

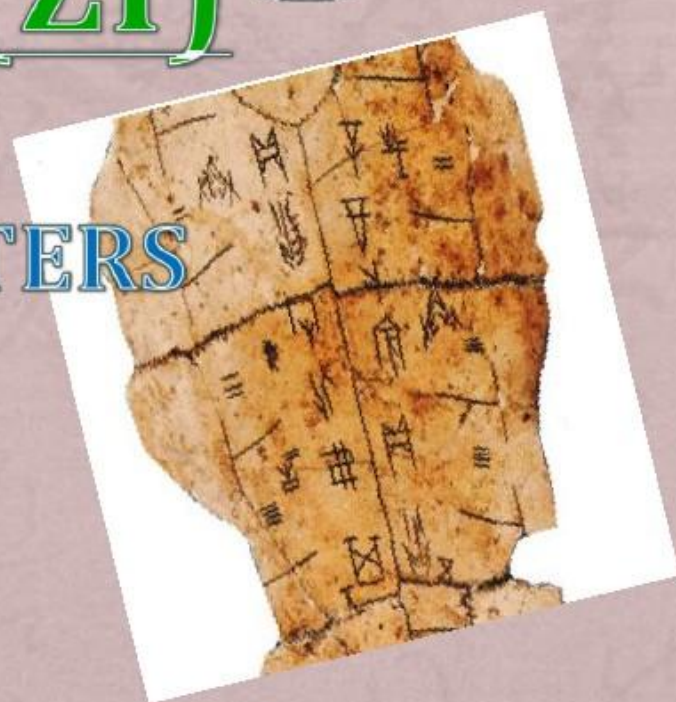
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汉 (HÀN) 字 (ZÌ)

CHINESE CHARACTERS



Do you know how long is Chinese in literature written?

China is the only country in the world with a literature written in one language for more than consecutive years.



Reason

This continuity results largely from the nature of the written language itself. It is the use of characters, not letters as in Western languages, that is most important in the Chinese language. The characters stand for things or ideas and so, unlike groups of letters. Thus Chinese could be read by people in all parts of the country in spite of gradual changes in pronunciation, the emergence of regional and local dialects, and modification of the characters .



The four ways of creating Chinese characters

xiàngxíng

象形

zhǐ shì

指事

huìyì

















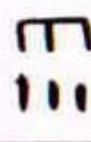



会意

xíngshēng

形声

xiàngxíng

象形 Pictograms

sun (日)						
moon (月)						
cloud (云)						
rain (雨)						

1. Pictograms characters derive from pictures, they have been standardized, simplified, and stylized to make them easier to write, and their derivation is therefore not always obvious. Examples include for sun for moon, and 木 for tree.

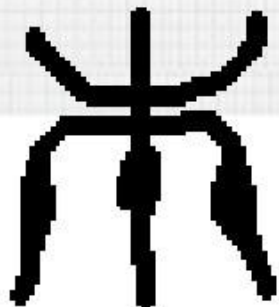
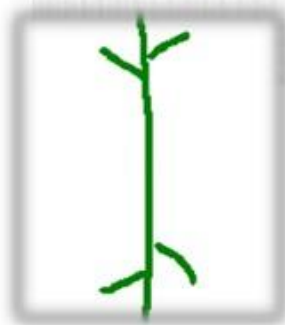
zhǐ shì

指事 Self-explanatory

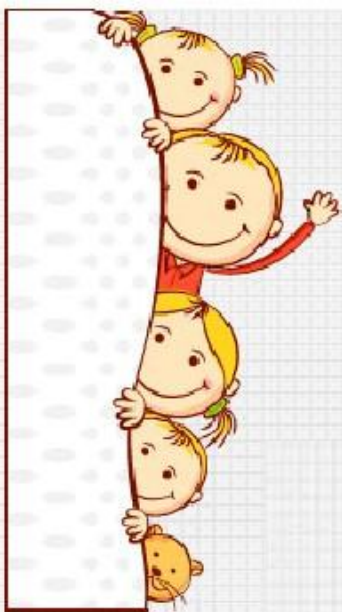
2. Based on the pictographic characters, Chinese people added more strokes to an existing character to indicate abstract meanings.



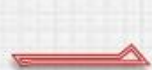
刀(dāo) + 丶 = 刃(rèn)
knife **blade**



木(mù) + 一 = 本(běn)
tree **root**



Can you guess?



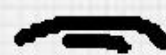
one



two

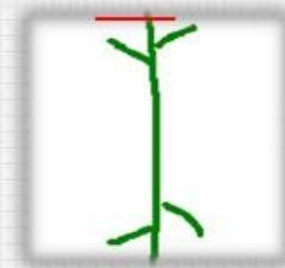


up



down

木(mù) + 一 = 本(běn)
tree root



last

Huì yì

会意 Combined-meaning

3. Another method of creating new characters is to integrate two or more existing characters to create a new character with a new meaning.



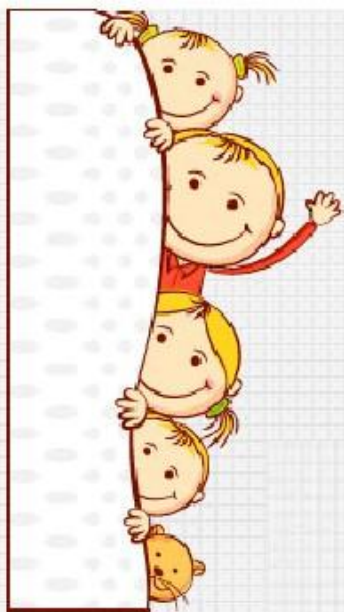
For example:

日(rì) **sun** + 月(yuè) **noon** =

明(míng) **bright**

木(mù) + 木(mù) **tree, wood** =

林(lín) **forest**



huìyì
会意

休



have a rest

休 休 休 休 休

炎

炎 炎 炎 炎

hot

Xíng shēng

形声 Mutually explanatory

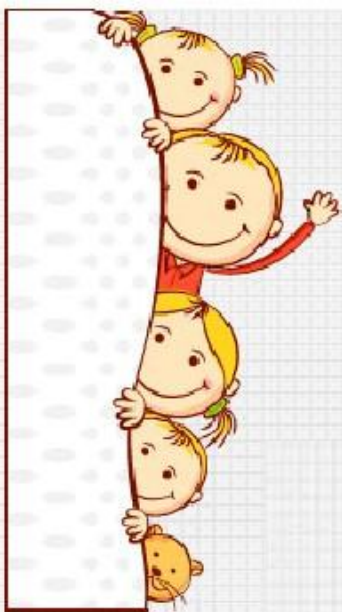
4. With the expansion of civilization, a more complicated method of creating characters developed: Select one existing character to indicate the pronunciation, and then integrate it with another existing character to create a new one.

More than 90% of Chinese characters currently in use were created in this way.

For example:

水(shuǐ) + 木(mù) → 沝 + 木 = 沐(mù) wash

水(shuǐ) + 干(gān) → 氵 + 干 = 汗(hàn) sweat



To write Chinese characters,
you should know.....

strokes

structural units

radicals



The basic knowledge in learning Chinese characters includes: strokes, structural units and radicals.

Stroke: is the smallest and the most basic structural unit of Chinese characters, consisting of dots and lines.

点	diǎn	dot	丶
横	héng	horizontal stroke	一
竖	shù	vertical stroke	丨
撇	piě	left-falling	丿
捺	nà	right-falling	㇏
提	tí	rising	㇀
折	zhé	a bending stroke	乙、乚、㇄
钩	gōu	hook	乚

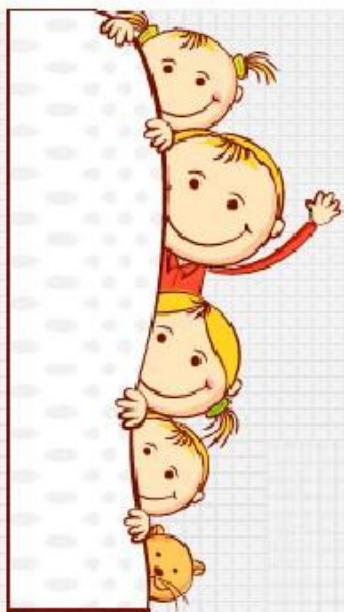


What is Radicals?

Strokes grouped together in a certain way to form part of a character are called radicals. From the view point of memory, symbols that appear repeatedly have a better chance to be remembered. If a new character has a familiar radical, it will be easier to learn.

水(shuǐ) water → 氵
zhī jiǔ chí hǎi hé
汁 juice 酒 alcohol 池 pool 海 sea 河 river

木(mù) tree, wood
táo lí liǔ lǐ bǎn
桃 peach 梨 pear 柳 willow 李 plum 板 board



What is Radicals?



金(Jīn) metal



Tiě Tóng Yín Guō Qián
铁 **iron** 铜 **copper** 银 **silver** 锅 **pan, pot** 钱 **money**

月(Yuè) meat



Pàng bì fèi wèi tuǐ
胖 **fat** 臂 **arm** 肺 **lung** 胃 **stomach** 腿 **leg**

火(huǒ) fire

lú kǎo chǎo rán shāo
炉 **stove** 烤 **bake** 炒 **sauté**; 燃 烧 **buring**



Can you guess?



Related to female, words have this radical usually mean female.



Related to heart



Related to mouth

