夫妻。

Tā - men shì yì cuì ān ài de fū qī

They are an affectionate couple.

合

HÉ

unite; join

THE upper portion of this character is made up of three lines joined together to form a balanced triangle Δ , indicating "together". The lower part is the character for "mouth": 口. Hence: 合 - three mouths (口) together (Δ), i.e., unity and understanding - a very rare occurrence, as the saying goes: "If three persons can agree entirely, then the earth can be changed to gold."



合唱

hé chàng chorus

合法

hé fǎ legal; lawful

合格

hé gé qualified; up to standard

合伙

hé huǒ form a partnership

合计

hé jì add up to; amount to; total

合理

hé lǐ reasonable; rational

合身

hé shēn fit

合同

hé tóng contract

合意

hé yì be to one's liking

合作

hé zuò cooperate; work together

Example

他是 一个 合格的 记者。

Tā shì yí ge hé gé de jì zhě.

He is a qualified reporter.

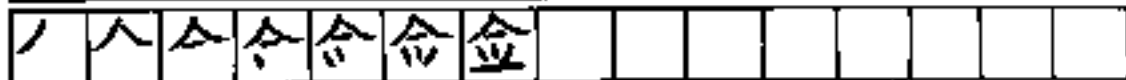
仝 (僉)

qiān unanimous; all together

仝 is a coming together (△) of mouths (口) and persons (人). △ signifies together; 口 indicates the clamour of voices; and 人 represents persons, one following another. 仝 therefore means unanimous or all together. Coincidentally, 仝 bears a striking resemblance to the face in a crowd and, classified by the flesh radical (月), stands for face: 臉.



臉



仝谋
仝议

qiān móu
qiān yì

plan decided by all
public opinion

Example

这是一项仝谋

zhè shì yí xiàng qiān móu

This is a plan decided by all.



jīn

now,
present

THIS character, dealing with time, is composed of 人 and 及 (contraction of 及). 人 shows the continuity of time and unity of its three elements: past, present and future. 及 (or 及) is a hand (又) holding a person (人), suggesting contact. Hence: 今, the time element we are always in contact with — the present.



P2143



今后	jīn hòu	from now on
今年	jīn nián	this year
今天	jīn tiān	today
今生	jīn shēng	this life
今昔	jīn xī	the present and the past
今译	jīn yì	modern translation

Example

今天的天气真好。
jīn tiān de tiān qì zhēn hǎo

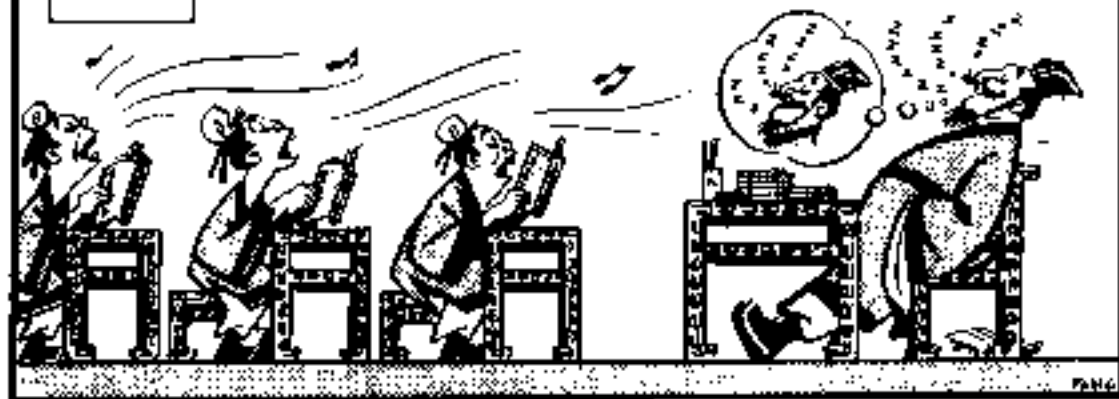
The weather today is very good.

念

NÌAN

read;
recite

THE components of 念 are 今 (present) and 心 (heart). 念 is to bring to mind the past — by means of reading, reciting or chanting. Derived meanings include thinking, studying, remembering and even wishing to revive the past.



ノ 人 人 今 今 念 念 念

念经	niàn jīng	recite or chant scriptures
念头	niàn tóu	thought
念珠	niàn zhū	beads; rosary
观念	guān niàn	sense; idea; concept
怀念	huái niàn	cherish
纪念	jì niàn	in memory
想念	xiǎng niàn	miss (someone or something)
念念不忘	niàn niàn bù wàng	bear in mind constantly

Example

在外 国 求 学 时 , 我 很 想 念 妈 妈 。

zài wài guó qiú xué shí , wǒ hěn xiǎng niàn mā ma

I missed my mother very much while I was studying abroad.

贪 (貪)

TĀN covet; greedy

THE presence (今) of anything precious (賈, covet money) arouses the emotion of covetousness or greed. Hence: 貪, to covet. Such greed enables a person to gain the things money can buy and lose the things money cannot buy.



贪婪	tān lán	avaricious; greedy
贪图	tān tú	covet
贪污	tān wū	corruption
贪心	tān xīn	greedy
贪脏	tān zāng	take bribes; practise graft
贪便宜	tān pián-ya	keep on gaining petty advantages
贪生怕死	tān shēng pà sǐ	be mortally afraid of death
贪污调查局	tān wū diào chá jú	Corrupt Practices Investigation Board (CPIB)

Example

他在法庭被控贪污。

tā zài fǎ tīng bèi kòng tān wū

He is charged in court for corruption.

金

JIN

gold:
metal

THE original seal form: 金 showed the presence (含) of four gold nuggets (金) hidden in the earth (土). The regular form reveals only two nuggets: 金. In the simplified radical form, even these two remaining nuggets are missing: 钅. However, the proverb reasons as: "True gold fears no fire." Only thieves!



PMH

ノ	人	人	人	人	人	人	人
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

余論

ἰὼν νόμα

សិទ្ធិក្រសួង

金色

jīn sè

golden

金熊

כִּי

goldfish

白金

bāi | n̄

*platinum

黄金

hướng jìn

gold

金字塔

jīn zǐ tǎ

pyramid

金縷玉衣

pīn lè yǔ yī

jade clothes sewn with gold thread

金碧辉煌

jīn bǐ huī huáng 金碧辉煌

grand und magnificent

Example

他喜欢穿金色的衣服，

Tā nī huān chuān jīn sè - de yī lù

He likes to wear clothes of a golden colour.

银 (銀)

YÍN silver

SILVER is produced by consolidating 金 (gold) with 良 (hard) 铁. 良, originally the eye (目) turned suddenly around (乚) to look a man full in the face defiantly, means "obstinate". Compared with gold, silver is a hard (良) metal (金), more precious than common copper. Hence the saying: "Even he who has accumulated 10,000 taels of silver cannot take with him at death half a copper."



Photo



银杯	yín bēi	silver cup; trophy
银币	yín bì	silver coin
银行	yín háng	bank
银河	yín hé	the Milky Way (sky)
银婚	yín hūn	silver wedding
银幕	yín mù	(motion-picture) screen
银牌	yín pái	silver medal
银色	yín sè	silvery
水银	shuǐ yín	mercury

Example

他 在 一 间 银 行 工 作 。

tā zài yī jiān yín háng gōng zuò 。

He works in a bank.

钱 (錢)

qián money

TWO spears (戈) breaking gold (金) into pieces means "money": 钱. And money, taking on the vicious character of spears, means power. So, when money talks, man listens in silence and whispers: "If you are rich, you speak the truth; if you are poor, your words are but lies."



一 二 三 四 五 六 七 八 九 十 十一 十二 十三 十四 十五 十六 十七 十八 十九 二十 二十一 二十二 二十三 二十四 二十五 二十六 二十七 二十八 二十九 三十 三十一 三十二 三十三 三十四 三十五 三十六 三十七 三十八 三十九 四十 四十一 四十二 四十三 四十四 四十五 四十六 四十七 四十八 四十九 五十 五十一 五十二 五十三 五十四 五十五 五十六 五十七 五十八 五十九 六十 六十一 六十二 六十三 六十四 六十五 六十六 六十七 六十八 六十九 七十 七十一 七十二 七十三 七十四 七十五 七十六 七十七 七十八 七十九 八十 八十一 八十二 八十三 八十四 八十五 八十六 八十七 八十八 八十九 九十 九十一 九十二 九十三 九十四 九十五 九十六 九十七 九十八 九十九 一百

钱币
钱包
钱财
钱柜
捐钱
零钱
赚钱

qián bì
qián bāo
qián cái
qián guì
juān qián
líng qián
zhuàn qián

coin
wallet; purse
wealth
money-locker; money-box; till
donate money
small change
earn money

Example

这个手表多少钱？

zhè ge shuǐ biǎo duō shǎo qián.

How much is this watch?

针 (針)

ZHĒN

needle

金



THIS character was originally written: 𦰩, compelling 金 (metal) and 𠂔 (bite). The needle takes up, as it were, mouthfuls of cloth, biting its way along. The regular form 針 has a good point, with the substituted phonetic 𠂔 resembling a threaded needle — warning us never to bite off more than we can chew, for “No needle is sharp at both ends.”

針



PLA



针对	zhēn duì	directed at
针灸	zhēn jiǔ	acupuncture
针线	zhēn xiàn	needlework
针眼	zhēn yǎn	the eye of a needle
针织	zhēn zhī	knitting
打针	dǎ zhēn	an injection
针刺麻醉	zhēn cì má zùi	acupuncture anesthesia

Example

针灸是中国人发明的。

Zhēn jiǔ shì Zhōngguó rén fā míng de.

Acupuncture was invented by the Chinese.

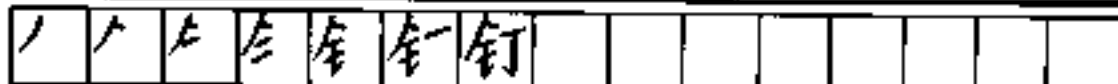
钉 (釘)

DING nail

ORIGINALLY, this character was a pictograph of a nail: 丁. Clarified with the metal radical (金), it is now written 釘 and simplified to 钉. 丁 itself now stands for a strong male adult or soldier for, in a sense, nails are soldiers — strong, useful but never really valued. Hence the saying: "Use not good iron to make nails, nor good men soldiers."



Ford



钉锤

dīng chuí

hammer

钉帽

dīng mào

the head of a nail

钉耙

dīng pá

(iron-toothed) rake

钉人

dīng rén

watch (or mark) an opponent in a game

钉鞋

dīng xié

spiked shoes

钉子

dīng-zi

nail

碰钉子

pèng dīng-zi

meet with a rebuff

眼中钉

yǎn zhōng dīng

thorn in one's flesh

Example

我想买一把钉锤。

wǒ xiǎng mǎi yì bǎ dīng chuí

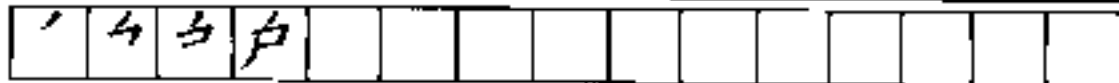
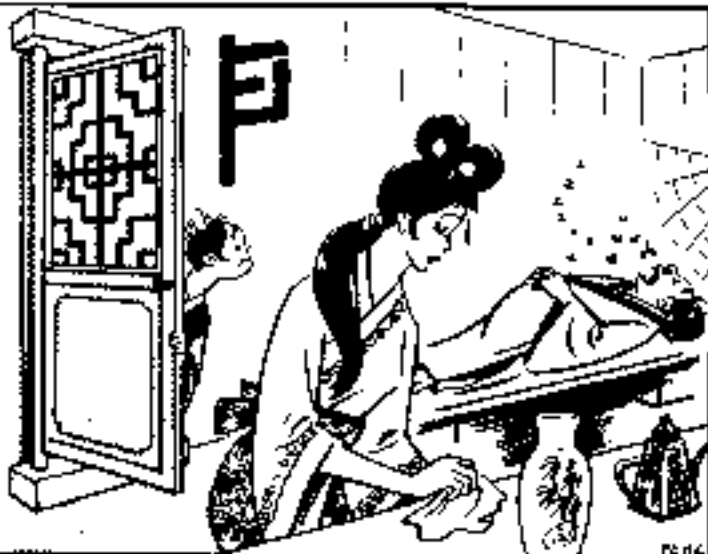
I wish to buy a hammer.



RÚ

door

户 is a photograph of a one-leafed door, and constitutes the radical part of numerous characters relating to doors and spaces. It is also symbolic of the house and family. The hinge of the ancient door was a vertical beam acting as a pivot; and because of its constant movement and workload, it was cited as an example in the saying: "The hinge of a door is never crowded with insects."



户口	hù kǒu	household; (bank) account
户外	hù wài	outdoor
户主	hù zhǔ	head of a family
住户	zhù hù	occupants
家家户户	jī, jī hù hù	every household

Example

他喜欢户外活动。

Tā xǐ huān hù wài huó dòng.

He likes outdoor activities.

方

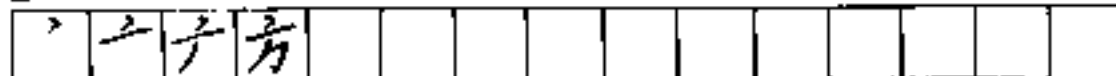
FĀNG

square

THE original version was a graphic representation of two boats lashed together to form a square target: 𠩺. This was replaced by the symbol: 𠩺, indicating the four regions of a square with two dimensions, i.e. the earthly surface. Modified to 𠩺 and finally 方, it widened its scope to mean also region, direction and even upright, or puritanical.



𠩺 𠩺 𠩺 方



方便	fāng biān	convenient
方法	fāng fǎ	method; way
方格	fāng gé	checks
方略	fāng lüè	general plan
方向	fāng xiàng	direction
方形	fāng xíng	square
方言	fāng yán	dialect
方正	fāng zhèng	upright

Example

这张桌子是方形的。

Zhè zhāng zhuō zi shì fāng xíng de.

This is a square table.



舱	tāng cāng	passenger's cabin in a ship
房产	fáng chǎn	house property
房顶	fáng dǐng	roof
房基	fáng jī	foundations (of a building)
房间	fáng jiān	room

房客	fáng kè	tenant; lodger
房契	fáng qì	title deed
房屋	táng wū	houses; buildings
房主	fáng zhǔ	house-owner
房地产	fáng dì chǎn	real estate

Example

他将房产抵押给银行。

Tā jiāng lǎng chūn de yà gěi jīn hāng.

He mortgaged his house to a bank.

斤

jīn

kati



斤 is a pictograph of an axe. Originally meaning "axe", it eventually became a standard measure of weight — a kati — probably because the ancient balance weight or counterpoise was shaped like an axe-head. Handling the axe with skill to produce results requires initiative and personal effort — the point of the saying: "The axe strikes the chisel; and the chisel strikes the wood."



斤两

jīn liǎng

weight

斤斤计较

jīn jīn jì jiào

be calculating

半斤八两

bàn jīn bā liǎng

not much to choose between the two

Example

这块石头重一斤。

Zhè kuài shí tóu zhòng yī jīn.

This stone weighs one kati.

所

ស្នំ

place

$\text{f}\dot{\text{a}}$ is a juxtaposition of f (door) and $\dot{\text{a}}$ (axe), and refers to the place where fuel is prepared. In sudden times, the chopping of firewood with the axe ($\dot{\text{a}}$) was done near the door or house (f). Hence: $\text{f}\dot{\text{a}}$ (axe beside house) meaning place or location.



Figure 2

ㄚ	ㄛ	ㄜ	ㄝ	ㄞ	ㄟ	ㄠ	ㄡ						
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	--	--	--	--	--	--

所部	suǒ bù	troops under one's command
所得	suǒ dé	income; earnings
所谓	suǒ wèi	what is called; so-called
所以	suǒ yǐ	so; therefore; as a result
所有	suǒ yǒu	own; possess
所在	suǒ zài	place; location
所致	suǒ zhì	be the result of
所以然	suǒ yǐ rán	the reason why
所向无敌	suǒ xiàng wú qián	be invincible

Ergebnisse

他所得的薪金有限。

Tā mǎi de shì jīn yǒu xié.

He earns a small salary.

匠

JIANG

artisan;
craftsman

匠



AN artisan: 匠 is represented by his tool: 斤 (an axe) and his work: 匚 (a hollowed-out leg, vessel or box). The craftsman's dependence upon his tools prompts the saying: "The workman who would do his work well should first sharpen his tools."



匠人	jiàng rén	artisan, craftsman
匠心	jiàng xīn	ingenuity; craftsmanship
木匠	mù jiàng	carpenter
石匠	shí jiàng	stonemason
铁匠	tiě jiàng	blacksmith

Example

他的作品独具匠心。

Tā de zuò pǐn dú jù jiàng xīn

His works show ingenuity.

兵

BĪNG

soldier,
army

兵

兵 is represented by two hands (𠂇 or 𠂈) brandishing a battle-axe (斤) — symbol of the soldier. Lamenting the necessity of maintaining an army in a belligerent world, one proverb concludes: "Feed soldiers for a thousand days, to be used for one day."



一 二 三 四 五 六 七 八 九 十 十一 十二 十三 十四 十五 十六 十七 十八 十九 二十

兵变

bīng biàn

mutiny

兵器

bīng qì

arms

兵役

bīng yì

military service

兵营

bīng yíng

barracks

步兵

bù bīng

infantry

工兵

gōng bīng

engineer (soldier)

士兵

shì bīng

soldier

兵荒马乱

bīng huāng mǎ luàn

tumult and chaos of war

Example

他是一个勇敢的士兵。

Tā shì yí gè yǒng gǎn de shì bīng.

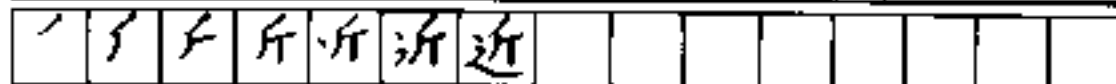
He is a brave soldier.

近

Jìn

near

THIS ideograph suggests the proper way for a warrior to advance (走) in battle -- with battle axe (斤) in hand, i.e., near. Hence: 近, meaning "near". The ideograph for "far": 遠 combines 辵 (proceed or walk) with 袁 (a long robe, necessary for a long journey).



近海	jìn hǎi	coastal waters
近乎	jìn hū	close to
近况	jìn kuàng	recent development
近来	jìn lái	recently
近邻	jìn lín	neighbour
近亲	jìn qīn	close relatives
近视	jìn shì	myopia
附近	fù jìn	nearby

Example

我家附近有一间戏院。

Wó jiā fù jìn yǒu yí jiān xì yuàn。

There is a cinema near my house.

质

(質)

zhì

character;
quality



TWO axes (质), poised above a cowrie shell (贝, representing something precious), are ready to dissect it and ascertain its worth. The axes require a complete and thorough job. Hence: 质, denoting value, quality, nature or character.



PENG

丿 ㄣ 尸 尸 尸 尸 质 质

质地
质料
质问
质疑
本质
品质
人质
性质

zhì dì
zhì liào
zhì wèn
zhì yí
běn zhì
pǐn zhì
rén zhì
xìng zhì

texture
material
question
query
innate character
quality; character
hostage
nature; character

Example

这衣服的材质很好。

Zhè yī fú de zhì liào hěn hǎo.

The material of this dress is of a high quality.

新

xīn

new

RODS, freshly chopped from the hazel bush (柞) for flexibility, were once used for flogging criminals, sometimes to extract a confession. Hence 新, the symbol for "new", indicated by the hazel rods (柞) and the axe (斤).



丶 一 乚 乙 立 亠 辛 辛 亲 亲 新 新 新

新兵
新婚
新郎
新年
新娘

xīn bīng
xīn hūn
xīn láng
xīn nián
xīn niáng

new recruit
newly-married
bridegroom
New Year
bride

新奇
新式
新闻
新鲜
新大陆

xīn qí
xīn shì
xīn wén
xīn xiān
xīn dà lù

strange; new; novel
new type; latest type
news
fresh
the New World - the Americas

Example

这是一座新建的工厂。

Zhè shì yí zuò xīn jiàn de gōng chǎng

This is a newly-built factory.

门 (Pǐ)

MÉN door, gate

JUST as 户 symbolizes a one-leaved door, 门 represents a door with two leaves. Doors provide exits and entrances, but not all are convenient, as exemplified in the proverb: "The door of charity is hard to open, and hard to shut." To simplify matters, the regular door: 門 has now been stripped down to an open doorway: 门.

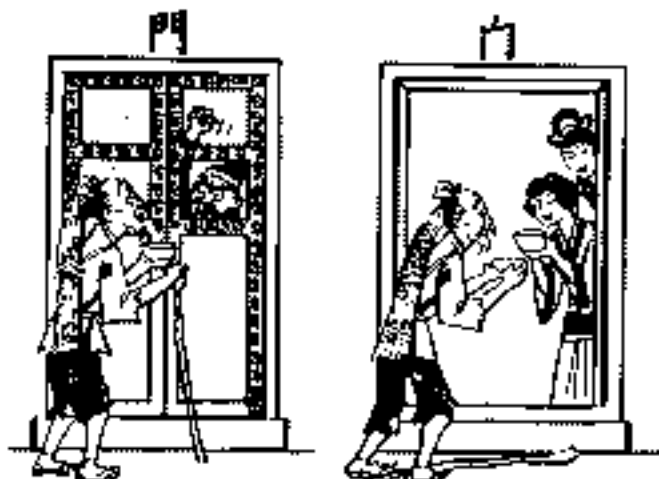


FIG. 4



门齿	mén chǐ	front tooth; incisor
门第	mén dì	family status
门户	mén bù	door
门槛	mén kǎn	threshold
门口	mén kǒu	doorway

门牌	mén pái	house number
门徒	mén tú	disciple
门诊	mén zhěn	outpatient service
门市部	mén shì bù	sales department
门外汉	mén wài hàn	layman

Example

请把门关起来。

Qǐng bǎ mén guān qǐ lái.

Please shut the door.

们 (們)

MÉN plural sign

THIS character has 人 (person) as radical and 門 (door) as phonetic. 門 is a door with two leaves instead of one (as in 户). Clarified by the radical for person (人), it is the plural sign for nouns and pronouns, applied to people: 們.



Rad. 6

丿	イ	イ	亻	们									
---	---	---	---	---	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

你们	nǐ · men	you (second person plural)
人们	rén · men	people; the public
他们	tā · men	they; them
我们	wǒ · men	we; us

Example

我们要去看戏。

Wǒ · men yào qù kàn xì.

We are going to see a show.

問 (問)

WÈN ask; enquire; question

ENQUIRIES are often made at the door, the entrance to a house. A mouth (口) at the door (門) therefore becomes a fitting ideograph for ask or require (問). It can also mean question or interrogate, although to do so in an officious manner would be, according to the saying, "asking the blind man the way." (盲人問路)



'	'	𠂇	𠂇	𠂇	𠂇
---	---	---	---	---	---

问答	wèn dá	questions and answers
问好	wèn hǎo	send one's regards to another person
问号	wèn hào	question mark
问候	wèn hòu	extend greetings to someone
问世	wén shì	be published; come out

问题	wèn tí	question; problem
问讯	wèn xūn	inquire; ask
问罪	wèn zuì	denounce; condemn
盘问	pán wèn	interrogate; cross-examination
审问	shěn wèn	interrogate

Example

他问我今年几岁。

Tū wān shí jīn qīn jī shì

He asked for my age.

闻

(聞)

ĐẾN

hear.
news

IN this ideograph, "ear" (耳) becomes "hear" (闻) when placed at the door (门). By extension 闻 also means "news", for the ear (耳) is the door (门) of knowledge or information. Not all news obtained by the ear is reliable, as the saying goes: "What the ear hears is not equal to what the eye sees."



Results

广 门 向 向 向 向 向 向 闻

别名

အဲဒါကတော့

famous

聞人

ພິ່ນ ງຳ

celebrity

॥३॥

chẩu nén

scandal

श्री।म।

ហេ ឆ្នាំ

nev's

安昌

၂၈၁ - ၈၇

important news

听而不闻

tiếng ếch bù nước

turn deaf ear to

聞風喪胆

mệnh lệnh sống dân

become terror-stricken at the news

聞所未聞

หน้า ๕๐๕ หน้า ๕๐๖

unheard of

Example

今天的新闻真多！

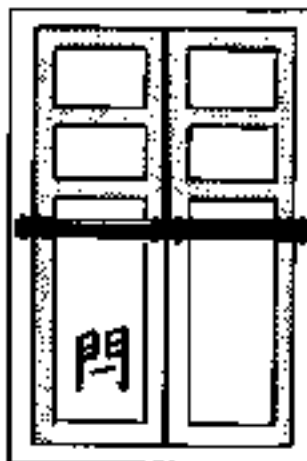
fū rǎo , de yīn mēn zhēn duō !

There is so much news today!

开 (開)

kāi open

A bar or bolt (一) across the door (門) means to shut (閉). Two hands (艹) taking away the bar (一) signifies to open: 開. But there is more to the business of opening than just unbolting the door. As the proverb says: "To open a shop is easy; the difficult thing is to keep it open."



Page 4



开办	kāi bàn	set up; establish
开采	kāi cǎi	mine; extract
开除	kāi chū	expel
开刀	kāi dāo	perform a surgical operation
开动	kāi dòng	start

开端	kāi duān	beginning
开幕	kāi mù	inaugurate; open
开始	kāi shǐ	start
开通	kāi tōng	liberal; open-minded
公开	gōng kāi	open (adj)

Example

请你把门打开。

qǐng nǐ bǎ mén dǎ kāi.

Please open the door.

宝 (寶)

Bǎo precious

AMONG the ancients, the precious things under the roof (宝) were jade (玉 or 玉), earthenware (瓦) and money cowrie (贝). Hence: 宝, meaning precious. Under his roof, modern man treasures gem or jade (玉), so he simplified 宝 to 宝. But, in his shop, "customers are the precious things; goods are only grass."



宝贝	bǎo bèi	treasured object, baby
宝贵	bǎo guì	valuable; precious
宝剑	bǎo jiàn	a double-edged sword
宝库	bǎo kù	treasure-house
宝石	bǎo shí	precious stone; gem
宝物	bǎo wù	treasure
宝藏	bǎo zàng	precious (mineral) deposits
宝座	bǎo zuò	throne

Example

这颗宝石值一万元。

zhè kē bǎo shí zhí yī wàn yuán.

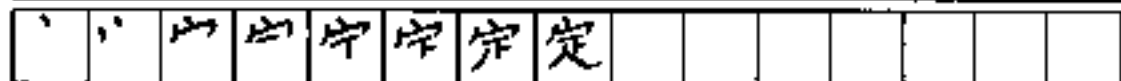
This gem is worth ten thousand dollars.

定

DÌNG

fix;
decide;
certain

THIS character is made up of roof (宀) and order (正 or 𠄎). It signifies peace and order under the roof, implanting the idea of fixed, certain or decided: 定. Order under the roof comes before order under the heavens, although the proverb states in no uncertain terms: "It is for man to plan, but for Heaven to decide."



定单
订购
订婚
定价
定居

dìng dān
dìng gòu
dìng hūn
dìng jià
dìng jū

order form
order
be engaged
fixed price
settle down

定理
否定
决定
肯定
一定

dìng lǐ
tǒu dīng
jué dìng
kěng dìng
yí dìng

theorem
deny; negative
decide
positive; confirm
surely

Example

我订购了一辆新车。

Wǒ dīng gòu le yí qiāng xīn chē.

I have ordered a new car.

完

WÁN

finish;
complete

THIS ideograph places roof (宀) over head (元). 元 means that which is upon (上 or 上) a person (人 or 人), i.e., the head, origin or principle. So, putting on the roof (宀) over the head (元) finishes (完) the building. Hence: 完, the end.



完
完
完
完
完
完

wán bèi
wán bì
wán chéng
wán gǎo
wán jié

complete
finish, complete
accomplish; complete
complete the manuscript
end; be over, finish

完
完
完
完
完
完

wán mǎn
wán měi
wán quán
wán shàn
wán zhèng

satisfactory; successful
perfect, flawless
whole; complete
perfect
complete; intact

Example

我的信箋用完了。

Wǒ de xìn jiàn yòng wán le.

My letter-heads have been used up.

刀

DĀO knife

THIS radical is a pictograph of a knife or sword. Wielded in the cause of justice, the sword protects the innocent, but brandished irresponsibly, it is double-edged. A sharp blade is likened to a person vested with too much power, and a proverb warns: "A knife that's too sharp easily cuts the fingers."

刀



刀 刀

刀背	dāo bèi	the back of a knife blade
刀叉	dāo chā	knife and fork
刀锋	dāo fēng	the point or edge of a knife
刀架	dāo jià	tool carrier
刀具	dāo jù	cutting tool; tool

刀片	dāo piàn	razor blade
刀枪	dāo qiāng	sword and spear; weapons
刀鞘	dāo qiào	sheath; scabbard
刀子	dāo zi	small knife; pocketknife
刀砧	dāo zhēn	butcher's knife and chopping block

Example

我们用刀叉来吃牛排。

Wǒ men yòng dāo chā lái chī niú jī.

We eat the steak with knife and fork.

分

FĒN

divide,
separate

THIS ideograph is made up of 八 (divide), and clarified by radical 刀 (knife) to enhance the idea of dividing or separating: 八. It is like dividing (八) with a knife (刀). 分 is used also for any small division, component or part, e.g., a minute, a mark or a cent.



PLATE 4



分別	fēn bié	differentiate
分布	fēn bù	be distributed
分担	fēn dān	share responsibility
分界	fēn jiè	boundary
分居	fēn jū	live apart
分开	fēn kāi	separate; part

分类	fēn lèi	classify
分裂	fēn liè	split; break up
分配	fēn pèi	distribute; allot
分期	fēn qī	by stages
分析	fēn xī	analyse
分类广告	fēn lèi guǎng gào	classified advertisements

Example

我要登一则分类广告。

Wǒ yào dēng yí zé lèi fēn guǎng gào

I want to place a classified advertisement.

利

lì

benefit; gain

禾



APPLYING the sickle (刀) to the grain (禾) suggests reaping the harvest, i.e., profit, benefit or interest; 利. Often two parties quarrel, and a third party reaps the harvest. When the oyster and the heron fight, the saying goes: "The fisherman benefits." (漁人得利.)



PEM 4

'	一	手	才	禾	利	利								
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

利弊	lì bǐ	pros and cons
利害	lì hài	terrible, formidable
利率	lì lǜ	rate of interest
利润	lì rùn	profit
利息	lì xī	interest
利益	lì yì	interest, benefits
利用	lì yòng	utilise; make use of
利爪	lì zhǎo	sharp claws

Example

这家银行的利率很高。

Dè jiā yínháng de lì lǜ nǎn gāo

The interest rate of this bank is very high.

别

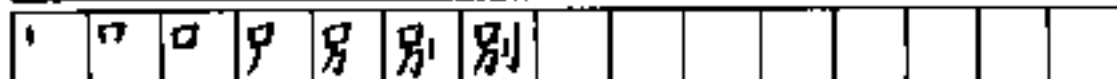
BIÉ

separate;
depart

THE primitive form of this character combined 冎 (pictograph of a bone) with 刂 (knife). 冎 was conventionalized to 另 and then 𠂆. The completed character: 𠂆 signifies the knife (刂) separating flesh from bone (𠂆) and stands for separate, depart or differ.



Field



别号
别离
别名
别人
别野

bié hào
bié lí
bié míng
bié rén
bié yě

alias
leave
another name
other people
villa

别针
别致
别字
别出心裁
别具一格

bié zhēn
bié zhì
bié zì
bié chū xīn cái
bié jù yī gé

safety pin; pin; brooch
unique
wrongly written words
try to be different
having a unique style

Example

他常常写别字。

Tā cháng cháng xiě bié zì.

He always writes the wrong words.

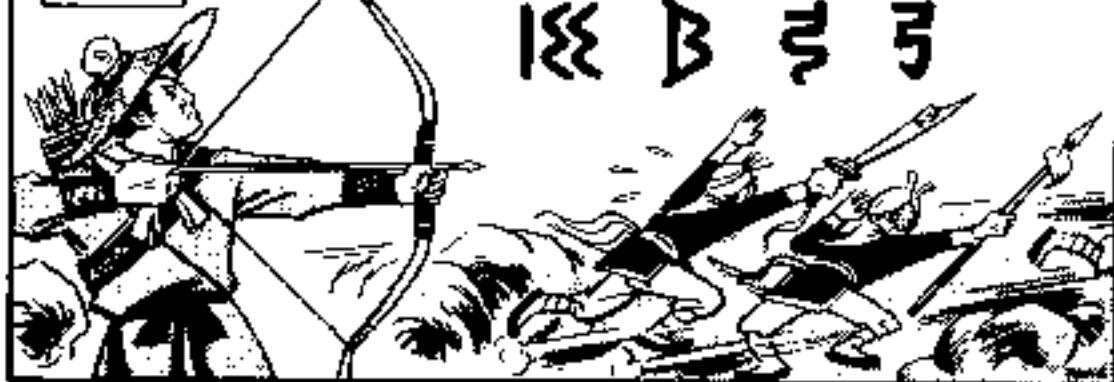


GŌNG

bow

弓 is a radical representing a Chinese bow: 弓. The ancient form shows it bent or vibrating: 𠄎. Drawing the string (|) of the bow (弓) produces the character 引, meaning to pull, guide or introduce. Though the bow is a lethal weapon for offence and defence, the proverb counsels: "Draw your bow, but don't shoot."

𠄎 𠄎 𠄎 𠄎



弓箭
弓弦
弓形

gōng jiǎn
gōng xián
gōng xíng

bow and arrow
bowstring
arch-shaped

Example

这把弓被他折断了。

Zhè bǎ gōng bèi tā zhé duàn le.

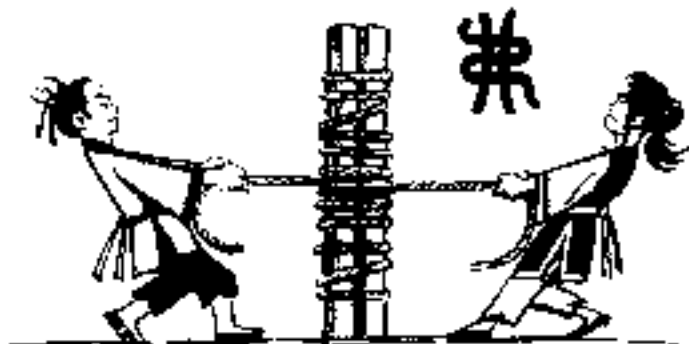
This bow was broken by him.

弗

FÚ

not; no

THIS character is both pictographic and ideographic. It depicts two divergent rods (𠄎) so tied together with a coil of rope (纆) that their forces are neutralised, suggesting opposition or negation; hence the meaning "not": 弗.



Feng

フ	コ	弓	弗												
---	---	---	---	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

自愧弗如 zì kuǐ fú rú feel ashamed of one's inferiority

Example

他只读到小学三年級，因此常常自愧弗如。

tā zhǐ dú dào xiǎo xué sān nián jí yīn cǐ cháng cháng zì kuǐ fú rú

He had only three years of primary education, so he often has a sense of inferiority.

费 (費)

THE phonetic: 费, representing two rods bent in opposite directions being bound together, means "not". 貝 is a picture of a cowrie shell, once used as money. 费 placed over 貝 therefore signifies under-valuing money; by inference, to waste or squander: 费.

FÈI expenses; squander



费解	fèi jiě	obscure; hard to understand
费力	fèi lì	strenuous
费时	fèi shí	time-consuming
费用	fèi yòng	expenses
会费	huì fèi	membership dues

浪费	làng fèi	waste; squander
免费	miǎn fèi	free of charge
学费	xué fèi	school fees
生活费	shēng huó fèi	living expenses
水电费	shuǐ diàn fèi	charges for water and electricity

Example

今天我们要交学费。

jīn tiān wǒ men yào jiāo xué fèi

We must pay school fees today.

判

TÌ

shave

勑

剃 combines 弟 (younger brother) with 刀 (knife or razor). 弟, the phonetic, depicts a thread round a spindle and means, by extension, a succession of brothers or younger brothers. The growing hair is suggested by the thread being unwound from the spindle (弟), and the addition of the razor (刀) gives us the character for shave: 剃. Our picture, however, shows how younger brother (弟) and razor (刀), put together, can mean a close shave.



、	、	、	、	弟	弟	弟	弟						
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	--	--	--	--	--	--

剃刀
剃度
剃头

tì 提
tì 提
tì 提

1204

制度

١١

CONSULT

剃头

๕. ร้อย

haircutting

Example

他用剃刀剃头。

Tā nāng bī dǎo cǐ cǎn

He uses the razor to shave his head.

矢

shǐ

arrow

THE arrow radical, in its original form: 𠂔, bears a striking resemblance to an arrow with full tip and feathers. It was later modified to 𠂔 and finally stylized 矢. Emphasizing the difficulty of combating insidious enemies, the saying goes: "It is easy to dodge a spear in the open, but difficult to avoid an arrow shot from hiding." (明枪易躲 暗箭难防)



矢量

shí liàng

vector

飞矢

fēi shǐ

flying arrow

风矢

fēng shǐ

wind vector

矢口否认

shǐ kǒu fǒu rěn

flatly deny

无的放矢

wú dì fàng shǐ

shoot at random - not to the point

Example

他的批评有如无的放矢。

Tā de pī píng yǒu rú wú dì fàng shǐ

His criticism is like random shooting.

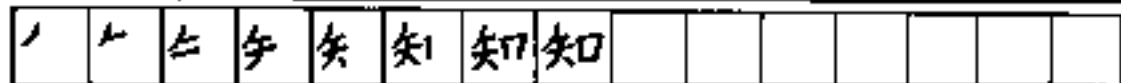
知

zhī

know

THE radical 矢 (arrow) represents swiftness. Combined with 口 (mouth), it means knowledge (知), possessed by one who can give his word or opinion with the precision and speed of an arrow (矢). Knowledge (知) is having a mouth (口) that is as sharp and far-reaching as an arrow (矢). Unfortunately, according to the proverb, "Those who know much talk little; those who know little talk much."

(知者不言，言者不知。)



知道
知底
知己
知交
知觉
知名
知识

zhī dào
zhī dǐ
zhī jǐ
zhī jiāo
zhī jué
zhī míng
zhī shì

know
know the inside story
bosom friend
bosom friend
consciousness
well-known
knowledge

知难而退
知情达理
(或)
通情达理
知识分子

zhī nán ér tuì
zhī qíng dá lǐ
(or)
tōng qíng dá lǐ
zhī shì fēn zǐ

shrink back from
difficulties
sensible

an intellectual

Example

我 不 知 道 她 已 经 结 婚 了。

Wǒ bù zhī dào tā yǐ jīng jié hūn le.

I didn't know that she is married.

醉

五

drunk

THIS ideograph combines the container for liquor: 酉 with the phonetic: 卒, representing a soldier. An soldierer do not last long. 卒 also means "to come to an end." So, to drink liquor (酉) and reach the limit (卒), is to become drunk: 酩酊. But, suggests the proverb, "If you want a way to stop drinking, look at a drunken man when you are sober."



一	二	三	四	五	六	七	八	九	十	十一	十二	十三	十四	十五	十六	十七	十八	十九	二十	二十一	二十二	二十三	二十四	二十五	二十六	二十七	二十八	二十九	三十	三十一	三十二	三十三	三十四	三十五	三十六	三十七	三十八	三十九	四十	四十一	四十二	四十三	四十四	四十五	四十六	四十七	四十八	四十九	五十	五十一	五十二	五十三	五十四	五十五	五十六	五十七	五十八	五十九	六十	六十一	六十二	六十三	六十四	六十五	六十六	六十七	六十八	六十九	七十	七十一	七十二	七十三	七十四	七十五	七十六	七十七	七十八	七十九	八十	八十一	八十二	八十三	八十四	八十五	八十六	八十七	八十八	八十九	九十	九十一	九十二	九十三	九十四	九十五	九十六	九十七	九十八	九十九	一百
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醉死

ଅଧିକାରୀ

drunkard

醇汉

zuǐ nán

drunkard

醉念

ruì tāi

the state of being drunk; drunkenness

醉心

20. 11. 2019

be bent on; engrossed in

醉眼

အဲဒီအခါမှာတော့

eyes showing the effects of drink

醉意

zǐ jī

signs or feeling of becoming drunk

醉醺醺

ឧប្បត្តិ ឬ ប្រតិបត្តិ

drunk; tipsy

醉生夢死

zhuō shìfēng mǎn gōu sǎi

lead a befooled life

Example

他喝醉了。

$$T_{\mu} = h\bar{\omega} \quad 2\mu = 1\text{e}$$

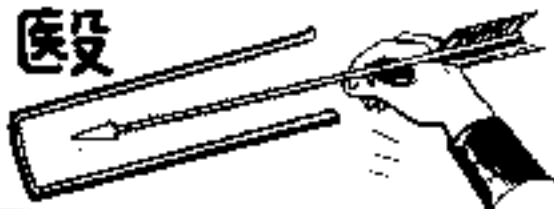
He is drunk.

医 (醫)

yī cure; heal

ANCIENT man attributed sickness to evil influences. Healing, therefore, was symbolised by drawing arrows from the quiver (医) to shoot (药) at the demons of disease. Wine (酒) was indispensable as an elixir. Although the modern form of healing is very much simplified: 医, the saying still goes: "A wise doctor never treats himself."

醫



西



7840

一 丁 尸 尸 尸 尸 医

医科	yī kē	medicine (a subject)
医疗	yī liáo	medical treatment
医生; 医师	yī sheng; yī shī	doctor
医术	yī shù	medical skill
医药	yī yào	medicine
医院	yī yuàn	hospital
医治	yī zhì	cure; treat

军医	jūn yī	medical officer (in the army)
牙医	yá yī	dental surgeon
外科医生	wài kē yī sheng	surgeon
专科医生	zhuān kē yī sheng	specialist doctor
新加坡	Xīn Jiā Pō	Singapore General
中央医院	Zhōng Yāng Yī Yuàn	Hospital

Example

这位医生很出名。
Zhè wèi yī sheng hěn chū míng.

This doctor is very famous.

丑 (醜)

chǒu shameful; ugly

TWO types of spirits were integrated to form the character for shame and ugliness: spirit or liquor (酉) from a wine jar, and an evil spirit (鬼) from the invisible realm. The result is a hideous drunken (酩) devil (酩) or 酩酊, representing ugliness, now hidden under the simplified form: 丑 of a clown.



Net 10

7 刀 丑

丑恶	chǒu'è	ugly; repulsive
丑化	chǒu huà	smear; defame
丑角	chǒu jué	clown
丑陋	chǒu lòu	ugly
丑事: 丑闻	chǒu shì: chǒu wén	scandal
丑态	chǒu tài	ugly performance
出丑	chū chǒu	make a fool of oneself
小丑	xiǎo chǒu	clown
丑八怪	chǒu bā guài	a very ugly person

Example

家丑不可外扬。

Jiā chǒu bù kě wài yáng

Don't wash your dirty linen in public.

狗

Gǒu

dog

THIS character for dog, 狗, fittingly combines the dog radical: 犳 (or 犬) with the phonetic: 句, meaning a sentence of words, suggests barking — a distinguishing characteristic of the dog. Counselling against the thoughtless ill-treatment of the underdog, the proverb warns: "In beating a dog, first find out who the owner is."



丿 了 牙 犳 犳 狗 狗

狗熊

gǒu xióng

black bear

海狗

hǎi gǒu

fur seal; ursine seal

狗腿子

gǒu tuǐ - zi

hired thug; lackey; henchman

狗胆包天

gǒu dǎn bāo tiān

monstrous audacity

狗眼看人低

gǒu yǎn kàn rén dī

snobbish

狗咬吕洞宾

gǒu yǎo lǚ dòng bīn

mistake a good man for a bad one

Example

我家有一条小狗。

wǒ jiā yǒu yī tiáo xiǎo gǒu

I have a puppy at home.

猴

HÓU
monkey

IN ancient times, skill in archery was the basis for selecting officials. In man (人), precision in shooting an arrow (矢) at a target (的 or 的) represented uprightness of heart. Hence the derived meaning of nobleman or prince: 侯. The addition of the animal radical 猴 extends the meaning to: "Prince among animals," a title applicable to the noble monkey: 猴. Featured here is the King of Monkeys, legendary hero of the classic: "Journey to the West."



猴



猴戏
猴子

hóu xì
hóu - zi

monkey show
monkey

Example

今年 是 猴 年。

Fú nián shì hóu nián

This is the year of the monkey.

吠

fèi

bark

MOUTH (口) plus dog (犬) equals bark吠. This character, therefore, shows what makes a dog bark. The ancient proverb, however, explains what makes a hundred dogs bark: "One dog barks at something, and a hundred bark at the sound."

吠

犬



一	口	口	口	吠	吠										
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狗吠

gǒu fèi

bark of dogs

吠形吠声

fèi xíng fèi shēng

to slavishly echo others — when one dog barks at a shadow, all the others join in

Example

这只狗的吠声很大。

zhè zhī gǒu de fèi shēng hěn dà.

This dog barks very loudly.

獄 (獄)

YÙ prison; jail

YIN Monograph places speech (言) between two different forms of dog, (犬 and 犬). It represents a lawsuit, 訟, with the two suiters barking at each other like dogs. 訟 also means prison — for the loser. And, for the winner: "Win your lawsuit, and lose your money."



'	了	牙	矛	犛	犛一	犛	狢	狢						
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狱吏	yù lì	prison officer; jailer
狱卒	yù zú	prison guard
地狱	dì yù	hell
监狱	jiān yù	prison
入狱	rù yù	be imprisoned
越狱	yè yù	escape from prison

臭

CHÓU

stink

THE nose (鼻) of a dog (犬) is especially sensitive to smell. A dog (犬), therefore, that sticks out its nose (鼻) while personal business is being done suggests stealth: 鬼. By the same token, a person who sticks his nose into other people's personal business also stinks.



臭虫

chóu chóng

bedbug

臭骂

chóu nǎ

scold angrily and abusively

臭气

chóu qì

bad smell

臭味

chóu wèi

stunk

臭鸡蛋

chóu jī dàn

rotten egg

臭名远扬

chóu míng yuǎn yáng

notorious

臭名昭著

chóu míng zhāo zhù

of ill repute; notorious

乳臭未干

rǔ chóu wèi gān

be young and unexperienced

Example

那条水沟臭得很。

Nèi tiáo shuǐ gōu chòu dé hěn.

That drain stinks.

哭

kū

cry;
wail;
weep

哭



THIS chapter uses two mouths (口口) to express intense action of the mouth, resembling the wailing of dogs (犬); so dog (犬) with two mouths (口口) means "wail" 哭. Two mouths may effectively express crying and howling, but certainly, "two buckets of tears," according to the proverb, "will not heal a bruise."



FEMA

一	口	口	口	口	口	哭	哭	哭					
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哭泣

kū qì

cry; weep

哭诉

kū sù

complain tearfully

哭哭啼啼

kū ku tí tí

weep endlessly

哭丧着脸

kū sàng zhè liǎn

put on a long face

哭天抹泪

kū tiān mǒ lèi

wail and whine

哭笑不得

kū xiào bù dé

not knowing whether to laugh or to cry

Example

当她知道考试不及格时，便哭了起来。
 dāng tā zhī dào kǎo shì bù jí gé shí, biàn kū le qǐ lái.

When she knew she had failed the examinations, she burst into tears.

伏

FÚ

prostrate

THIS ideograph reduces man (人) to the level of the lowly dog (犬). It means: "Man behaving like dog," prostrating himself or humiliating another: 伏. The saying proves true: "Flog the cur that's fallen into the water" — be merciless to bad people.

伏



ノ	イ	一	伏	伏											
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伏安

fú ān

volt-ampere

伏兵

fú bīng

(troops in) ambush

伏法

fú fǎ

be executed

伏击

fú jī

ambush

伏流

fú liú

subterranean drainage; underground stream

伏贴

fú tiē

fit perfectly

伏尔加河

fú'ěr jiā hé

the Volga (river)

伏特加酒

fú tè jiǎ jiǔ

vodka

Example

他 伏 在 地 上 不 动。

Tā fú zài dì shàng bù dòng.

He lies face down on the ground, motionless.

突

tū

suddenly

穴 is a hole made by removing and dividing (宀) rock or earth to provide a roof (宀) over the wild dog's head. 突 represents the dog (犬) rushing out of its den (穴) to attack and bite an intruder. Hence the meaning suddenly or unexpectedly — without warning, as the saying goes: "A biting dog does not show its teeth."



丶 丿 山 宀 穴 空 穿 突 突

突变	tū biàn	sudden change
突出	tū chū	protruding; outstanding
突击	tū jī	a sudden and violent attack
突破	tū pò	break through
突起	tū qǐ	break out; rise high

突然	tū rán	suddenly
突兀	tū wù	lofty (landscape); sudden
突袭	tū xí	surprise attack
突飞猛进	tū fēi měng jìn	advance by leaps and bounds
突如其来	tū rú qí lái	arise suddenly

Example

他说到一半，突然停了。

Tā shuō dào yī bàn, tū rán tíng le.

He was talking halfway when he stopped suddenly.

兽(獸)

YEVU

animal; brute; beast

THE ancient form of 犬 graphically portrays the typical domestic animal with its ears, head, legs and tail. Clarified by the dog radical (犬), it means animals in general: 獸. The modern simplified form, however, discards the dog radical: 犳, even though sometimes a dog's life is to be preferred. In the words of the proverb: "Better a dog in times of peace than a man in times of war."



Fig. 1

兽环	shù huán	door-knocker
兽类	shù lèi	animals
兽王	shòu wáng	the king of beasts - the lion
兽行	shòu xíng	brutality
兽性	shòu xìng	barbarity

兽医	shòu yī	a vet
兽欲	shòu yù	animal desire
野兽	yě shòu	wild animal
兽力车	shòu lì chē	animal-drawn vehicle
人面兽心	rén miàn shòu xīn	a beast in human form

உதாரணம்

在非洲森林里，有许多野兽，

zài fēi chān sēn lín lì yǐn xú tuō qǐ shòu.

There are many wild animals in the forests of Africa

犹 (猶)

YÓU like; undecided



IN this extraordinary word, the phonetic: 犹 signifies liquor (酒) after fermentation, with the drops mixed or separated (灑). Although its striking likeness to water may deceive even a dog (狗), its odour would cause hesitation and uncertainty. Hence it means both "like" and "undecided." 犹 is now simplified to 犹, the phonetic: 尤 meaning extraordinary. Because the dog reflects the image of its owner, "A Iron dog shapes its master."



2014

丿 才 才 才 才 犹 犹 犹

犹如

yóu rú

just as

犹疑

yóu yí

hesitate

犹豫

yóu yù

hesitate

犹太人

Yóu Tàì rén

Jew

Example

他做事常常犹豫不决。

Tā suī shì cháng cháng yóu yù bù jué。

He often hesitates in whatever he does.

狂

KUÁNG

mad;
wild;
eccentric

狂, the phonetic, is a contraction of 狂, meaning luxuriant vegetation that sprouts (狂) from the earth (土) and grows wild, indicating a rambling nature. 狂, therefore, is like a mad dog (狂) that strays or roams about aimlessly (狂), suggesting the meaning: "mad or wild." Instead of advocating madness against madness, the proverb recommends prevention rather than cure: "If the fence is secure, no dog will enter."



丿 勹 勹 勹 勹 狂 狂

狂暴
狂放
狂吠
狂风
狂热

kuáng bào
kuáng fàng
kuáng fèi
kuáng fēng
kuáng rè

violent
unruly or unrestrained
bark furiously
fierce wind
fanaticism

狂人
狂喜
狂笑
发狂
狂想曲

kuáng rén
kuáng xǐ
kuáng xiào
fā kuáng
kuáng xiǎng qǔ

maniac
wild with joy
laugh wildly
mad
rhapsody (music)

Example

昨晚的一场狂风暴雨，把许多树吹倒了。

zuó wǎn de yí chǎng kuáng fēng bào yǔ bǎ xǔ duō shù chuī dǎo le .

Many trees were crushed by yesterday's gale.

犯

FÀN

transgress;
violate;
offend

THE phonetic: 艹 means to blossom, sprout, expand or erupt. Dog (犬) with blossom (艹) — like dog in a flower garden — suggests heedlessness and transgression: 犯. Through miscarriage of justice, many an offender gets away with transgression; so laments the proverb: "The black dog eats the meat; the white dog is punished."



丿 ㇏ 𠂆 犯 犯

犯法	fàn fǎ	violate the law
犯规	fàn guī	break the rules
犯忌	fàn jì	violate a taboo
犯人	fàn rén	convict
犯上	fàn shàng	go against one's superiors

犯疑	fàn yí	suspect; be suspicious
犯罪	fàn zuì	commit a crime
战犯	zhàn fàn	war criminal
犯不着	fàn bù zháo	not worthwhile
杀人犯	shā rén fàn	murderer

Example

他在工作上犯了错误。

Tā zài gōng zuò shàng fàn le cuò wù.

He made a mistake in his work.

狠

hěn

fierce;
vicious;
cruel

狠, the phonetic, is the classical abbreviation of 𥇑, made up of 𥇑 (eye) and 𠂔 (turn). It signifies to turn around and look a man defiantly in the face. With the addition of the dog radical (犭), indicating beastliness, it means: fierce, vicious, cruel or quarrelsome. But, concludes the proverb: "A good dog does not fight with chickens, nor a good man with his wife."



覷



PELA

丿	𠂔	犭	犭	犭	犭	犭	犭	狠						
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狠毒
狠心
凶狠

hěn dú
hěn xīn
xiōng hěn

vicious
heartless
ferocious and ruthless

Example

这只狮子很凶狠。

zhè zhī shī zi hěn xiōng hěn.

This lion is ferocious.

狮

(獅)

shī

lion



THE radical is the character for dog or beast (犬). The phonetic: 獅 signifies the first (一) banner (巾) over the foot (足), i.e., the banner of the commander-in-chief, and means: leader or master. Clarified by the dog radical (犬) the idea is set forth that the king or master (主) of beasts (犬) is the lion: 獅.



PL 10

丿	𠂇	𠂇	𠂇	𠂇	𠂇	𠂇	𠂇	𠂇	𠂇	𠂇	𠂇	𠂇	𠂇	𠂇	𠂇	𠂇	𠂇	𠂇	𠂇
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獅子

shī · zi

lion

獅子狗

shī zǐ gǒu

pug-dog

獅子舞

shī zǐ wǔ

lion dance

獅子座

shī zǐ zuò

Leo (of the horoscope)

Example

新加坡动物园里有许多狮子。

Xīn jiā pō dòng wù yuán lǐ yǒu xǔ duō shī zi 。

There are many lions in the Singapore Zoological Gardens.

骑 (騎)

qí ride; sit astride

THIS phonetic 奇 means strange and wonderful. In association with 木 (wood) it forms 椅 (chair) — a wooden contraption, strange to those used to sitting on the floor. 马 (horse) replaces 木 (wood) in the character for riding: 骑. To ride, therefore, is to sit on a horse (马) — a wonderful (奇) experience. But don't get carried away too easily, warns the proverb: "The best riders are sure to fall."



7	马	马	马	马	马	马	马	马	马	马	马				
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骑兵	qí bīng	cavalryman
骑马	qí mǎ	ride a horse
骑士	qí shì	knight
骑术	qí shù	horsemanship

Example

那将军骑在一匹白马上。
 Nà jiāng jūn qí zài yì pǐ bái mǎ shàng
 That general was riding on a white horse.

驯

(驯)

XÚN tame; docile

THE concept of "tame" is derived by combining horse (马) and river (河). Just as the flow of a river is controlled and guided by the land surface, so to tame (驯) is to subdue a horse (马), guiding it like a river (河). Unfortunately, the treatment meted out to a tame horse is also applied to a good man. In the words of the proverb: "A good man is imposed upon just as a tame horse is ridden."



PEM 5

7 马 马 马 驯 驯

驯服

xún fú

docile; tame

驯化

xún huà

domestication

驯良

xún liáng

tame and gentle

驯鹿

xún lù

reindeer

驯顺

xún shùn

tame and docile

驯养

xún yǎng

domesticate

Example

他善于驯虎。

Tā shàn yú xún hǔ.

He is good at taming tigers.

骡

(驢)

LUÓ

mule

THE phonetic 累 gives a clue to the identity of this member of the horse (馬) family. 累 was originally 𠂔, three articles (𠂔) connected or tied (糸) together, and means involved or accumulated, troublesome or unmanageable, burdened or tired. These traits characterise the mule: 驢, a beast of burden, noted for being stubborn. Its sluggishness prompts the saying: "A person riding a mule does not realise the slowness of walking."



了 马 马 马 驹 驹 驹 驹 驹 驹 驹 驹 驹 驹 驹

骡夫

luó fū

a muleteer

骡马

luó mǎ

mules and horses

骡子

luó zǐ

mule (the off-spring of an ass and a mare)

骡马店

luó mǎ diàn

an inn with sheds for carts and animals

Example

骡子可以拉车子。

luó zǐ kě yǐ lā chē zi.

Mules can draw carriages.

駱

(駱)

LUÒ camel

2. , representing a horse or beast of burden, is the radical 𠂔, the phonetic, means to go one's way unconcernedly, without heeding others. This is a dominant characteristic of the self-sufficient camel: 𠂔, an animal blessed with great endurance and ability to go without food and water for weeks.



2014

7 马 马 马 马 骏 骏 骏 骏

骆驼	luò tuó	camel
骆驼队	luò tuó duì	camel train; caravan
骆驼绒	luò tuó róng	camel's hair material

骆驼队 luò tuō duì camel train; caravan

骆驼绒 luò tuó róng camel's hair material

Experiments

这是一只单峰骆驼。

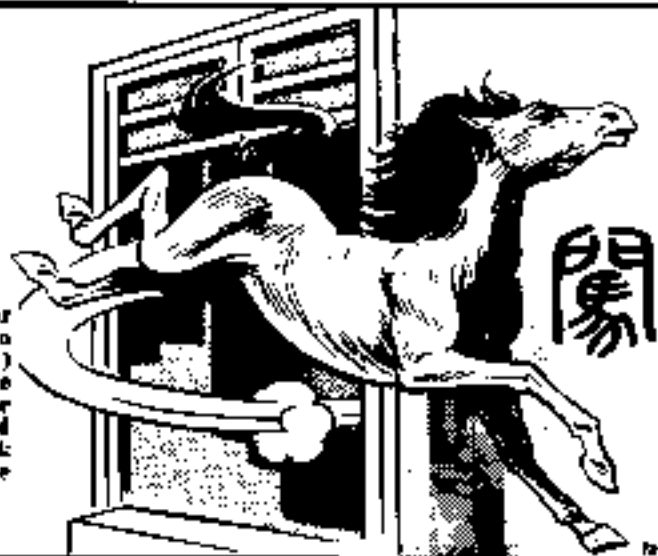
Zhāng shì yī rì dān tāng kǒu tuō

This is a one-humped camel.

闯 (闖)

CHUǎNG rush; clash; charge

THE idea of rushing suddenly or rudely is graphically expressed in this ideograph of a swift horse (馬) dashing through a door (門). The character suggests rashness or impetuosity, something to guard against. As the proverb says it: "When a word has left the lips, the swiftest horse cannot overtake it."



闯祸	chuǎng huò	get into trouble
闯将	chuǎng jiāng	daring general; path breaker
闯劲	chuǎng jìn	pioneering spirit
闯练	chuǎng liàn	leave home to temper oneself; be tempered in the world
闯江湖	chuǎng jiāng hú	make a living wandering from place to place (as a fortune-teller, acrobat, etc.)
横冲直闯	héng chōng zhí chuǎng	run amuck

Example

你开车要小心，千万别闯祸。

Nǐ kāi chē yào xiǎo xīn, qiān wàn bié chuǎng huò.

Be careful with your driving and don't get into trouble.

鹿

LÙ

deer

THE swift-footed and graceful deer is adequately represented by an ornate pictograph sporting prominent antlers. So highly prized is the deer for its skin and flesh that it is said: "The deer-hunter does not look at the hare."

鹿



鹿角

lù jiǎo

deerhorn; antler

鹿圈

lù juàn

deer enclosure; deer pen

鹿皮

lù pí

deerskin

鹿茸

lù róng

pilose antler

鹿肉

lù ròu

venison

鹿苑

lù yuàn

deer park

公鹿

gōng lù

buck

母鹿

mǔ lù

doe

小鹿

xiǎo lù

fawn

梅花鹿

méi huā lù

sika (deer)

Example

母鹿是没有角的。

Mǔ lù shì méi yǎo jiǎo de.

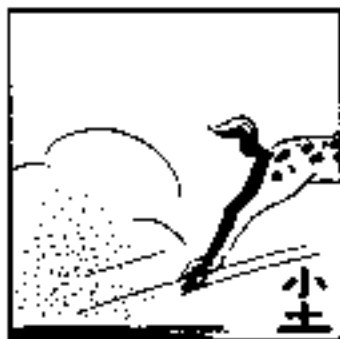
A doe has no antlers.

尘

(塵)

CHÉN dust; dirt

THE original form showed three deer (鹿) running over the earth (土), stirring up a trail of dust (塵). The regular form reduced the number of deer to one. The simplified form breaks it down further to tiny (小) particles of earth (土), forming dust or dirt: 尘.



尘埃 chén' ai dust
 尘暴 chén bào dust storm
 尘肺 chén fèi pneumoconiosis
 尘封 chén fēng covered with dust; dust-laden
 尘垢 chén gòu dust and dirt

尘世 chén shì this world; this mortal life
 尘上 chén shàng dust
 尘污 chén wū soiled with dust
 尘嚣 chén xiāo hubbub; uproar
 红尘 hóng chén dust; dirt

Example

她把家里打扫得一尘不染。

tā bǎ jiā lǐ dǎo sǎo de yī chén bù rǎn.

She kept the house spick and span.

庆 (慶)

qìng celebrate; congratulate

IN ancient times it was traditional to go (去) and offer, on a festive day, a deer's (鹿) skin with hearty (心) wishes. Hence: 慶, to celebrate, congratulate or bring a blessing. The simplified form for celebration puts it in a nutshell: something big (大) under cover or roof (广) - a big occasion indeed.



丶 亠 广 广 庆 庆

庆典	qìng diǎn	celebration
庆祝	qìng hè	celebrate
庆幸	qìng xìng	rejoice
庆祝	qìng zhì	celebrate
庆功会	qìng gōng huì	victory meeting
国庆节	guó qīng rì	National Day

Example

八月九日是我国的国庆节。

Bā yuè jiǔ rì shì wǒ guó de guó qīng rì.

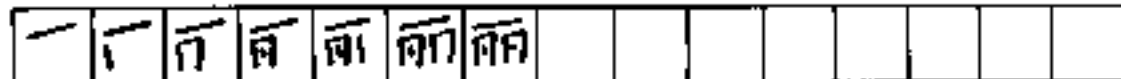
Our National Day falls on August 9.

丽

(麗)

Lì beautiful; handsome; elegant

THIS character for beauty and elegance is a picture of the graceful deer (鹿) decorated with a pair of pendants (麗). The simplified form displays the pair of pendants linked together: 丽. Physical attractiveness is not to be envied, if we go by the saying: "Beautiful women generally suffer an evil fate; intelligent young men are seldom handsome."



丽人	lì rén	a beauty
美丽	měi lì	beautiful
风和日丽	fēng hé rì lì	lovely weather

Example

雪山的风景真美丽！

Xuě shān de fēng jǐng zhēn měi lì

The scenery of snow-clothed mountains is lovely.

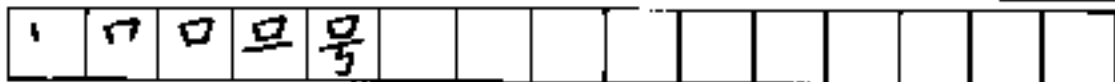
号

(號)

Hǎo shout

Hào mark; number

号 comes from mouth (口) uttering an exclamation (丿, the breath 气 rising against an obstacle -). 号 therefore means to cry out. The presence of the tiger (王) gives the needed impetus to shout: 吼. In the simplified form, the tiger is eliminated: 号. 號 also means mark or number, usually announced by the mouth, with a call or cry.



号哭

háo kū

wail

号叫

háo jiào

howl; yell

号称

hào chēng

known as; claim to be

号令

hào lìng

order

号码

hào mǎ

number

号信

hào xìn

call; appeal

编号

biān hào

serial number

绰号

chuò hào

nickname

问号

wèn hào

question mark

号啕大哭

hào táo dà kū

cry one's eyes out

Example

请问你的电话儿号？

Qǐng wèn nǐ de diàn huà er hào?

What is your telephone number?

象

XIANG elephant

THIS character is a striking image of the elephant, emphasising its trunk and precious tusks 象. Valuable possessions can pose a hazard to life; in the words of the proverb: "The elephant is killed because of its tusks."

象象象象



Photo



象鼻	xiàng bí	trunk (of an elephant)
象棋	xiàng qí	Chinese chess
象散	xiàng sǎn	astigmatism
象声	xiàng shēng	onomatopoeia
象限	xiàng xiàn	quadrant

象牙	xiàng yá	elephant's tusk; ivory
象样	xiàng yàng	presentable
象征	xiàng zhēng	symbolise; signify
好象	hǎo xiàng	seem; like
象牙雕刻	xiàng yá diāo kè	ivory carving

Example

这个象牙雕刻很精致。

Zhè ge xiàng yá diāo kè hěn jīng zhì

This is an exquisite ivory carving.

像

XIÀNG

portrait; image

IN THIS character the phonetic 象 means elephant and also image. The radical 亻 (man) clarifies its application to man and means image, portrait or resemblance: 像. Man has been making images of everything imaginable under and above the sun. So, reasons the proverb: "No image-maker worships the gods; he knows what they are made of."



丿 亻 亻 亻 亻 像 像 像 像 像 像 像 像 像 像

像样
像话
人像

xiàng yàng
xiàng huà
rén xiàng

up to the mark; presentable; decent
reasonable; proper, right
portrait; image

Example

这位画家人的人像很逼真。

zhè wèi huà jiā rén de rén xiàng hěn bī zhēn

This artist's portraits are very realistic.

熊

Xióng

bear

熊



熊 is a representation of the bear, with its head (𧢲), hairy body (𧢲) and paws (𧢲). The bear is a symbol of bravery, and is extremely strong and able. Hence: 熊, meaning able. To differentiate its bear from ability (能) four dots (丶) standing for feet are added: 熊.

ㄣ	ㄣ	𠂇	𠂇	𠂇	𠂇	𠂇	熊	熊	熊	熊	熊	熊	熊	
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熊蜂

xióng fēng

humble bee

熊猴

xióng hóu

Assamese macaque

熊貓

xióng māo

panda

熊掌

xióng zhǎng

bear's claw (as a rare delicacy)

狗熊

gǒu xióng

Asiatic black bear

熊熊大火

xióng xióng dà huǒ

raging fire

Example

熊貓是惹人喜愛的動物。

Xióng māo shì rě rén ài - de dòng wù.

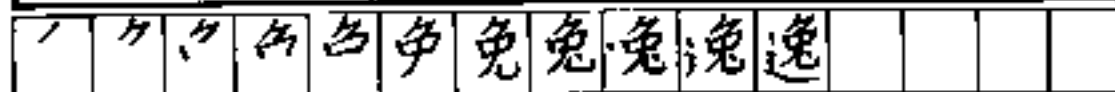
Pandas are lovable animals.

逸

yì

escape;
leisure

THE radical 走 means to go fast and stop suddenly. Combined with 兔 (rabbit), it suggests a rabbit on the run, and means to flee, escape or retire from the world. The hare, being regarded as a profligate, 逸 also means to lead an idle and licentious life.



逸乐	yì lè	comfort and pleasure
逸民	yì mīn	hermit (in ancient times); recluse
逸事	yì shì	anecdote (especially about famous people)
逸闻	yì wén	anecdote
逃逸	táo yì	escape
好逸恶劳	hào yì wù láo	love ease and hate work

Example

年青人千万不可好逸恶劳。

Hàn qīng rén qiān wàn bù kě hào yì wù láo

Young people must not love ease and hate work.

鼠

SHǔ

rat;
mouse

鼠 refers to rodents in general — from the timid mouse to the aggressive rat. It is a photograph of the rat, showing its head, whiskers and tail:鼠. A young rat may know how to gnaw its hole but, warns the proverb: "A rat that gnaws at a cat's tail invites destruction."

鼠 鼠 鼠 鼠



PBL 1746

'	丿	乚	乚	乚	白	白	白	白	鼠	鼠	鼠	鼠		
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鼠辈

shǔ bèi

scoundrels

鼠疫

shǔ yì

plague

老鼠

lǎo shǔ

mouse; rat

老鼠过街、lǎo shǔ guò jiē,

when a rat runs across the street, everybody cries, "Kill it!" (said of a person or thing hated by everyone)

人人喊打 rén rén hǎn dǎ

Example

老鼠是惹人讨厌的动物。

lǎo shǔ shì rě rén tǎo yàn de dòng wù

Mice are hateful creatures.

雀

què

sparrow

The radical of this character is 隹, a wheel-tailed bird, as compared with 鳥, a long-tailed bird. The sparrow is designated by the ideographic 雀, literally small (小) bird (隹) — a fitting symbol for anything insignificant and unworthy. Hence the proverbial reference to the irrational trouble-shooter: "He uses a cannon to shoot a sparrow."



20140



雀斑
雀鯛
雀鷹
雀躍
麻雀

què bān
què diào
què yāng
què yuè
má què

freckle
damselfish
sparrow hawk
jump for joy
sparrow

Example

他的臉上有許多雀斑。

Tā de liǎn shàng yǒu xǔ duō què bān.

He has a freckled face.

集

jí

assemble;
gather
together

The ancient character depicted three birds (隹) flocking together atop a tree (木). This was eventually contracted to 隹: bird (隹) on tree (木). A gathering of birds may have created the character for "assembly" but, as the saying goes: "A gathering of mosquitoes can create a noise like thunder."



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丿 亻 亻 亻 亻 隹 隹 隹 隹 隹 集 集 集 集 集

集合	jí hé	gather
集会	jí huì	assembly
集锦	jí jìn	a collection of choice specimens
集市	jí shì	countryside fair; market
集体	jí tǐ	collective

集团	jí tuán	group; bloc
集训	jí xùn	centralized training
集邮	jí yóu	stamp-collecting
集中	jí zhōng	concentrate
聚集	jù jí	gather

Example

大门口聚集了一大堆人。

dà mén kǒu jí jí le yí dà duī rén

A big crowd gathered at the gate.

只 (隻)

ZHǐ one; single

A bird (隻) in hand (又) means "one" or "single"; 隻 is used as a numerative or classifier for birds, animals, ships and single individuals of things in pairs or sets, as arm, eye, hand, shoe, etc. It is now replaced by the simplified form: 只, which, incidentally, means "only."



一	口	只	只																
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只身

zhǐ shēn

alone; by oneself

一只

yī zhǐ

used as a numerative or classifier

只言片语

zhǐ yán piàn yǔ

a word or two

Example

他 只 身 前 往 外 国 。

Tā zhǐ shēn qián wǎng wài guó

He goes abroad alone.

双

(雙)

Just as one bird (隹) in hand (又) means single: 隻, so two birds (隹) in hand (又) stand for a pair: 雙. The simplified form shows just two hands: 双 — a clearer representation because hands, unlike birds, always come in pairs. Unfortunately, according to the saying, "Blessings never come in pairs, nor misfortunes singly."

SHUANG

a pair



H-110

ㄅ

ㄆ

ㄇ

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双边
双屏

shuāng biān
shuāng píng

bilateral
double-deck;
two layers

双重
双方
双亲

shuāng chóng
shuāng fāng
shuāng qīn

double
both sides
(both) parents

双生
双喜
双月刊
双周刊
双管齐下

shuāng shēng
shuāng xǐ
shuāng yuè kān
shuāng zhōu kān
shuāng guǎn qí xià

twin
double happiness
bi-monthly
bi-weekly
work along both lines

Example

他买了一双新鞋。

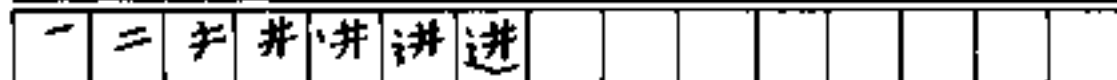
Tā mǎi le yī shuāng xīn xié

He bought a new pair of shoes.

进 (進)

Jìn advance; enter

This character is made up of "move" (走, contraction of 走) and "bird" (隹). When birds "move" they always fly forward, never backward. So 进 means to "advance." In the simplified form, 井 (order) replaces 隹 (bird), suggesting advancement and, by extension, entry: 进 — an orderly movement encouraged by the proverb: "He who does not advance loses ground" (不进则退).



达步	jìn bù	progress; advance
进度	jìn dù	rate of progress
进攻	jìn gōng	attack
进化	jìn huà	evolution
进取(心)	jìn qǔ (xīn)	enterprising (spirit)

进食	jìn shí	have one's meal
进行	jìn xíng	be in progress
进展	jìn zhǎn	make progress
进出口	jìn chū kǒu	import and export
进一步	jìn yī bù	go a step further

Example

你的汉语大有进步了。
Nǐ de Huà yǔ dà yǒu jìn bù le.

Your Chinese has improved.

售

SHÒU

sell

售

The original ideograph for "sell" represented two birds (隹), the buyer and the seller, haggling with the mouth (口). The modern character shows only one bird (隹), the seller, marketing his wares with the mouth (口). The proverb explains the absence of the buyer: "Fuel is not sold in the forest, nor fish on the shore of the lake."



ノ イ 个 仨 仨 位 佳 佳 佳 售 售

售货	shòu huò	sell goods
售价	shòu jià	selling price
售卖	shòu mài	sell
出售	chū shòu	offer for sale
售票处	shòu piào chù	ticket office
售票口	shòu piào kǒu	wicket
售票员	shòu piào yuán	ticket seller; conductor
女售货员	nǚ shòu huò yuán	salesgirl

Example

这餐具的售价是一千五百元。

Zhè cān jù de shòu jià shì yī qiān wǔ bǎi yuán

The selling price of this dinner set is \$1,500.

焦

JIÀO

burnt;
scorched

Bird (焦) over fire (焦) means "burnt or scorched"; 焦, and by extension, "worried or anxious." Man has always felt like a bird over fire. In the words of the saying: "One does not live a hundred years, yet worries enough for a thousand."



丿 丨 丩 𠂇 𠂇 𠂇 佳 佳 佳 佳 焦 焦 焦 焦 焦 焦 焦 焦

焦点	jiāo diǎn	focal point
焦化	jiāo huà	coking
焦黄	jiāo huáng	sallow; brown
焦急	jiāo jí	anxious
焦距	jiāo jù	focal distance; focal length

焦渴	jiāo kě	terribly thirsty; parched
焦虑	jiāo lù	feel anxious
焦炭	jiāo tàn	coke
焦土	jiāo tǔ	scorched earth - ravages of war
焦头烂额	jiāo tóu làn é	badly battered; in a terrible fix

Example

这块饼被烤焦了。

zhè kuài bǐng bèi kǎo jiāo le.

This piece of biscuit is burnt.

难

(難)

The phonetic 隹 is a contraction of yellow (黃) earth (土) — clay dried in the sun and therefore barren. The addition of bird (隹) as radical suggests the plight of birds living in such an environment. Hence: 难, signifying difficulty or distress. The simplified form: 难 conveys the idea even more forcefully: a bird (隹) firmly grasped in the hand (又).

NÁN difficult; not easy



ナ ナ ナ ナ ナ ナ 难 难 难

难倒	nán dǎo	daunt
难得	nán dé	hard to come by; rare
难怪	nán guài	no wonder
难过	nán guò	have a hard time; be grieved
难堪	nán kān	intolerable; embarrassed

难看	nán kàn	ugly
难受	nán shòu	feel unwell
难忘	nán wàng	unforgettable
难为情	nán wéi qíng	ashamed; shy
难言之隐	nán yán zhī yǐn	something which would be awkward to disclose

Example

这条路很难走。

zhè tiáo lù hěn nán zǒu

This road is difficult to pass.

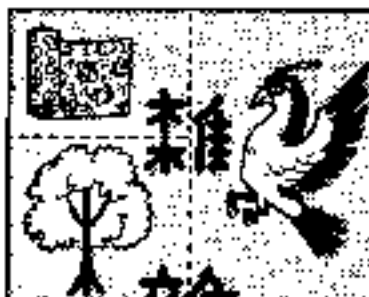
杂 (雜)

ZÁ mixed; assorted

This character itself is mixed up. Originally it was written: 𪛗, apparently with 木 as radical and 𪛗 as phonetic, suggesting an assortment of cloth (𪛗) stitched together (𪛗) to form a garment. The regular form mixes up the components by adopting 隹 (bird) as radical and 𪛗 (contracted combination of 木 and 木) as phonetic. The simplified form straightens it out with nine (九) trees (木), i.e. variety: 𪛗.



𪛗



𪛗



杂

70146

九	九	九	杂	杂	杂														
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杂草	zá cǎo	weeds	杂务	zá wù	sundry duties
杂费	zá fèi	sundry fees	杂志	zá zhì	magazine
杂货	zá huò	groceries	夹杂	jiā rǎ	mingled; mixed
杂技	zá jì	acrobatics	杂而不乱	zá ér bù luàn	mixed but not confused
杂乱	zá luàn	in a jumble	杂乱无章	zá luàn wú zhāng	disorderly and unsystematic

Example

这花盆长满了杂草。

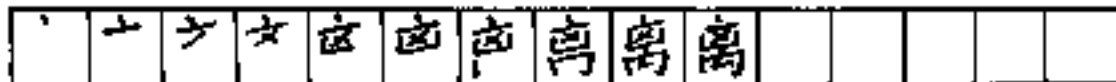
Zhè huā péng mǎng mǎn le zá cǎo.

This flower pot is full of weeds.

离 (離)

lí part; leave; separate

鷦 was formerly used for the oriole, an elegant golden bird, — 离 meaning sunny and 住 meaning bird. When the oriole made its rare appearance in spring, it was the signal for daughters of marriageable age to wed and leave their parental home; hence the idea of "to leave." 住 has since separated from 离, leaving the simplified form 离.



离别	lí bié	part; bid farewell
离婚	lí hūn	divorce
离间	lí jiàn	sow discord
离境	lí jìng	leave a country or place
离开	lí kāi	leave, depart from; deviate from

离奇	lí qí	odd; fantastic
离题	lí tí	stray from the subject
距离	jù lí	distance
离乡背井	lí xiāng bèi jǐng	leave one's native place
离群索居	lí qún suǒ jū	live in solitude

Example

她离家已经三年了。

Tā lí jiā yǐ jīng sān nián le.

She's been away from home for three years.

鸡

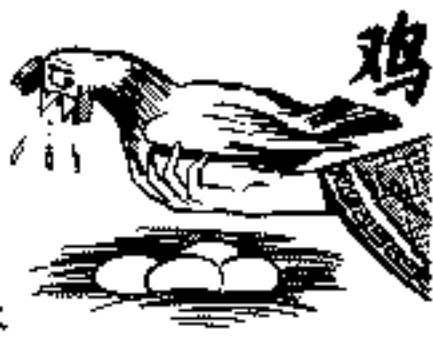
(鷄)

Jī chicken

THE radical 鳥 stands for bird. The phonetic 奚 signifies an adult (大) with hand (扌) or 扌 on silk thread (奚 or 奚) a spinner. Previously, women prisoners were condemned to spinning without getting any benefit, not unlike the chicken confined to the labour of laying eggs for its owner. A bird (鳥) on hand (扌) produces the simplified character 鸡, a really handy bird.



鷄
雞



PM115

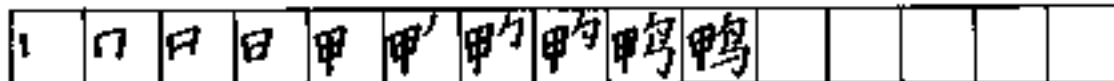
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鸭

(鴨)

甲 — meaning armour, protective covering or shell — is the distinguishing phonetic here. The duck is probably the hardiest of birds, with a natural immunity to disease and ability to withstand severe environmental conditions. Hence: 鸭, the well-protected (甲) bird (鳥). Nevertheless, the proverb has the last word: "Compare a duck with a goose, and the duck will be unsalable."

Yā duck



鸭蛋

yā dàn

duck's egg

鸭绒

yā róng

duck's down; eiderdown

公鸭

gōng yā

drake

母鸭

mǔ yā

duck

小鸭

xiǎo yā

duckling

鸭舌帽

yā shé mào

peaked cap

鸭嘴笔

yā zuǐ bǐ

drawing pen; ruling pen

鸭嘴兽

yā zuǐ shòu

platypus; duckbill

Example

你吃过北京鸭吗？

Nǐ chī guò Běi jīng yā ma?

Have you tried Beijing duck?

鸽 (鸽)

GE dove; pigeon

合 indicates harmony of many (△) mouths (口), △ symbolising unity and agreement of three lines forming a balanced triangle. 鸽, ideographically refers to the dove or pigeon — the bird (鳥) that flacks together in peace, harmony and unity (合).



一 人 人 人 合 合 合' 合' 合' 鸽 鸽

鸽子	gē · zi	pigeon; dove
家鸽	jiā gē	domestic pigeon
野鸽	yě gē	wild pigeon
鸽子笼	gē - a lóng	pigeon cage

Example

在伦敦的特拉法广场有许多鸽子。

Zài lún dūn - de tè lǎ fǎ guǎng chǎng yǒu xǔ duō gē - z

There are many pigeons at the Trafalgar Square in London.

凤

(鳳)

易鳳

FÈNG phoenix (male)

ORIGINALLY, the phoenix was represented by 鳳 (鳳), its tail. As it flew, it drew all birds to it in friendship. Eventually 鳳 became a symbol of friendship, and a new character was adapted for the phoenix: 鳳 — a pictograph of the bird — retaining its to wind (風) in sound and symbol. The simplified form substitutes a friendly hand (友) for the friendly phoenix: 凤.



凤凰

fēng huáng

phoenix

凤梨

fēng lí

pineapple

凤尾鱼

fēng wěi yú

anchovy

凤尾竹

fēng wěi zhú

fernleaf hedge bamboo

凤仙花

fēng xiān huā

balsam plant

凤毛麟角

fēng máo lín jiǎo

phoenix feathers and unicorn horns — (fig.) rarity of rarities

Example

她的衣服上绣有· · 只凤凰。

Tā de yī fú shàng xiù yǒu yī zhī fēng huáng.

There is a phoenix embroidered on her dress.

燕

燕 燕 燕 燕

YÀN swallow

燕 is a symmetrical pictograph of the swallow flying upwards. Swallows abound in the northern hemisphere and are always a welcome sight in spring. The swallow (燕) is fondly remembered as a bird from the north (北), flying across the waters (水) with a stalk (一) of grain (禾) in its mouth (口).



燕麦	yàn mǎi	oats
燕鸥	yàn'ōu	tern
燕巢	yàn chāo	hobby
燕窝	yàn wō	edible bird's nest
燕鱼	yàn yú	Spanish mackerel
燕子	yàn · zi	swallow
燕尾服	yàn wěi fú	tuxedo

Example

燕窝是一种珍贵的食品。

Yàn wō shì yī zhǒng zhēn guì de shí pǐn.

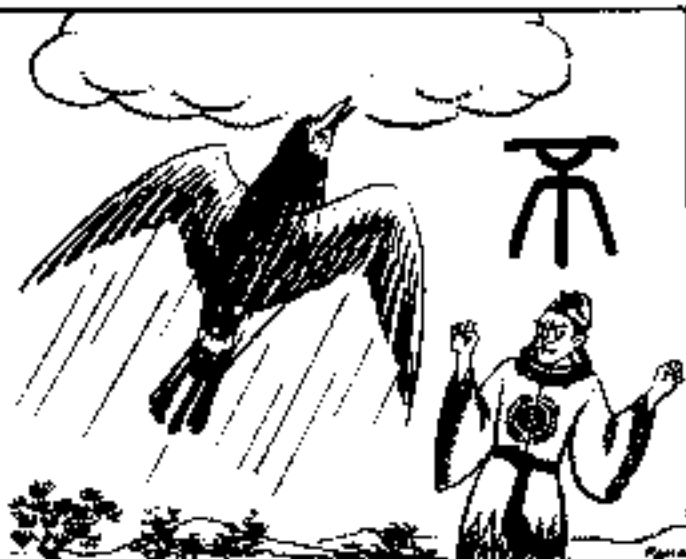
Bird's nest is a valuable delicacy.

不

BÙ

not

THIS character represents a bird flying up towards the sky and disappearing from sight, as if becoming non-existent. The horizontal stroke (一) signifies the sky as the limit, blocking the bird (小) from ever reaching its destination. Hence the idea of "not", a negative: 不. Arrogant man, unable even to walk with his fellow-man, now tries to fly; to him also, the sky is the limit.



一 丿 才 不

不安	bù ān	uneasy; disturbed
不便	bù biàn	inconvenient
不断	bù duàn	continuous
不顾	bù gù	in spite of; regardless of
不得已	bù dé yǐ	act against one's will

不客气	bù kè qì	impolite
不辞而别	bù cí ér bié	leave without saying goodbye
不得人心	bù dé rén xīn	be unpopular
不怀好意	bù huái hǎo yì	harbour evil designs
不欢而散	bù huān ér sǎn	break up in discord

Example

社会是在不断地进步中。
 Shì huì shì zài bù duàn de jìn bù zhōng
 Society is constantly making progress.

歪

wāi

crooked

歪

正

歪 is an ideograph composed of two characters: 不 (not) and 正 (upright). It means not straight, i.e., crooked. 正 itself indicates stopping (止) at a line or limit (一), without going astray, hence upright. Although imperfect, we do well to heed the proverbial counsel: "Stand upright, and don't worry if your shadow is crooked."



一 丌 丌 丌 丌 丌 丌 歪

歪风

wāi fēng

unhealthy trend

歪曲

wāi qū

distort, misrepresent

歪诗

wāi shī

inelegant verses; doggerel

歪斜

wāi xié

crooked

歪歪扭扭

wāi wāi niǔ niǔ

crooked; askew; shapeless and twisted

邪门歪道

xié mén wāi dào

crooked ways; dishonest practices

Example

这堵墙有点歪。

zhè dǔ qiáng yǒu diǎn wāi

This wall is a little tilted.

至

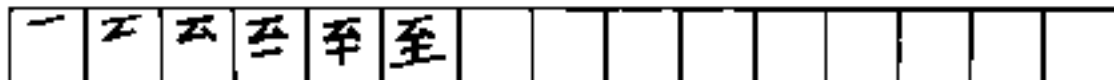
zhì

arrive;
reach

THE character 至 is the opposite of 不 which represents a bird flying straight upwards but unable to reach its destination. The original form 𠂔 is a pictograph of a bird, bending its wings and darting downwards to the earth and reaching it. 𠂔 is the modern form, meaning: arrive or reach.



12345



至诚	zhì chéng	utmost sincerity
至多	zhì duō	at the most
至交	zhì jiāo	most intimate friend
至今	zhì jīn	up to now; so far
至上	zhì shàng	supreme; the highest

至少	zhì shǎo	at the least
至死	zhì sǐ	till death
至于	zhì yú	as for; as to
至高无上	zhì gāo wú shàng	most lofty; supreme
至理名言	zhì lǐ míng yán	maxim; famous dictum

Example

我至今还未得到他的答复。

Wǒ zhì jīn hái wèi dé dào tā de dá fù .

So far, I've had no reply from him yet.



wū house

THE phonetic 至 means to arrive or reach, and the radical 尸 is a reclining figure. 屋 is where you recline (尸) on arrival (至) — a place of rest, a house. And a house, once built, is permanently at rest; hence the saying: "Before you build a house, know your neighbourhood."



一	丿	尸	尸	尸	尸	尸	尸	尸								
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

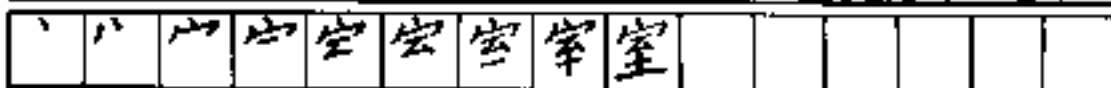
屋顶	wū dǐng	roof
屋脊	wū jǐ	ridge (of a roof)
屋架	wū jià	roof truss
屋檐	wū yán	eaves
屋宇	wū yǔ	house
屋子	wū - zi	dwelling place
瓦屋面	wǎ wū miàn	tile roofing
世界屋脊	shì jiè wū jǐ	the roof of the world (The Himalayas)

室

shì

room;
chamber

THE Ideograph 室 suggests arrival (至) at a destination under a roof (宀), i.e., a room enclosed by walls. And because there are two sides to the wall, "One family builds a wall, two families enjoy it."



室外	shì wài	outdoor
课堂	kè táng	classroom
卧室	wú shì	bedroom
办公室	bàn gōng shì	office
会客室	huì kè shì	reception room
室内设计	shì nèi shè jì	interior designing
室内装饰	shì nèi zhuāng shì	interior decorating

Example

他把一架电视机放在卧室里。

Tā bǎ yī jià diàn shì jī fàng zài wú shì lǐ

He put a TV set in his bedroom.

龟

(龜)

guī

tortoise

THE tortoise is a symbol of longevity, having a life span of over 150 years. Unassuming and coldblooded but harmless, it is described as an animal with its "flesh inside and bones outside." The character for tortoise is a pictograph, with an evolutionary history as slow and steady as the creature itself.



龜 龜 龜 龜 龜 龜 龜 龜

ノ	ク	ク	名	名	昌	龜								
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

龟板

guī bǎn

tortoise plastron

龟背

guī bèi

curvature of the spinal column

龟甲

guī jiǎ

tortoise-shell

龟缩

guī suō

withdraw into passive defence

乌龟

wū guī

tortoise

Example

乌龟的寿命很长。

wū guī de shòu mìng hěn cháng

The tortoise has a long life-span

易

yì

change, easy

易 bears the likeness of a chameleon, a lizard that changes its colour easily to blend with its background. This change of colour is "as easy as turning over one's palm" (易如反掌). Hence the extended meaning: change or easy.

易 易 易 易 易



一 口 月 日 月 易 易 易

易经

Yì Jīng

The Book of Changes

轻易

qīng yì

easily

容易

róng yì

easy

易燃物

yì rán wù

combustibles; inflammables

易如反掌

yì rú fǎn zhǎng

as easy as turning one's hand over — (fig.) very easy

Example

这是件很容易的事，让我来做吧！

zhè shì jiàn hěn róng yì de shì , ràng wǒ lái zuò , ba !

This is an easy matter, let me do it!

龙

(龍)

LÓNG

dragon

THE primitive form was a pictograph of the dragon: 龍. The regular form: 龍, although resembling the royal creature, is made up of 𠂔 (contraction of 飛, wings), 月 (body), and 立 (contraction of 立, imperial or glorious; hence the saying: "With money you are a dragon, without it you are a worm.")



一 九 龙 龙

龙船

lóng chuán

dragon boat

龙卷

lóng juǎn

spout

龙虾

lóng xiā

lobster

龙眼

lóng yǎn

longan

龙钟

lóng zhōng

senile

龙卷风

lóng juǎn fēng

tornado

龙飞凤舞

lóng fēi fēng wǔ

like dragons flying and phoenixes dancing — (fig.) lively and vigorous

龙潭虎穴

lóng tán hǔ xué

dragon's pool and tiger's den — (fig.) a danger spot

龙争虎斗

lóng zhēng hǔ dòu

a fierce struggle between two evenly-matched opponents

Example:

龙是古代中国皇族的象征。

Lóng shì gǔ dài Zhōng Guó huáng zú - de xiàng zhēng

The dragon is a symbol of nobility in ancient China.

角

JIAO

horn; corner;
10-cent piece

THE radical 角 resembles a horn with its strokes. It is probably a combination of 力 (strong) and 月 (Beak). Because the horn terminates in an angle and tapers to a point, 角 can mean angle or corner. 角 is also a 10-cent piece, a mere tenth or "corner" of a dollar.



角尺	jiǎo chǐ	angle square
角度	jiǎo dù	angle
角落	jiǎo luò	corner; nook
角膜	jiǎo mó	cornea
角质	jiǎo zhì	cutin

号角	hào jiǎo	bugle
鹿角	lù jiǎo	antler
牛角	niú jiǎo	ox horn
角锥体	jiǎo zhuī tǐ	pyramid
角柱体	jiǎo zhù tǐ	prism

Example

在院子的一个角落里有一棵树。

Zài yuàn zi de yí gè jiǎo luò li yǒu yí kē shù.

There is a tree in the corner of the courtyard.

解

jiě

divide; untie; explain

THIS character combines the radical for horn (角) with knife (刀) and ox (牛). To cleave the horn of an ox requires the use of a knife; hence 解: to divide. The horn of an ox is also shaped like bodkins (刀) for untying knots. So 解 also means to untie, undo, unravel and, by extension, explain. The ancient lexicon 说文解字 explains the origin of Chinese characters.



角 角 角 角 角 角 角 解 解 解 解 解 解 解 解 解 解

解除	jiě chú	remove	解闷	jiě mèn	divert oneself from boredom
解答	jiě dá	answer; explain	解剖	jiě pōu	dissect
解雇	jiě gù	discharge; dismiss	解脱	jiě tuō	free oneself
解决	jiě jué	solve; dispose of	溶解	róng jiě	dissolve
解开	jiě kāi	untie	注解	zhù jiě	explanatory notes

Example

我们终于解决了这个难题。

Wǒ men zhōng yú jiě le zhè ge nán tí

We solved the problem finally.

毛

MÁO

hair; fur;
10-cent piece

毛

毛 is a pictograph of the hair of man or beast. Compared with other parts of the body, the hair is insignificant and valueless. 毛 also means little, unpolished, or the common 10-cent piece. Our hairs may not be numbered but, says the proverb: "Pull a hair and the whole body may be affected."



WANG

毛

毛笔 máo bǐ writing brush
毛纺 máo fāng wool spinning
毛巾 máo jīn towel
毛孔 máo kǒng pore
毛毯 máo tǎn woollen blanket

毛线 máo xiàn knitting wool
毛衣 máo yī woollen sweater
羽毛 yǔ máo feather
毛毛雨 máo - máo yǔ drizzle
毛骨悚然 máo gǔ sǒng rán with one's hair standing on end - (fig.) absolutely terrified

Example

他的毛病是性急。
Tā de máo bìng shì xìng jí
He is impetuous.

尾

wěi

tail; end

尾 has 尸 (a recumbent body) as radical and 毛 (hair) as phonetic. In the seal form 毛 is inverted, indicating hair growing downwards from the body (尸), suggesting a tail: 尾. The tail is meant to be wagged by the body but when the people are strong and the ruler weak, "The tail is too large to wag" (尾大不掉).

人
大
尾
尾



1984.6

一 尸 尸 尸 尸 尸 尾

尾巴

wěi bā

tail

尾灯

wěi dēng

tail light; tail lamp

尾欠

wěi qiǎn

balance due

尾声

wěi shēng

epilogue; end

尾随

wěi suí

tag along; follow at somebody's heel

尾追

wěi zhuī

in hot pursuit

Example

这个研讨会已接近尾声了。

Zhè ge yáo yǎo huì yì jīn jìn wěi shēng - le

This seminar is drawing to an end.

老

Lǎo

old; aged

老耆老

THE seal character for "old" grew out of 老 (hair), 人 (person) and 匕 (change). When the hair of man turns gray or white, its colour has changed, indicating old age: 老, now arbitrarily shrunk to 老. To encourage respect for white hair, the old saying warns: "Laugh at the old, and age will laugh at you."



FENG

一 十 土 𠂔 𠂔 老

老板

lǎo bǎn

boss; employer

老成

lǎo chéng

experienced; steady

老将

lǎo jiàng

veteran; old-timer

老练

lǎo liàn

seasoned; experienced

老牛

lǎo niú

old age

老实

lǎo shí

honest; frank

老气横秋

lǎo qì héng qiū

lacking in youthful vigour

老生常谈

lǎo shēng cháng tán

common place; platitude

老羞成怒

lǎo xiū chéng nù

fly into a rage out of shame

老着脸皮

lǎo zhe liǎn pí

unabashedly; unblushingly

Example

她办事很老练。

Tā bàn shì hěn lǎo liàn.

She works with an experienced hand.

票

PIÀO

bill; ticket; ballot

THE early seal form: 𤇀 represents an ancient method of signalling — fire (火) with rising smoke (𤇀) manipulated by four hands (𤇀). This suggests ticket or ballot as form of sign. Another seal form: 𤇁 depicts the mischievous fairy of the phantom-fire, a dreaded natural phenomenon. It stands for bill or warrant — things also dreaded. The modern arbitrary form: 票 may be remembered as a bank bill, a western (西) token (示).



PLATE



票額 piào'é the sum stated on a cheque or bill; denomination

票房 piào fáng booking office

票根 piào gēn counterfoil; stub

票價 piào jià the price of a ticket

票面 piào miàn nominal value

票箱 piào xiāng ballot box

票子 piào zi bank note; paper money; bill

綁票 bǎng piào kidnap

車票 chē piào ticket (bus)

投票 tóu piào vote

Example

这场戏是要凭票入场的。

Zhè chǎng xì shì yào píng piào rù chǎng de.

Admission to this show is by ticket only.

爬

PÁ

crawl;
creep;
climb

爬 combines two pictographs: 爪 (claw) is the right hand, palm down, resting on the finger-tips; 乙 (bam) is a snake raised on its tail. Hence 爬: to crawl, creep or climb, like a snake. Climbing is not plain sailing according to the saying: "Following virtue is like climbing a hill; following vice is like sailing downstream."



PCH

'	丿	爪	乙	爬	爬	爬	爬	爬	爬							
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

爬虫

pà chóng

reptile; insect

爬竿

pá gān

climbing pole; pole-climbing

爬犁

pá lí

sledge

爬山

pá shān

mountain-climbing

爬行

pá xíng

crawl; creep

Example

蛇止往洞里爬。

Shé zhǐ wǎng dòng lǐ pá.

The snake is crawling into the hole.

为

(爲)

A PICTOGRAPH based on reason, 理, originally was a female monkey with a human body: 𠃉 because of the resemblance. It was borrowed for "because" and contracted to two claws: 𠃉 because the female monkey was most prone to claw. To include the meaning "to do, to be" it took on a more human form: 𠃉, a hand carding textile fibres to remove unessentials, leading to the simplified form: 为

WÉI because WÉI to be; to do



10/10

、ノ为为

为何 wéi hé why
为难 wéi nán feel awkward; make things difficult
为期 wéi qī by a definite date; duration
为人 wéi rén behave; conduct oneself
为止 wéi zhǐ up to

为重 wéi zhòng attach most importance to
为主 wéi zhǔ give priority to
为非作歹 wéi fēi zuò dǎi do evil
为富不仁 wéi fù bù rén be rich and cruel; be one of the heartless rich
为所欲为 wéi suǒ yù wéi have one's own way

Example

他是新来的同事，大家千万不可为难他。

tā shì xīn lái de tóng shì, dà jiā qiān wàn bù kě wéi nán tā

He's a new colleague, we should not make things difficult for him.

争

(爭)

ZHÈNG

contend;
fight;
quarrel

THIS ideograph features two hands tugging at an object. The older forms graphically portray the quarrel or fight between two pairs of hands. Though the left hand conquers, the right-hand advantage is gained. Hence: "Pottery and fine porcelain must not fight" and "Eggs must not quarrel with stones."



PM 148



争辩	zhēng biàn	argue
争吵	zhēng chǎo	quarrel
争持	zhēng chí	refuse to give in
争斗	zhēng dòu	fight; struggle; strife
争端	zhēng duān	controversial issue; dispute; conflict

争今	zhēng jīn	fight
争论	zhēng lùn	controversy; dispute
争执	zhēng zhí	disagree; dispute; argue
争权夺利	zhēng quán duó lì	scramble for power and profit
争先恐后	zhēng xiān kǒng hòu	strive to be the first and fear to lag behind

Example

你们在争论什么？

Nǐ men zài zhēng lùn shén me?

What are all of you arguing about?

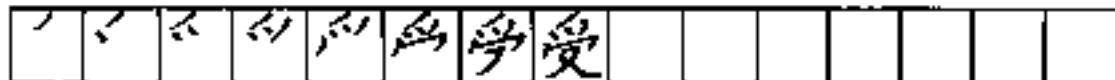
受

SHÒU

receive;
accept

受 受 受 受 受

THIS character represents the loading of goods. A hand (扌), on the bank, delivers the goods while another hand (又), in the boat, (舟) receives and stows them away in the hold. In the seal form the boat can be seen in symbol: 舟, eventually contracted to 舟 and 舟. The ideograph, by extension, means "receive, accept, endure."



受苦
受难
受罚
受害
受惊

shòu kǔ
shòu nàn
shòu fá
shòu hài
shòu jīng

suffer
suffer calamities
be punished
victimized
be frightened; be startled

受气
受伤
受益
享受
受不了

shòu qì
shòu shāng
shòu yì
xiǎng shòu
shòu bù liǎo

be bullied
be wounded
benefit from
enjoy
cannot bear; unable to endure

Example

他受不了老板的态度。

Tā shòu bù liǎo lǎo bǎn de tài dù .

He cannot tolerate the boss's attitude

皮

pí

skin; leather

THREE components make up the character for skin: 反, the hand that flays; 犭, the animal skin; and 刀, the knife. The animal skin, being durable, may be compared to the reputation of a man, as in the saying: "Man dies and leaves a name; the tiger dies and leaves a skin."



PHILIP



皮袄	pí'ǎo	fur-lined jacket
皮包	pí bāo	leather handbag
皮带	pí dài	leather belt
皮蛋	pí dàn	preserved egg
皮肤	pí fū	skin
皮箱	pí xiāng	leather suitcase
皮鞋	pí xié	leather shoes
皮鞭子	pí biān · zi	leather-thonged whip

Example

他 踏 到 香 蕉 皮 ， 摔 了 一 跤 。
 Tā tà dào xiāng jiāo pí, shuāi le yī jiāo

He stepped on a banana skin and slipped.

假

jiǎ

false

假

IN THE seal form, 𠂇 (two) added to 𠂇 (skin) produces 𠂇, two skins or double skin — a borrowed skin over one's true skin — suggesting a disguise, a falsehood. Clarified by the radical for man (亻), the character has special application to man, the one most guilty of falsehood: 假. Truth exaggerated becomes a falsehood, and when "one man tells a falsehood, a hundred repeat it as truth."



丿 亻 亻 亻 亻 亻 亻 亻 假 假 假 假 假 假 假 假

假扮

jiǎ bàn

disguise oneself

假充

jiǎ chōng

pretend to be

假定

jiǎ dìng

suppose

假想

jiǎ xiǎng

imagination

假如

jiǎ rú

if

假设

jiǎ shè

suppose

假面具

jiǎ miàn jù

mask; false front

假惺惺

jiǎ xīng - xing

hypocritically; unctuously

假公济私

jiǎ gōng jì sī

use public office for private gain

假仁假义

jiǎ rén jiǎ yì

hypocrisy

Example

假如我忘了，请提醒我一下。

jiǎ rú wó wàng - le, qǐng tí xǐng wǒ yí xià

Please remind me if I forget.

须 (須)

xū must: wait: beard

THIS is a photograph showing a man's head (首) upon his body (身) with hair (髮) on his face — his beard: 須.

In ancient days, it was necessary for a man to wait for the right time to grow a beard, namely, when he was master of a family. Hence the extended meanings: must, necessary, wait.

身須須



须要	xū yào	have to
须知	xū zhī	one should know that
须发	xū fà	beard and hair
须根	xū gēn	fibrous root
须臾	xū yú	moment; instant
必须	bì xū	must
留须	liú xū	grow a beard

Example

做这项工作须要小心。

zuò zhè xiàng gōng zuò xū yào xī xīn

This work needs to be done with care.

头

(頭)

TÓU head

頭 has 頁 for radical and 豆 for phonetic. 頁 is a picture of a head (首) upon the body (人). 豆 is a sacrificial vessel for serving meat; it suggests the skull, containing the meaty part of the body, the brain. Hence 頭 the head, where the brain is contained. The simplified form may have lost its head 头, but the saying still goes: "You can cut off the head but you can't stop the tongue."



丶 丶 丶 头 头

头版	tóu bǎn	front page (of a newspaper)
头等	tóu děng	first-class
头发	tóu fà	hair
头昏	tóu hūn	dizzy; giddy
头巾	tóu jīn	scarf
头脑	tóu nǎo	brains; mind
头疼	tóu téng	headache
头头是道	tóu tóu shì dào	closely reasoned and well argued
茫无头绪	máng wú tóu xù	be in a hopeless tangle

Example

她很有头脑。

Tā hěn yǒu tóu nǎo.

She has a good brain.

虫

(蟲)

CHÓNG

insect; worm

THE seal form of the radical 虫 represents a snake or worm. 𧈧, the triple-form, includes small crawling, creeping or swarming creatures like bugs, insects, worms and reptiles (now simplified to 虫). Biting at the predatory habits of human beings, the saying goes: "While the mantis is after the clouds, the sparrow is not far behind."




丶	冂	口	中	虫	虫										
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虫灾	chóng zāi	plague of insects
虫子	chóng - zi	insect; worm
害虫	hài chóng	destructive insect (pest)
蛔虫	huí chóng	roundworm
益虫	yì chóng	(beneficial) insect
幼虫	yòu chóng	larva
寄生虫	jì shēng chóng	parasite
微生物	wēi shēng chóng	bacteria

Example

蛔虫是肚子里的寄生虫：

Huí chóng shì dù - zǐ lǐ - de jì shēng chóng

Roundworms are parasites in the stomach.

蜂

FĒNG bee, wasp

虫 (insect) forms the radical for this character. The phonetic 丰 signifies walking slowly (走) or working one's way through backward (丰): by extension, to meet opposition. The bee is equipped to fight opposition. When provoked, it uses its sting and dies; but it will not take advantage of the weak and harmless.



蜂巢	fēng cháo	honeycomb
蜂刺	fēng cì	the sting of a bee or wasp
蜂毒	fēng dú	bee venom
蜂蜡	fēng là	beeswax
蜂蜜	fēng mì	honey

蜂鸟	fēng niǎo	hummingbird
蜂乳	fēng rǔ	royal jelly
蜂王	fēng wáng	queen bee; queen wasp
蜂拥	fēng yōng	swarm; flock
蜜蜂	mì fēng	honeybee

Example

蜂蜜营养丰富。

fēng mì jīng yǎng fēng fù

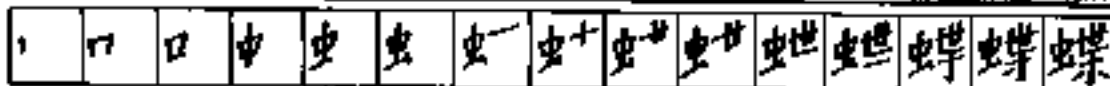
Honey is nutritious.

蝶

dié

butterfly

THE character for butterfly: 蝶, the most beautiful of insects, is based on the radical 虫 (insect). It owes its beauty to its colourful leaf-like wings, some species even mimicking leaves. Fittingly, its phonetic: 蝶 is a representation of leaves that reappear yearly — the successive generations (世) of a tree (木).



蝶骨
蝶泳
蝴蝶

dié gǔ
dié yǒng
hú dié

sphenoid bone
butterfly stroke (swimming)
butterfly

Example

蝴蝶在花间嬉戏。

Hú dié zài huā jiān xī xì。

Butterflies are playing among the flowers

虾(蝦)

XII prawo: shrimp

蝦 the shrimp, sheds its skin while growing another. It is the creature with a false (假) skin, literally two 二 (二) skins (皮). 蝦 is now simplified to 虾 — the creature (虫) below (下) or low-down. Combining the puny shrimp with the mighty dragon produces the lobster (龙虾). But comparing their generates the proverb: "The dragon in shallow water becomes the butt of shrimp."



Results

1	口	口	虫	虫	虫	虫	虫	虫					
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虾饼	xiā bǐng	prawn-crackers
虾干	xiā gān	dried shrimps
虾姑	xiā gū	mantis shrimp
虾酱	xiā jiàng	shrimp paste
虾米	xiā mǐ	dried, shelled shrimps
虾皮	xiā pí	dried small shrimps

虾群	xiā qún	a shoal of shrimps
虾仁	xiā rén	shelled fresh shrimps; shrimp meat
龙虾	lóng xiā	lobster
虾兵蟹将	xiā bīng xiè jiāng	shrimp soldiers and crab generals — ineffective troops

Example

我弟弟喜欢吃虾饼。

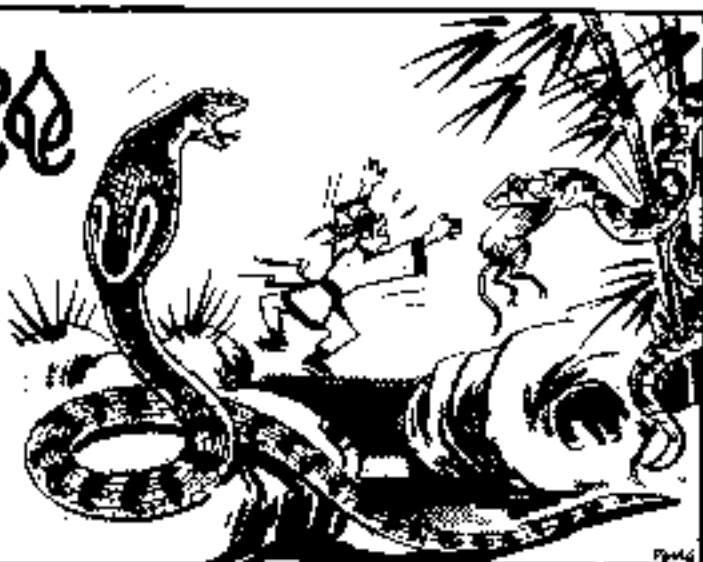
khởi . đi . về . đi . học . chơi . đi . nghỉ

My brother likes prawn-crackers.

蛇

蛇 snake, serpent

蛇 features 虫 (reptile) as radical and 它 (snake) as phonetic. It is probably a cobra, poised on its tail (乚), with distended neck (山) and darting tongue (ノ). Snakes prey on lizards, mice, birds and even larger creatures, swallowing them whole. Hence the saying: "A man whose heart is not content is like a snake which tries to swallow an elephant."



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蛋

DÀN egg

蛋 refers to the ball rolled (滚) by the dung-beetle (屎壳郎) for food or for breeding; by extension, egg. 滚 (real form of 滚) signifies the foot (足) turning or rolling (转). Paired beetles work closely together to mould, roll and bury the dung-ball housing the egg. With poultry, however, the cock crows, but the hen lays the egg.



蛋白	dàn bái	egg-white
蛋粉	dàn fěn	powdered eggs
蛋糕	dàn gāo	cake
蛋黄	dàn huáng	yolk
蛋壳	dàn ké	egg-shell
蛋品	dàn pǐn	egg products
蛋清	dàn qīng	egg-white

蛋白质	dàn bái zhì	protein
蛋用鸡	dàn yòng jī	layer
鸡飞蛋打	jī fēi dàn dǎ	the hen has flown away and the eggs in the coop are broken - all is lost

Example

多吃含有蛋白质的东西对身体有益。

Duō chī yǒu yǒu dàn bái zhì de dōng xī duì shēn tǐ yǒu yì.

More protein is good for the body.

风 (風)

FĒNG wind

THE seal form: 風 is based on man's belief that insects (虫) are born under the influence of the wind or vapour (气). An older form: 風 - from 日 (sun), 凡 (motion) and 凡 (extension) - suggests that wind is produced by the action of the sun. The simplified form, however, cuts out the sun and insects, leaving the motion and extension; 风, which goes to prove that "Man's words are like grass - they away with the wind."



風

風



PANG

丿	乚	风	风												
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风采	fēng cǎi	elegant demeanour
风干	fēng gān	air-dry
风格	fēng gé	style
风光	fēng guāng	scene; view
风浪	fēng làng	stormy waves, storm

风靡	fēng mǐ	fashionable
风气	fēng qì	general mood; atmosphere
风趣	fēng qù	humour; wit
风俗	fēng sú	custom
风云人物	fēng yún rén wù	man of the hour

Example

迷你裙曾经风靡一时。

Mǐ nǐ qún céng jīng fēng mǐ yí shí

The mini-skirt was all the rage at one time.

公

GŌNG

public;
impartial

公 is made up of 八 (division, opposition) and 私 (private, selfish), a pictograph of a silkworm coiled in its cocoon. It implies the division (八) of private (私) property for the benefit of the public. Hence 公, meaning public or impartial, i.e., opposed (八) to private or selfish (私).



Dybb



公道	gōng dào	reasonable
公共	gōng gòng	public
公分	gōng fēn	centimetre (cm)
公愤	gōng fèn	public indignation, popular anger
公民	gōng mín	citizen
公式	gōng shì	formula

公司	gōng sī	company; corporation
公用	gōng yòng	for public use
公寓	gōng yú	apartment
公园	gōng yuán	park
公制	gōng zhì	the metric system
公众	gōng zhòng	the public

Example

这个电话是公用的。

Zhè - ge diàn huà shì gōng yòng - de.

This telephone is for public use.

丝

(絲)

sī silk

丝 is the seal form of 系, the radical for silk. The upper 8 represents two cocoons; the lower part 巾, the twisting of several strands into a thread. 系 is duplicated to stand for silk, indicating that many threads are required to form silk: 絲. In the modern version the two identical components are woven together and simplified to 丝.



丝绉	sī chóu	silk cloth
丝带	sī dài	silk ribbon; silk braid; silk sash
丝毯	sī tǎn	a bit
丝绒	sī róng	velvet
丝状	sī zhuàng	filiform
肉丝	ròu sī	meat floss

丝织品	sī zhī pǐn	silk fabrics
丝丝入扣	sī sī rù kòu	(done) with meticulous care and flawless artistry
一丝不挂	yī sī bù guà	not have a stitch on; be stark-naked
一丝一毫	yī sī yī háo	a tiny bit; an iota, a trace

Example

她脸上没有一丝笑容。
Tā liǎn shàng méi yǒu yī sī xiào róng.

There isn't a trace of a smile on her face.

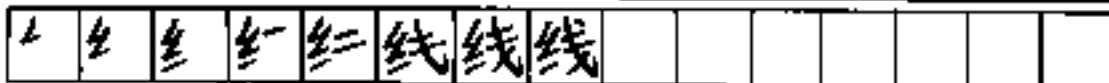
线 (綫)

Xiàn thread

THE radical is 糸 (silk). The phonetic 线 mostly small, fine or split into bits — the common work of many spears (线). Hence 线: thread, made up of minute 线 (strands of silk) (线). Another version is 綫, with 泉 (spring) as phonetic. Here the thread is likened to a continuous flow of water from a spring. Whichever the version, "The thread cannot pass without a needle; the boat cannot cross without water."



Photo



线虫
线段
线描
线绳
线索

xiàn chóng
xiàn duàn
xiàn miáo
xiàn shéng
xiàn suǒ

nematode
line segment
line drawing
cotton rope
clue

线装
光线
铜线
直线
线轴儿

xiàn zhuāng
guāng xiàn
tóng xiàn
zhí xiàn
xiàn zhóu

traditional thread
binding (of Chinese books)
light ray
copper wire
straight line
bobbin

Example

那些难民在饥饿线上挣扎。

Nà xiē nán mín zài jī è xiàn shàng zhēng zhá.

The refugees are struggling against starvation.

红 (紅)

HÓNG red

RED is a happy, auspicious colour, most pleasing to the Chinese. Because it is not the natural colour of silk (丝), extra work (工) has to be put in to dye it red: 东工. Red, however, is not always propitious, as in the saying: 红颜薄命 (Beautiful women are often unfortunate).



红豆	hóng dòu	red beans; red seeds
红海	Hóng Hǎi	Red Sea
红利	hóng lì	bonus
红润	hóng rùn	rosy
红晕	hōng yūn	blush; flush

红运	hóng yùn	good luck
红卵	hóng lǎn	red and swollen
口红	kǒu hóng	lipstick
红白事	hóng bái shì	weddings and funerals
红绿灯	hóng lǜ dēng	traffic lights; traffic signals

Example

他的脸上泛出红晕。

Tā de liǎn shàng fàn chū hóng yūn.

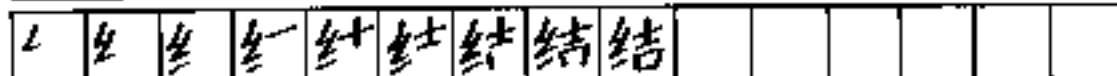
His face was red.

结 (結)

JIE

knot;
produce;
settle

THE phonetic 吉 means fortunate — from 事 (affair) and 口 (mouth) — an affair worth announcing. In this character, the radical 糸 (silk) enforces the idea of tying or making secure something fortunate, e.g., concluding a contract, producing fruitage or tying a knot: 結. Illustrated is the successful conclusion of an affair worth announcing — the tying of the matrimonial knot.



结拜	jié bài	become sworn brothers or sisters
结冰	jié bīng	freeze
结彩	jié cǎi	adorn or decorate
结果	jié guǒ	result; outcome
结合	jié hé	combine

结婚	jié hūn	get married
结论	jié lùn	conclusion
结盟	jié méng	form an alliance
结清	jié qīng	settle
结束	jié shù	end

Example

油漆上面结了一层皮。

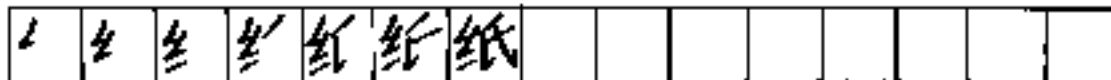
Yóu qī shàng miàn jié - le - yī cèng pí

A layer of skin formed on the paint.

纸 (紙)

zhǐ paper

THE phonetic 氏 (chī) was originally a floating plant (苳) spread out flat (𦰩) over the water surface, rooting itself to the bottom. Silk (糸) — the radical — is also spread out when used as a writing material. Hence 纸: paper — the writing material like silk (糸) that lies flat and apparently harmless as the water-plant (苳). But beware: "Paper and brush may kill a man; you don't need a knife."



纸板	zhǐ bǎn	paperboard, cardboard
纸币	zhǐ bǐ	paper money; currency note
纸盒	zhǐ hé	box; carton
纸花	zhǐ huā	paper flower
纸牌	zhǐ pái	playing cards

纸型	zhǐ xíng	paper mould
纸鸢	zhǐ yuān	kite
纸张	zhǐ zhāng	paper
报纸	bào zhǐ	newspaper
纸上谈兵	zhǐ shàng tán bīng	be an armchair strategist

Example

这朵纸花很美。

zhè duǒ zhǐ huā hěn měi

This paper flower is very pretty.

网

(網)

Wǎng net

THIS character started as a pictograph of a net: 𦉳. It was cast aside and replaced by the regular form 網, comprising 糸 (silk) and 罔 (trap) — without much success. So the primitive pictograph of the net was taken up again for the modern simplified form 网, demonstrating that "There is a day to cast your nets, and a day to dry your nets."



Page 6



网罗	wǎng luó	trap
网球	wǎng qiú	tennis
电网	diàn wǎng	electrified barbed wire
发网	fà wǎng	hair net
漏网	lòu wǎng	slip through the net; escape unpunished
鱼网	yú wǎng	fish net

广播网	guǎng bō wǎng	broadcasting network
蜘蛛网	zhī zhū wǎng	cobweb
天罗地网	tiān luó dì wǎng	nets above and snares below — tight encirclement
网开一面	wǎng kāi yī miàn	leave one side of the net open — give the wrongdoer a way out

Example

这个鱼网破了。

Zhè · ge yú wǎng pò · le

This fish net is torn.

细

(細)

Xì fine; tender; careful

IN THIS character, the phonetic 田 was originally written: 囟, a top view of the child's skull showing the tender fontanelles. Hence 囟田, meaning tender, fine, soft, like the silken (丝) hair around the fontanelles (囟). Small beginnings are not to be despised for, just as resources last a long time if used sparingly, "A small stream flows without interruption."

細細細細細



1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70 71 72 73 74 75 76 77 78 79 80 81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96 97 98 99 100

细胞
细长
细工
细节
细菌

xì bāo
xì cháng
xì gōng
xì jié
xì jūn

cell
tall and slender
fine workmanship
minute detail
germ

细密
细腻
细心
细小
仔细

xì mì
xì nǐ
xì xīn
xì xiǎo
zǐ xì

fine and closely woven
exquisite
careful, attentive
very small; tiny
careful; attentive

Example

她做事很细心。

Tā zuò shì hěn xì xīn.

She is very careful in everything she does.

经

(經)

JING classic; already; pass through

THE phonetic 经 was originally 經 — an allusion to water currents (經) under the ground (一) that the geomancers examine (土) — something deep, not superficial. In the regular form, the phonetic resembles warp threads on a loom: 纆. Just as silk threads (纆) are woven into precious fabrics, so wisdom is woven into enduring classics: 經, a literary heritage that has already passed through many hands.

經經經經經經經經



经常
经典
经度
经费
经管

jīng cháng
jīng diǎn
jīng dù
jīng fèi
jīng guǎn

frequently
classics
longitude
funds
be in charge of

经过
经济
经纪
经理
经传

jīng guò
jīng jī
jīng jī
jīng lǐ
jīng chuán

pass through; pass by
economy
broker; manage (a business)
manager; manage
classics

Example

这车经过动物园吗？

Zhè chē jīng guò dòng wù yuán ma?

Does this car pass by the zoo?

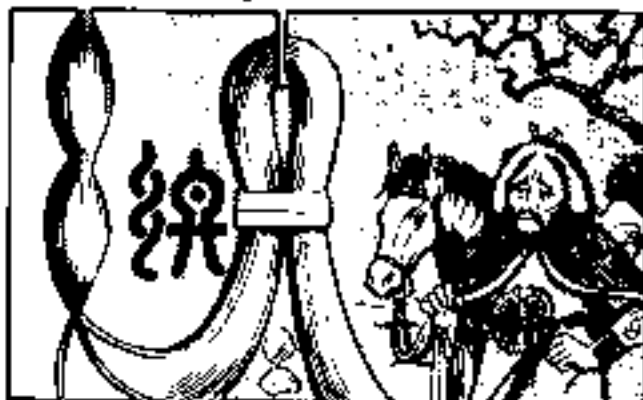
终

(終)

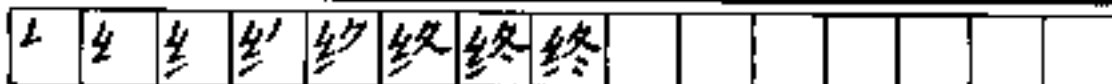
终终终终终

ZHŌNG end; final

THIS character has 冬 (winter) for its phonetic. Its seal form was a bundle of silk tied at the end by a band to suggest "end": 𣎵. 冬 (冬) was added to signify winter, the end of the year. The presence of the silk radical (纟) extends the idea to "the winter of the silk thread." In the final part of it, the end: 终.



PL 16



终场	zhōng chǎng	end of a performance or show
终点	zhōng diǎn	destination; finishing line
终古	zhōng gǔ	forever
终归	zhōng guī	eventually; after all
终究	zhōng jiū	eventually; in the end

终年	zhōng nián	throughout the year
终身	zhōng shēn	lifelong
终于	zhōng yú	finally
终止	zhōng zhǐ	stop; terminate
临终	lín zhōng	on one's death-bed

Example

一个人的力量终究有限。

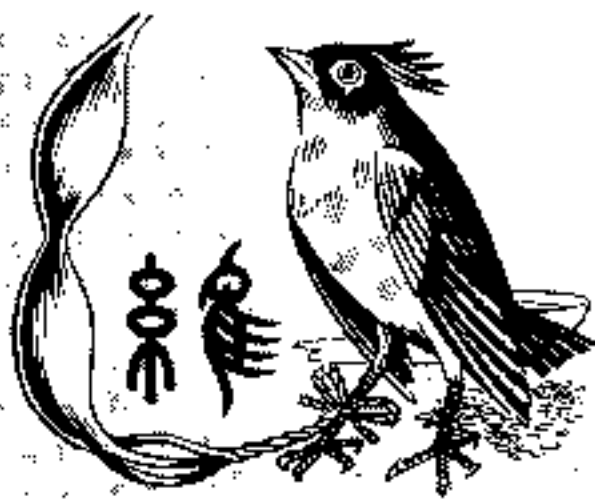
Yí gè rén de lì liàng zhōng jiū yǒu xiàn

The strength of an individual is limited after all.

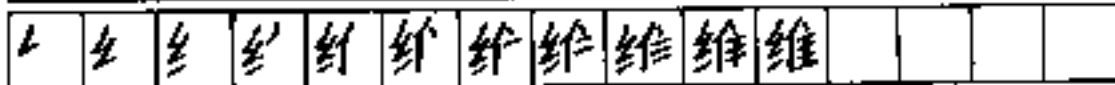
维 (維)

WÉI tie; fasten; safeguard

维 is an ideograph composed of two pictographs: 纟 (silk) and 隹 (bird). It represents a silk thread attached to a bird, suggesting to tie, fasten or secure, hence to safeguard or maintain. Often used in a good sense, 维 is incorporated in transliterations of words like vitamin, Venus, Victoria, Virginia, etc.



David



维持	wéi chí	maintain; keep
维护	wéi hù	safeguard
维系	wéi xì	hold together; maintain
维新	wéi xīn	reform
维持	wéi xiū	service; maintain
思维	sī wéi	thought; thinking
维他命	wéi tā mìng	vitamin
维妙维肖	wéi miào wéi xiào	remarkably true to life; absolutely lifelike

Example

大家需要互相了解，才能维持友好关系。
 dà jiā xū yào hù xiāng liǎ jiě, cái néng wéi chí yǒu hǎo guān xi

To maintain our friendly relations, we need to understand one another.

罗 (羅)

羅 is a sieve or net (网 or 罟) of silk (糸) for catching birds (雀). It is usually round and flat. The simplified form reduces it to 罗, made up of 罒 (net) and 夕 (evening, slanting). Because the net resembles a gong, the addition of the metal radical 钅 transforms it into the character for gong: 锣.

LUÓ net for birds, sieve



丶	冂	罒	罒	罒	罗	罗													
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

罗列	luó liè	spread out; set out; enumerate
罗马	luó mǎ	Rome
罗盘	luó pán	compass
罗网	luó wǎng	net; trap
罗织	luó zhī	frame up
罗致	luó zhì	collect; enlist the services of
罗望子	luó wàng zǐ	tamarind
门可罗雀	mén kě luó què	catch sparrows on the doorstep – (fig.) visitors are few and far between
自投罗网	zì tóu luó wǎng	walk right into the trap

Example

他到处罗致人材。

Tā dào chù luó zhì rén cái.

He went round enlisting the services of able people.

乐 (樂)

YUÈ music;
LÈ joy, pleasure

THE symbol for music was once five drums (鼓) - representing the five tones of the Chinese musical scale - upon a stand of wood (木). The regular form 樂 is now simplified to 乐, shaped after the music stand. The symbol for music 樂, pronounced differently, means joy or pleasure, for music gladdens the heart of man.

樂
樂
樂
樂
樂



一 二 三 四 五 六 七 八 九 十 十一 十二 十三 十四 十五 十六 十七 十八 十九 二十

乐队 yuè duì orchestra; band
乐谱 yuè pǔ music score
乐器 yuè qì musical instrument
声乐 shēng yuè vocal music
音乐 yīn yuè music

乐观 lè guān optimistic
乐趣 lè qù delight
乐意 lè yì pleased; happy
乐不可支 lè bù kě zhī overjoyed
乐极生悲 lè jí shēng bēi extreme joy begets sorrow

Example

他对前途感到乐观。
Tā duì qián tú gǎn dào lè guān.
He is optimistic about his future.

药

(藥)

YÀO medicine

MEDICINAL herbs (艹), like music that soothes the mind, restore harmony (和) to the body; hence 藥, the symbol for medicine. The simplified form 药 combines 艹 (herbs) with 约 (agree, restrain), implying that herbs restrain sickness. Though there are herbal remedies for all sorts of ailments: "No medicine can cure a man of vulgarity."



WANG



药草

yào cǎo

medicinal herbs

药方

yào fāng

prescription

药房

yào fāng

dispensary

药水

yào shuǐ

lotion; liquid medicine

药丸

yào wán

pill

服药

fú yào

take medicine

火药

huǒ yào

gunpowder

杀虫药

shā chóng yào

insecticide

Example

这药很苦：

zhè yào hěn kǔ

This medicine is bitter.

学

(學)

XUÉ learn; study

THIS ideograph signifies enlightenment — the master's laying on of hands (㇏) crosswise (㇏) upon the darkness which covers (㇏) the mind of his disciple (子). It implies to learn or study. Learning is essential to the upbringing of a child, hence: "To raise a son without learning is raising an ass; to raise a daughter without learning is raising a pig."



PENG

丶 丿 ㇏ ㇏ ㇏ 学 学

学费	xué fèi	tuition fee
学府	xué fǔ	an institution of learning
学科	xué kē	branch of learning; subject
学生	xué shēng	student; pupil
学识	xué shí	knowledge
学徒	xué tú	apprentice; trainee
学校	xué xiào	school
学无止境	xué wú zhǐ jìng	knowledge is infinite
学以致用	xué yǐ zhì yòng	study for the purpose of application

Example

你的功课学会了吗？

Nǐ de gōng kè xué huì le ma?

Have you learned your lessons?

写

(寫)

鳳 凰 寫 写

XIĚ write

寫 originally was a picture of a magpie (寫) under a roof (宀). Regarded as a bird of good omen, the magpie is a tidy bird with the habit of picking up bright objects and hiding them. 寫 therefore suggests order under the roof; by extension, to set one's ideas in order; to write, now simplified to 写.



写实	xiě shí	write or paint realistically
写稿	xiě gǎo	write for (a magazine, etc.)
写生	xiě shēng	draw, paint or sketch from nature
写照	xiě zhào	portrayal, portraiture
写作	xiě zuò	writing
写字台	xiě zì tái	writing desk

Example

他经常为报章、杂志写稿。

Tā jīng cháng wéi bào zhāng, zá zhì xiě gǎo.

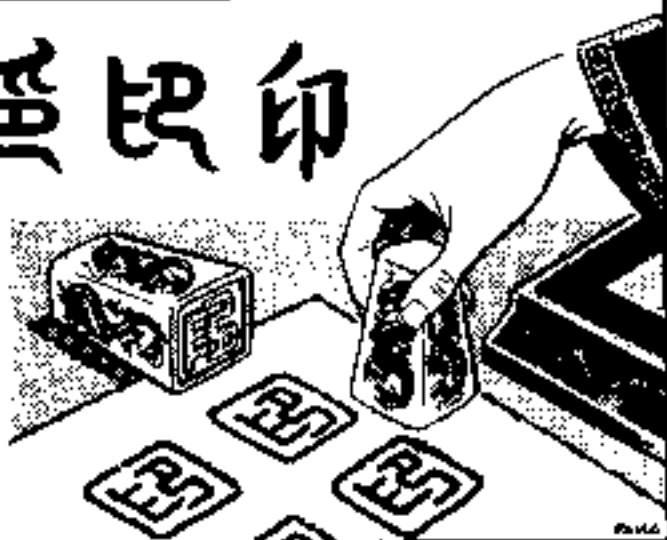
He often writes for the newspapers and magazines.

印

印 民 国

Yìn print; stamp; seal

THE right hand (印) pressing a seal (印) formed the character for seals used for stamping impressions on clay: 印. There, in time, gave way to inked impressions on paper. With the invention of block printing and movable type, the character enlarged its meaning to include stamping and printing.



Printed



印发	yìn fā	print and distribute
印盒	yìn hé	seal box
印花	yìn huà	revenue stamp
印刷	yìn shuā	printing
印台	yìn tái	ink pad; stamp pad
印象	yìn xiàng	impression
印章	yìn zhāng	seal
盖印	gài yìn	affix one's seal
印刷机	yìn shuā jī	printing machine

Example

这照片印得不清楚。

Zhè zhào piàn yìn de bù qīng chǔ

This photo is not well-printed

书 (書)

SHU book; writings

書 is the product of a pen (筆) that speaks (言) — books and writings. 讠 indicates a stylus (丨) in hand (讠) scratching a line (一) on a tablet (一). 言, the radical, is the mouth (口) with a word (一) in it. Because not everything the pen speaks is truth, "It is better to have no books than to rely blindly on them."

書



ㄋ ㄣ 书 书

书包
书报
书本
书店
书法

shū bāo
shū bào
shū běn
shū diàn
shū fǎ

schoolbag
books and newspapers
book
bookshop
calligraphy

书房
书籍
书评
书生
书呆子

shū táng
shū jí
shū píng
shū shēng
shū dāi - zi

study room
books
book review
scholar
bookworm

Example

这是一间小书店，卖的书不多。

zhè shì yī jiān xiǎo shū diàn. mài de shū bù duō.

This is a small bookshop. There aren't many books.

画

(畫)

HUÀ painting; drawing

畫, a painting or drawing, is symbolized by the artist's brush (筆) and his picture (畫); of the frame there now remains only the bottom part (—). However, the simplified form: 画 restores the picture (畫) with its frame (畫). "Painting a snake and adding legs" (画蛇添足) would be superfluous. Hence the need to be practical: "You cannot satisfy your hunger by merely drawing a foot."



畫畫畫畫畫

Rene G.

一	丁	万	月	雨	田	画	画								
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

画报

huà bào

pictorial

画家

huà jiā

painter; artist

画架

huà jià

easel

画廊

huà láng

gallery

画室

huà shì

studio

画像

huà xiàng

portrait

画展

huà zhǎn

art exhibition

画饼充饥

huà bǐng chōng jī

draw cakes to allay one's hunger — (fig.) feed on illusions

画蛇添足

huà shé tiān zú

draw a snake and add feet to it — (fig.) ruin the effect by adding something superfluous

Example

这个画家是我的朋友。

Zhè ge huà jiā shì wǒ de péng you

This artist is my friend.

事

SH)

affair;
business;
matter

AN affair is a matter to be viewed seriously and executed faithfully. It is represented by two hands (扌) and 𠂇 (contractions at 𠂇) selling with fidelity 𠂇 (contraction of 𠂇): 𠂇. Another view is that an affair is a business to be recorded accurately, symbolized by a hand (扌) with stylus (𠂇) recording what is told by word of mouth (口): 𠂇.



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半部

shǐ qǔ

musings

半后

shì hòu

after the event, afterwards

車道

shì jì

deed

书信

shǐ jìn

inciden1

車理

phổ

reason; logic

主體

shí qīng

affair: matter

陈

shè shí

fact

• 41

shè pǐ

undertaking; enterprise

事物

ရှမ်း ဟု

ching

半功倍

shī bèi gōng bǎn

get half the result with twice the effort

Εφαρμογές

事情的真相不是这么简单。

Shì yíng , de zhēn xiàng nǐ shì zhè , qī jiān dān , dà .

The truth is not as simple as that.