LESSON A.3 - PART 1

CHINESE CHARACTERS

汉字 HÀNZÌ

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LESSON A.2 REVISION

Construct words/phrases from the below characters:

早上
zǎoshàng

问
wèn

明
míng

再
zài

吃了
chīle

慢
màn

熊
xióng

没有?
méiyǒu

好
hǎo

天
tiān

见
jiàn

候
hòu

猫
māo

走
zǒu

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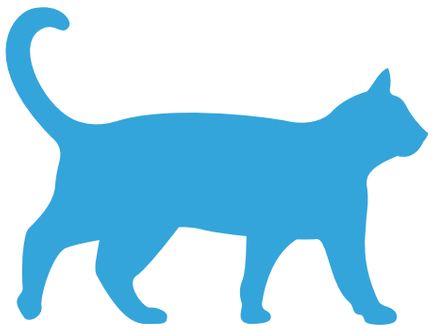
TWO STYLES

- There are two forms of written Chinese:

    1. **Traditional** characters - used in most Chinese-speaking countries outside mainland China, e.g. Hong Kong, Taiwan and Macau

    2. **Simplified** characters - predominantly used in mainland China

Traditional		Simplified
貓		猫

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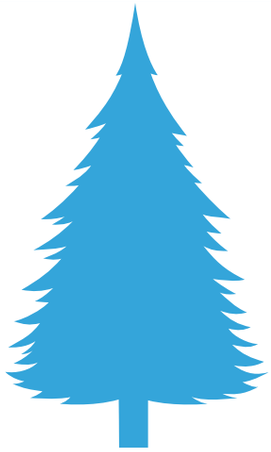
FOUR TYPES

- There is no really easy way to learn characters. Each one needs to be memorised. However, you can try to picture it.

Pictograph

木

The character mimics the real object



wood/tree

Ideograph

二

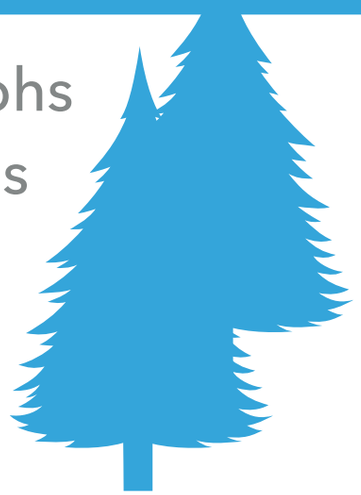
The character is a portrait of an idea

two

Combination

林

Put pictographs or ideographs together to create new character



forest

Phonograph

Combine sound and meaning

sound		meaning		new character
元	+	辶	=	远
yuán		to walk quickly		far
元	+	囗	=	园
yuán		enclosure		garden

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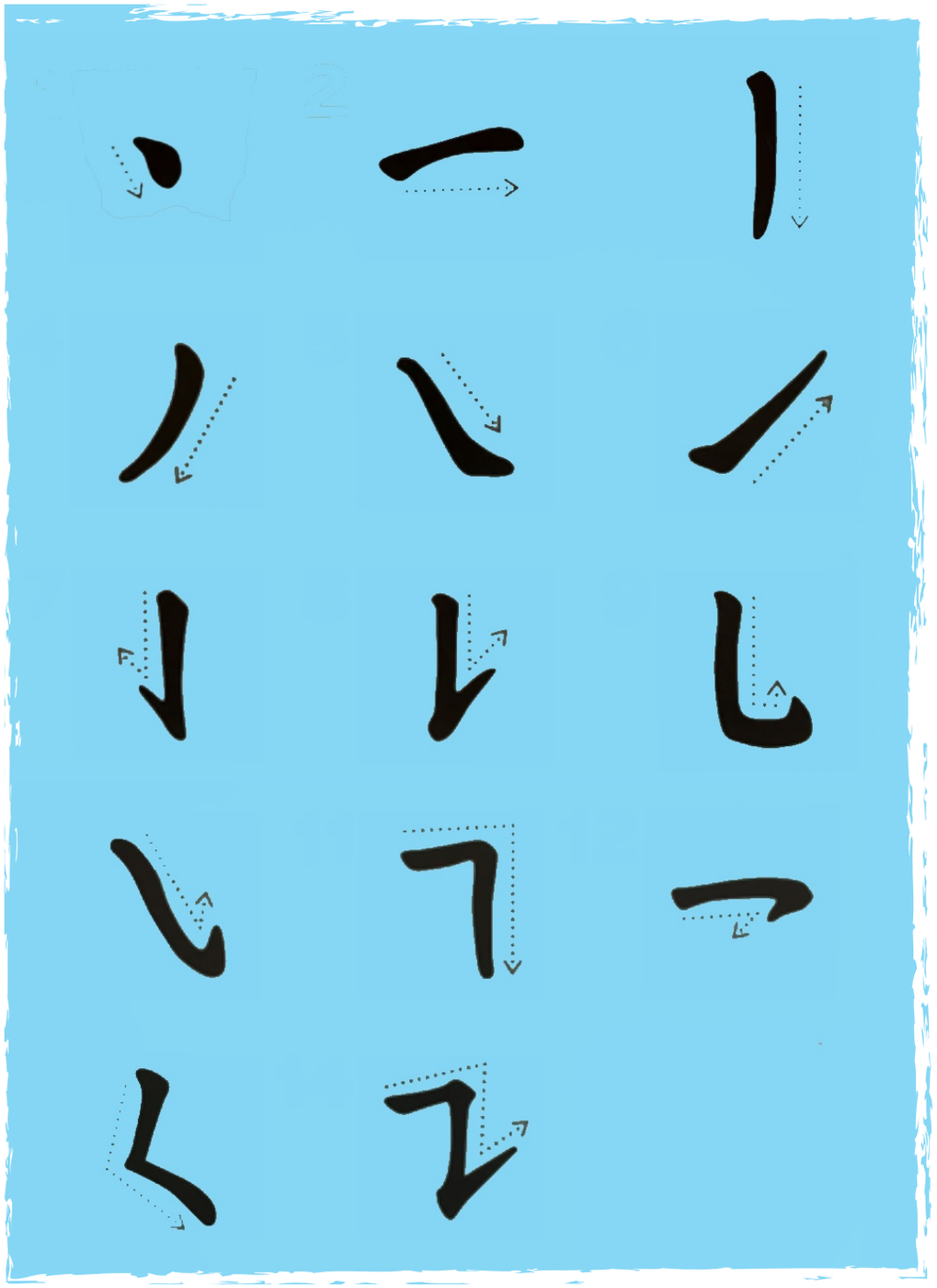
BASIC STROKES

- Each character is made up of a set of strokes.
- These strokes are always written in the **same manner**
- Following the **rule** of where to start and where to end would make it easier in learning new characters.



Practice makes perfect!

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STROKE ORDER

- Chinese writing emphasizes on a **smooth** movement.
- There are guidelines to help users but they are **not fail-safe.** It all depends on what looks best or which order minimises blobbing when scholars are using brushes and ink to write.

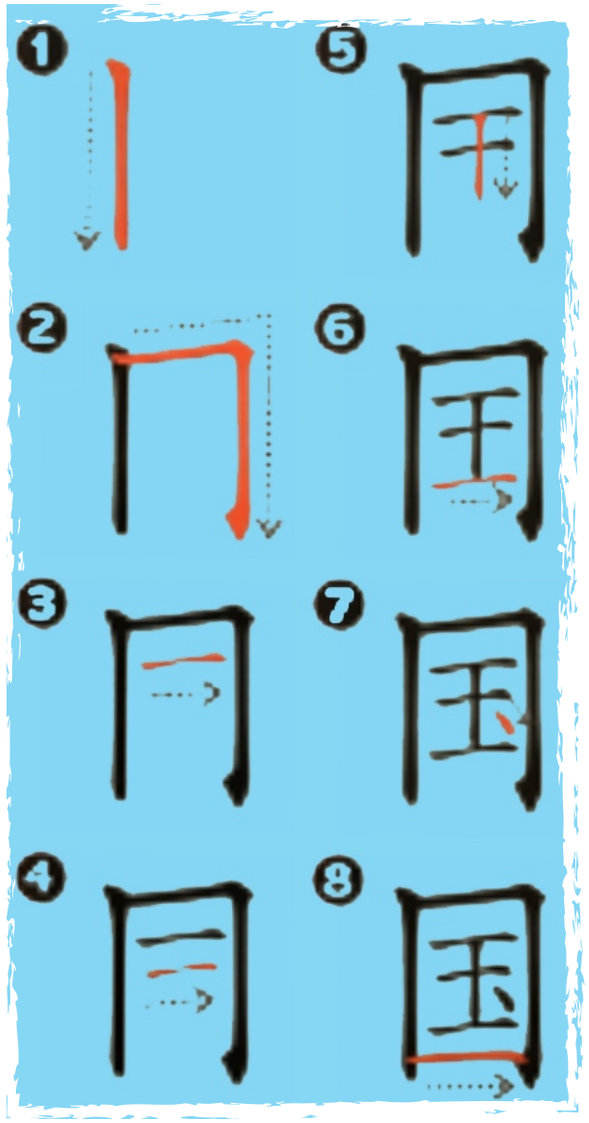
General rules:

- From top to bottom
- From left to right
- From outside to inside
- From middle to sides

Country

国

guó



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LESSON A.3 - PART 2

ESSENTIAL CONVERSATION

基本对话 JĪBĚN DUÌHUÀ

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FEW ESSENTIAL WORDS

我 ***wǒ***	me/I
叫 ***jiào***	call
高兴 ***gāoxìng***	happy
认识 ***rènshi***	meet

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INTRODUCING YOURSELF

您叫什么?
nín jiào shénme

What's your name?
(Lit. you call what)

我叫.....
wǒ jiào

I'm called...

很高兴认识您。
hěn gāoxìng rènshi nín

Very pleased to meet you.

我也是。
wǒ yěshì

Me too.

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SORRY

对不起 ***duìbùqǐ***	Sorry
我不明白 ***wǒ bù míngbái***	I don't understand
请重复 ***qǐng chóngfù***	Please repeat
不用谢 ***bùyòng xiè****	You are welcome *(no need for thanks)*

Note: for 不 (bù), change the tone to 2nd tone when preceding 4th tone.

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HOW'S IT GOING?

怎么样?

zěnme yàng

How's it going?

(Lit. How is it like)

不错

bùcuò*

Not bad

马马虎虎

mǎmǎhūhū *

So-so

(Lit. horse horse tiger tiger)

真棒!

zhēn bàng

Awesome!

Note: for 不 (bù), change the tone to 2nd tone when preceding 4th tone.
For a series of 3rd tones, change all the former ones to 2nd

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SPEAKING MANDARIN?

你会说英语吗?

nǐ huì shuō yīngyǔ ma?

Can you speak English?

我可以。

wǒ kěyǐ *

I can.

你会说普通话吗?

nǐ huì shuō pǔtōnghuà ma?

Can you speak Mandarin?

一点儿

yīdiǎn er *

A little.

Note: for a series of 3rd tones, change all the former ones to 2nd tone.
For 一 (yī), change the tone to fourth tone when preceding a 3rd tone

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FEW COMMON WORDS

To be 是 (*shì*)

- In English, "to be" change forms with the subject, i.e. "I am", "we are", "he is" etc. In Chinese 是 (*shì*) does not change with the subject.
- It is skipped in front of an adjective.
- It also means "yes".
- Negative: add not 不 (bù) in the front.
- Example: He is Chinese 他是中国人 *(tā shì zhōngguó rén)*

to be	not to be
是 *shì*	不是 *bù shì*

To have 有

- An informal and straightforward way to talk about possession is to use the expression 有, meaning have or has.
- Negative: add not 没 méi in the front.
- Example: He has money 他有钱 *(tā yǒu qián)*

to have	not to have
有 *yǒu*	没有 *méi yǒu*

Of 的

- A common possessive particle is 的, meaning of or 's.
- It can be skipped sometimes to simplify the sentence.
- When this is put at the end, it becomes an adverb, meaning truly or really.
- Example: My home 我的家 *(wǒ de jiā)*
- Example: Really delicious! 很好吃的！ *(hěn hào chī de)*

of
的 *de*

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CULTURE – CHINESE DIALECTS

Why Mandarin?

- China has the biggest population in the world - **1.3 billion** people.
- It is home to a multitude of languages and dialects - over 200!
- There are 3 major languages spoken in China:

Mandarin, Shanghainese, and Cantonese

- Mandarin has more native speakers than any other language in the world.
- Chinese people learn Mandarin too. It is studied like a foreign language class, to use for speaking with non-locals in China.
- Mandarin is easier than Cantonese which has at least **8 tones**!

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Zhōngwén 中文 "The Chinese Language"

- There are several ways to refer to the Chinese language:
    1. **Zhōngwén** 中文 - originally referred to the written Chinese language but now generally also includes spoken Chinese
    2. **Hànyǔ** 汉语 - a more precise term which covers both the spoken and the written Chinese
    3. **Zhōnguóhuà** 中国话 - a colloquial term for spoken Chinese
    4. **Guóyǔ** 国语 - national spoken Chinese designated by the government in 1919. Taiwan has continued to use this till today
    5. **Pǔtōnghuà** 普通话 - the official name for "**Mandarin"** since the establishment of the People's Republic of China PRC in 1949

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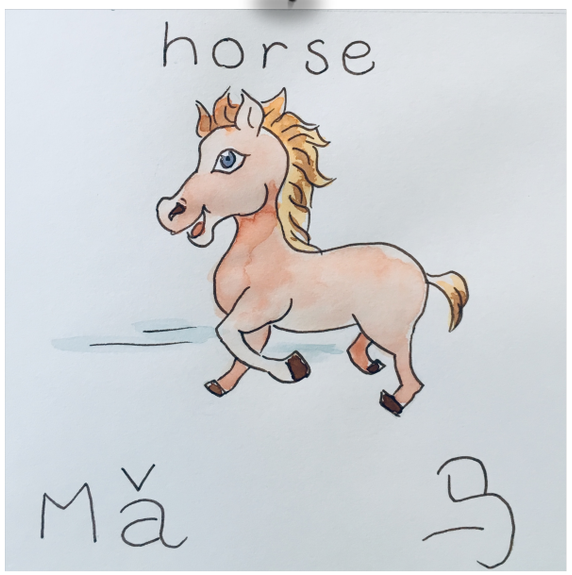
COLLOQUIAL – HORSE



- There are many ways to use "horse" as a colloquial expression in Mandarin.
- Quite often there is a sense of urgency.

I'll be right there!	I'll do it right away!
我马上到！	我马上做！
wǒ mǎshàng dào*	***wǒ mǎshàng zuò!****

SO-SO *(horse horse tiger tiger)*

马马虎虎

mǎmǎhūhū *

- The above idiom has two meanings: 1. very careless; do not do things seriously. 2. just passable.

- The shape of a potato looks like a horse bell and thenceforth the Chinese name was adopted.

potato
马铃薯
mǎlíngshǔ

Note: for a series of 3rd tones, change all the former ones to 2nd tone.

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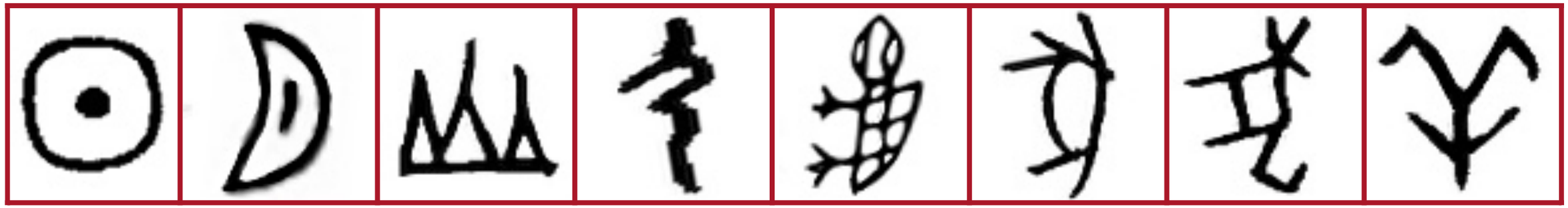
CLASSROOM EXERCISE A.3 – CHINESE CHARACTER

Can you guess the modern Chinese character from the oracle bone drawing:



人	日	山	犬	月	羊	豕	龟
rén	*rì*	*shān*	*quǎn*	*yuè*	*yáng*	*shǐ*	*guī*
person/ human	**sun/day**	**hill/ mountain**	**dog**	**moon/ month**	**sheep**	**hog/ swine/ pig**	**turtle/ turtoise**

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