wishyou.today learning

day 81 festivals and celebrations

Chinese HSK 7–9 in 193 days
unit 11 · Chinese culture

Talk about the Spring Festival and its customs, and say what happens as a result with 这样一来.

The Spring Festival is the heart of the Chinese year: every conversation in winter turns to it.

words

word	pinyin	meaning	example
新春	xīnchūn	the New Year season, Spring Festival time	祝大家新春快乐！ Happy New Year to you all!
正月	zhēngyuè	first month of the lunar year	正月十五是元宵节。 The fifteenth of the first lunar month is the Lantern Festival.
腊月	làyuè	twelfth month of the lunar year	一到腊月，家家户户就开始准备过年。 As soon as the twelfth month comes, every family starts getting ready for New Year.
佳节	jiājié	happy festival, festive season	春节是中国人最重要的佳节。 The Spring Festival is the most important festival for Chinese people.
喜庆	xǐqìng	festive, joyous; happy occasion	街上挂满了红灯笼，看起来非常喜庆。 The streets are full of red lanterns: everywhere looks bright and festive.
庆典	qìngdiǎn	celebration, ceremony	公司成立十周年，举办了一场庆典。 The company held a celebration for its tenth anniversary.
庆贺	qìnghè	to celebrate, congratulate	大家聚在一起，庆贺新年的到来。 Everyone gathered to celebrate the arrival of the New Year.
盛大	shèngdà	grand, magnificent (event)	学校为毕业生举行了盛大的晚会。 The school held a grand evening party for its graduates.
盛会	shènghuì	grand gathering, big event	世界杯是全世界球迷的盛会。 The World Cup is a great event for football fans all over the world.
隆重	lóngzhòng	grand, solemn, ceremonious	婚礼办得很隆重。 The wedding was a very grand affair.
嘉年华	jiāniánhuá	carnival	海边每年夏天都有一个音乐嘉年华。 There's a music carnival by the sea every summer.
狂欢	kuánghuān	to celebrate wildly, party	比赛赢了，球迷们在街上狂欢到半夜。 After the win, the fans partied in the streets until midnight.
庙会	miàohuì	temple fair	春节的时候，我们去公园逛庙会。 At Spring Festival we went to the temple fair in the park.
烟花	yānhuā	fireworks	除夕夜，天空中开满了烟花。 On New Year's Eve the sky was full of fireworks.

爆竹	bàozhú	firecrackers (written)	爆竹声中一岁除。 Amid the sound of firecrackers, the old year leaves.
鞭炮	biānpào	firecrackers (a string)	很多城市春节期间不许放鞭炮。 Many cities don't allow firecrackers over Spring Festival.
燃放	ránfàng	to set off (fireworks)	市区禁止燃放烟花爆竹。 Setting off fireworks and firecrackers is banned in the city centre.
对联	duìlián	couplet (on a doorway)	过年的时候，门两边要贴对联。 At New Year you paste couplets on both sides of the door.
年画	niánhuà	New Year picture	这张年画上画着一个抱着鱼的胖娃娃。 This New Year picture shows a chubby baby holding a fish.
秧歌	yāngge	yangge (folk dance)	公园里，一群老人在扭秧歌。 In the park a group of older people are doing the yangge dance.
农历	nónglì	the lunar calendar (Chinese calendar)	春节是农历的正月初一。 Spring Festival is the first day of the first month of the lunar calendar.
阴历	yīnlì	the lunar calendar (everyday word)	我奶奶过生日一直按阴历算。 My grandma always counts her birthday by the lunar calendar.
阳历	yánglì	the Western (solar) calendar	今年阳历一月和农历正月差了二十多天。 This year the Western January and the first lunar month are more than twenty days apart.
节气	jiéqì	solar term (24 points of the farming year)	以前农民种地都要看节气。 Farmers plan their work by the solar terms.
属相	shǔxiàng	Chinese zodiac animal (of your birth year)	你的属相是什么？我属龙。 What's your zodiac animal? I'm a Dragon.
吉利	jílì	lucky, auspicious	八这个数字听起来很吉利。 The number eight sounds lucky.
吉祥物	jíxiángwù	mascot	这只大熊猫是运动会的吉祥物。 This giant panda is the mascot of the games.
福气	fúqi	good fortune, luck	有这么孝顺的孩子，您真有福气！ With such caring children, you're very lucky!
许愿	xǔyuàn	to make a wish; make a promise	吹蜡烛之前，先许愿吧。 Make a wish before you blow out the candles.
诞辰	dànchén	birthday (of a great person, formal)	今年是这位诗人诞辰三百周年。 This year is the 300th anniversary of the poet's birth.
风尚	fēngshàng	prevailing custom, trend	节约成了一种新的社会风尚。 Being thrifty has become a new social trend.
俗	sú	vulgar, tacky; common	这件衣服的颜色太俗了。 The colour of this jacket is too tacky.
惯例	guànlì	convention, usual practice	按照惯例，年夜饭要全家一起吃。 By custom, the whole family eats the New Year's Eve dinner together.

汉服	Hànfú	Hanfu (traditional Han clothing)	现在不少年轻人喜欢穿汉服拍照。 Plenty of young people now like to wear Hanfu for photos.
旗袍	qípáo	qipao, cheongsam	她穿|着一件红色的旗袍。 She is wearing a red qipao.

pattern 这样一来: this way, as a result

what happened + 。这样一来， + the result

这样一来 starts a new sentence and says what follows from what you just said: “this way, as a result, so”. It sums up a change and points to its effect, often with 就 or 了 in the result.

他们把庙会搬到了公园。这样一来，地方大了很多。 **tāmen bǎ miàohuì bān dào le gōngyuán zhèyàng yì lái dìfang dà le hěn duō** They moved the temple fair to the park. That way there’s much more room.

今年不放鞭炮了。这样一来，狗也不害怕了。 **jīnnián bú fàng biānpào le zhèyàng yì lái gǒu yě bú hàipà le** No firecrackers this year. So the dogs aren’t scared any more.

我们提前买了票。这样一来，就不用排队了。 **wǒmen tíqián mǎi le piào zhèyàng yì lái jiù búyòng páiduì le** We bought our tickets in advance, so we don’t have to queue.

dialogue getting ready for new year

ms zhang 安娜，今年春节来我们家过吧！一家人热热闹闹的，多喜庆。
Ānnà jīnnián Chūnjié lái wǒmen jiā guò ba yì jiā rén rèrènaonao de duō xǐqìng · Anna, spend Spring Festival with us this year! The whole family together: it'll be so festive.

anna 太好了，谢谢阿姨！说真的，我一直想过一个地道的中国年。
tài hǎo le xièxie āyí shuō zhēn de wǒ yìzhí xiǎng guo yí gè dìdao de Zhōngguó nián · Wonderful, thank you! Honestly, I've always wanted a real Chinese New Year.

little sister 现在已经是腊月了。按照惯例，腊月二十三以后就要打扫房子、贴对联、贴年画，门口还要悬挂红灯笼。
xiànzài yǐjīng shì làyuè le ànzhào guànlì làyuè èrshísān yǐhòu jiù yào dǎsǎo fángzi tiē duìlián tiē niánhuà ménkǒu hái yào xuánguà hóng dēnglong · It's already the twelfth month. By custom, after the twenty-third you clean the house, put up couplets and New Year pictures, and hang red lanterns by the door.

anna 对联上的字是谁写的？
duìlián shàng de zì shì shéi xiě de · Who writes the characters on the couplets?

xiaoming 以前是爷爷自己写，现在大多是买的。今年我想试试自己写。
yǐqián shì yéye zìjǐ xiě xiànzài dàduō shì mǎi de jīnnián wǒ xiǎng shì shi zìjǐ xiě · Grandpa used to write them himself; now most people buy them. This year I want to try writing ours.

little sister 哥哥，你的字太丑了，贴出去多不吉利！
gēge nǐ de zì tài chǒu le tiē chuqu duō bù jílì · Your handwriting's awful! Putting it on the door would be bad luck!

anna 那放鞭炮呢？我在电视上看过，特别热闹。
nà fàng biānpào ne wǒ zài diànshì shàng kàn guo tèbié rènao · What about firecrackers? I've seen it on TV: it looks like so much fun.

ms zhang 市区禁止燃放烟花爆竹。这样一来，空气好了，也安全了，就是过年的气氛少了一点儿。
shìqū jìnzhǐ ránfàng yānhuā bàozhú zhèyàng yì lái kōngqì hǎo le yě ānquán le jiùshì guònián de qìfēn shǎo le yìdiǎnr · Fireworks and firecrackers are banned in the city. So the air is better and it's safer, though it feels a bit less like New Year.

xiaoming 不过正月初一有庙会，有扭秧歌的，有卖小吃的，还有一个大吉祥物，孩子们都簇拥着它拍照。无论天冷与否，人都特别多。
búguò zhēngyuè chū yī yǒu miàohuì yǒu niǔ yāngge de yǒu mài xiǎochī de hái yǒu yí gè dà jíxiángwù háizimen dōu cùyōng zhe tā pāizhào wúlùn tiān lěng yǔ fǒu rén dōu tèbié duō · But on the first day there's a temple fair: yangge dancers, snack stalls, and a giant mascot that the children crowd round for photos. Cold or not, it's always packed.

anna 听起来像个嘉年华！在英国，新年夜大家在街上狂欢。中国人怎么庆贺新年？
tīng qǐlai xiàng gè jiāniánhuá zài Yīngguó xīnnián yè dàjiā zài jiē shàng kuánghuān Zhōngguó rén zěnme qìnghè xīnnián · Sounds like a carnival! In the UK people party in the streets on New Year's Eve. How do Chinese people celebrate?

ms zhang 春节是一年里最重要的佳节，最隆重的是除夕的年夜饭，一家人一定要在一起。
Chūnjié shì yì nián lǐ zuì zhòngyào de jiājié zuì lóngzhòng de shì chúxī de niányèfàn yì jiā rén yídìng yào zài yìqǐ · Spring Festival is the most important festival of the year. The grandest part is the New Year's Eve dinner: the family must be together.

little sister 吃完饭还要看春节晚会，那可是全国人民的盛会。
chī wán fàn hái yào kàn Chūnjié wǎnhuì nà kěshì quán guó rénmín de shènghuì · After dinner there's the Spring Festival Gala on TV: a big event for the whole country.

ms zhang 孩子们最高兴了，在院子里玩捉迷藏，玩到半夜也不睡。
háizimen zuì gāoxìng le zài yuànzi lǐ wán zhuōmícáng wán dào bànyè yě bú shuì · The children love it most: they play hide-and-seek in the courtyard and stay up till midnight.

anna 我要穿汉服去！现在年轻人穿汉服好像成了一种新风尚。上次买的那件一直没机会穿。

wǒ yào chuān Hànfú qù xiànzài niánqīng rén chuān Hànfú hǎoxiàng chéng le yì zhǒng xīn fēngshàng shàng cì mǎi de nà jiàn yìzhí méi jīhuì chuān · I'll wear Hanfu! Wearing Hanfu seems to have become the new fashion among young people. I've never had a chance to wear the one I bought.

little sister 我穿旗袍。今年是我的本命年，属相是龙，我要穿红的，图个吉利。
wǒ chuān qípáo jīnnián shì wǒ de běn mìng nián shǔxiàng shì lóng wǒ yào chuān hóng de tú gè jílì · I'll wear a qipao. It's my zodiac year, I'm a Dragon, so I'll wear red for luck.

xiaoming 红旗袍再配一条绿色的围巾？那也太俗了吧！
hóng qípáo zài pèi yì tiáo lǜsè de wéijīn nà yě tài sú le ba · A red qipao with a green scarf? That would be so tacky!

anna 本命年？是不是每十二年一次？
běn mìng nián shì bu shì měi shíèr nián yí cì · Your zodiac year? Is that once every twelve years?

ms zhang 对，按农历算。我们过节按农历，以前种地还要看节气。你奶奶过生日也按阴历吧？
duì àn nónglì suàn wǒmen guòjié àn nónglì yǐqián zhòngdì hái yào kàn jiéqì nǐ nǎinai guò shēngrì yě àn yīnlì ba · Yes, counted by the lunar calendar. Our festivals follow it, and farmers used to go by the solar terms. Your grandma counts her birthday by the lunar calendar too, doesn't she?

xiaoming 妈妈，安娜的奶奶在英国，当然按阳历了！
māma Ānnà de nǎinai zài Yīngguó dāngrán àn yánglì le · Mum, Anna's grandma is in the UK: of course she uses the Western calendar!

ms zhang 哈哈，也是。除夕晚上我们一起包饺子、打麻将、猜谜语，十二点许愿，新的一年就有福气了。
hā hā yě shì chúxī wǎnshang wǒmen yìqǐ bāo jiǎozi dǎ májiàng cāi míyǔ shíèr diǎn xǔyuàn xīn de yì nián jiù yǒu fúqi le · Ha, of course. On New Year's Eve we'll make dumplings, play mahjong and guess riddles together, make a wish at midnight, and the new year will bring good luck.

write it trace the grey, then write your own

壳
ké
shell, husk

芽
yá
sprout, bud

苗
miáo
seedling, young plant

籽
zǐ
seed

good to know · Calendars: 农历 or 阴历 is the lunar calendar, 阳历 or 公历 the Western one. Birthdays of older people, festivals and the 24 节气 follow the lunar side. "Ask someone's animal": 你属什么？ The answer: 我属龙. 属相 is the noun; in speech 属 does the work.

Couplets, temple fairs, zodiac signs: you can now join the New Year chat at any Chinese table.
Do this day interactively, with audio and games, free at **wishyou.today/learning**

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day 82 temples, myths and legends

Chinese HSK 7–9 in 193 days
unit 11 · Chinese culture

Visit a temple as a sight, retell a legend, and add “then again” to a point with 话(又)说回来.

Temples, gods and monsters live on in Chinese sayings, films and everyday jokes: 老天保佑, 魔鬼训练, 购物天堂.

words

word	pinyin	meaning	example
信仰	xìnyǎng	belief, faith; to believe in	每个人都有自己的信仰，我们应该互相尊重。 Everyone has their own beliefs, and we should respect each other.
宗教	zōngjiào	religion	这座寺庙是研究古代宗教建筑的好例子。 This temple is a fine example for studying ancient religious architecture.
佛	fó	Buddha	寺庙中间有一座很高的佛像。 In the middle of the temple stands a very tall statue of the Buddha.
菩萨	púsà	bodhisattva; a kind-hearted person	我现在是泥菩萨过河，自身难保，哪儿还帮得了{liao3-4}你? I’m a clay idol crossing a river: I can barely save myself, let alone help you.
和尚	héshang	Buddhist monk	一个和尚挑水喝，两个和尚抬水喝，三个和尚没水喝。 One monk carries his own water, two monks carry it together, three monks go without.
僧人	sēngrén	monk (formal)	以前这座寺里住着几十位僧人。 Dozens of monks used to live in this temple.
寺	sì	(Buddhist) temple	这座寺已经有一千多年的历史了。 This temple is more than a thousand years old.
寺庙	sìmiào	temple	山上的寺庙每年春节都很热闹。 The temple on the hill is always busy at Spring Festival.
庙	miào	temple, shrine	村子后面有一座小庙。 There’s a little shrine behind the village.
坛	tán	altar; platform; circle (of a field)	天坛是古代皇帝祈祷丰收的地方。 The Temple of Heaven is where emperors of old prayed for a good harvest.
供奉	gòngfèng	to enshrine, honour (with offerings)	这座庙里供奉着一位古代有名的医生。 This temple honours a famous doctor of ancient times.
祈祷	qídǎo	to pray; hope hard	大家都在祈祷明天别下雨。 Everyone is praying it won’t rain tomorrow.
虔诚	qiánchéng	devout, sincere	他对音乐的热爱几乎是虔诚的。 His love of music is almost devout.
保佑	bǎoyòu	to bless, protect	老天保佑，这次考试千万要过! Heaven help me, I just have to pass this exam!

洗礼	xǐlǐ	baptism; (figurative) a testing experience	经过这次比赛的洗礼，队员们成熟了很多。 Tested by this competition, the players have grown up a lot.
神圣	shénshèng	sacred, holy	保护孩子是每个老师神圣的责任。 Protecting children is every teacher's sacred duty.
神仙	shénxiān	immortal, god (in folk tales)	退休以后，他过上了神仙一样的日子。 After retiring, he lives a life of perfect ease.
仙女	xiānnǚ	fairy, goddess	她穿上汉服，真像画里的仙女。 In her Hanfu she looks just like a fairy in a painting.
天使	tiānshǐ	angel	在病人眼里，护士就是天使。 To patients, nurses are angels.
天堂	tiāntáng	paradise, heaven	这个商场简直是购物天堂。 This mall is a shopper's paradise.
地狱	dìyù	hell; (figurative) a nightmare	每天早上的交通简直像地狱一样。 The traffic every morning is a total nightmare.
阎王	Yánwang	Yama, king of the underworld (folk tales)	小时候奶奶讲过阎王的故事，吓得我不敢睡觉。 When I was little, Grandma told me stories about Yama: I was too scared to sleep.
魔鬼	móguǐ	devil, demon	教练的魔鬼训练让大家累得要命。 The coach's brutal training wore everyone out.
妖怪	yāoguài	monster, demon (in folk tales)	故事里的妖怪最后被打败了。 In the end the demon in the story is defeated.
怪物	guàiwu	monster; a strange person	孩子们最喜欢看怪物电影。 Kids love monster films.
凤凰	fènghuáng	phoenix	龙和凤凰都是吉祥的象征。 The dragon and the phoenix are both symbols of good fortune.
魔法	mófǎ	magic	假使我会魔法，我就把时间停下来。 If I could do magic, I'd stop time.
魔力	mólì	magic, charm, appeal	音乐有一种神奇的魔力。 Music has a kind of magical power.
化身	huàshēn	embodiment, incarnation	在故事里，凤凰是美丽和吉祥的化身。 In stories, the phoenix is the embodiment of beauty and good fortune.
灵魂	línghún	soul	细节是一个作品的灵魂。 The details are the soul of a work.
人间	rénjiān	the human world, on earth	人们常说杭州是人间天堂。 People often say Hangzhou is heaven on earth.
世间	shìjiān	in the world, on earth	世间万物都在不停地变化。 Everything in the world is changing all the time.
命	mìng	to order, command (written)	皇帝命{ming4-7}人在山上修了一座寺庙。 The emperor ordered a temple to be built on the hill.

pattern 话(又)说回来: then again, having said that

one side | 。话(又)说回来， | the other side

话又说回来 turns the conversation back to the other side: “then again, having said that”. Say your first point, then add the balancing fact. 话说回来 is the same, a little more casual.

门票有点儿贵。话又说回来，这么好的地方，也值了。 **ménpiào yǒudiǎnr guì huà yòu shuō huilai zhème hǎo de dìfang yě zhí le** The ticket is a bit pricey. Then again, for a place this good, it’s worth it.

他说话很直。话说回来，他的心是好的。 **tā shuōhuà hěn zhí huà shuō huilai tā de xīn shì hǎo de** He’s very blunt. Having said that, his heart is in the right place.

老房子住着不太方便。话又说回来，邻居们都很热心。 **lǎo fángzi zhù zhe bú tài fāngbiàn huà yòu shuō huilai línjūmen dōu hěn rèxīn** The old house isn’t very convenient. Then again, the neighbours are all so kind.

dialogue the temple on the hill

professor chen 这座寺已经有一千多年的历史了。据说当年皇帝命人在山上修了这座寺庙。
zhè zuò sì yǐjīng yǒu yìqiān duō nián de lìshǐ le jùshuō dāngnián huángdì mìng rén zài shān shàng xiū le zhè zuò sìmiào · This temple is over a thousand years old. They say an emperor ordered it built up here.

anna 人真多啊！大家都是来烧香的吗？
rén zhēn duō a dàjiā dōu shì lái shāo xiāng de ma · So many people! Have they all come to burn incense?

professor chen 有的是，有的不是。有人有宗教信仰，有人只是来看建筑、看风景。我们来，是看历史的。
yǒude shì yǒude bú shì yǒu rén yǒu zōngjiào xìnyǎng yǒu rén zhǐshì lái kàn jiànzhù kàn fēngjǐng wǒmen lái shì kàn lìshǐ de · Some have, some haven't. Some people are religious; others come for the buildings and the views. We've come for the history.

little sister 那边有个老奶奶站在佛像前面，特别虔诚，一个劲儿地说着什么。
nàbiān yǒu gè lǎo nǎinai zhàn zài fó xiàng qiánmiàn tèbié qiánchéng yígèjìnr de shuō zhe shénme · There's an old lady in front of the Buddha statue over there, very devout, murmuring something over and over.

professor chen 老人过年来这儿，多半是祈祷家人平安、健康。以前寺里住着几十位僧人，现在只剩几个和尚了。
lǎorén guònián lái zhèr duōbàn shì qídǎo jiārén píngān jiànkāng yǐqián sì lǐ zhù zhe jǐ shí wèi sēngrén xiànzài zhǐ shèng jǐ gè héshang le · Older people who come here at New Year are mostly praying for their family's safety and health. Dozens of monks used to live here; now there are just a few.

anna 这些菩萨像做得真精致。这里供奉的是谁？
zhèxiē púsà xiàng zuò de zhēn jīngzhì zhèlǐ gòngfèng de shì shéi · These bodhisattva statues are so finely made. Who is honoured in this hall?

professor chen 这里供奉的是一位古代有名的医生。传说他治好了很多人，大家把他看作好心的神仙。
zhèlǐ gòngfèng de shì yí wèi gǔdài yǒumíng de yīshēng chuánshuō tā zhì hǎo le hěn duō rén dàjiā bǎ tā kànzuò hǎoxīn de shénxiān · This one honours a famous doctor of ancient times. Legend says he cured so many people that they came to see him as a kind immortal.

anna 这儿和天坛一样吗？
zhèr hé tiān tán yíyàng ma · Is this like the Temple of Heaven?

professor chen 不一样。天坛不是寺庙，是古代皇帝祈祷丰收的地方。
bù yíyàng tiān tán bú shì sìmiào shì gǔdài huángdì qídǎo fēngshōu de dìfang · No. The Temple of Heaven isn't a temple of this kind: it's where the emperors of old prayed for good harvests.

little sister 我小时候最喜欢听神话故事：仙女、凤凰、在天上盘旋的龙、会魔法的妖怪……
wǒ xiǎoshíhou zuì xǐhuan tīng shénhuà gùshi xiānnǚ fènghuáng zài tiānshàng pánxuán de lóng huì mófǎ de yāoguài · When I was little I loved myths: fairies, phoenixes, dragons circling in the sky, demons who could do magic…

anna 我们的童话里也有天使、魔鬼和各种怪物。看来世间的孩子都爱听这些。
wǒmen de tónghuà lǐ yě yǒu tiānshǐ móguǐ hé gèzhǒng guàiwu kànlái shìjiān de háizi dōu ài tīng zhèxiē · Our fairy tales have angels, devils and all kinds of monsters too. It seems children everywhere love these stories.

professor chen 这些故事有一种魔力。比如凤凰，就是美丽和吉祥的化身。
zhèxiē gùshi yǒu yì zhǒng mólì bǐrú fènghuáng jiùshì měilì hé jíxiáng de huàshēn · These stories have a kind of magic. The phoenix, for example, is the embodiment of beauty and good fortune.

little sister 我奶奶还讲过阎王和地狱的故事，吓得我直哆嗦，屡次半夜哭醒。
wǒ nǎinai hái jiǎng guo Yánwang hé dìyù de gùshi xià de wǒ zhí duōsuo lǚcì bànyè kū xǐng · My grandma told me stories about Yama and hell too: they made me shiver with fright, and I woke up crying in the night again and again.

anna 哈哈，怪不得你这么胆小！
hā hā guàibude nǐ zhème dǎnxiǎo · Ha ha, no wonder you're such a scaredy-cat!

professor chen 神话里，好人死后去天堂，坏人去地狱。说到底，故事是想告诉人们：在人间要做好人。

shénhuà lǐ hǎo rén sǐ hòu qù tiāntáng huài rén qù dìyù shuō dàodǐ gùshi shì xiǎng gàosu rénmen zài rénjiān yào zuò hǎo rén · In myths the good go to heaven and the bad to hell. In the end the stories are saying: be good while you're here on earth.

anna 爬了一个小时的山，累得我腿都动弹不了了。话又说回来，山上的风景真值得。

pá le yí gè xiǎoshí de shān lèi de wǒ tuǐ dōu dòngtan bu liǎo le huà yòu shuō huilai shān shàng de fēngjǐng zhēn zhídé · An hour's climb: my legs can hardly move. Then again, the view up here is so worth it.

little sister 老天保佑，明天去庙会千万别下雪！

lǎo tiān bǎoyòu míngtiān qù miàohuì qiānwàn bié xià xuě · Fingers crossed it doesn't snow tomorrow for the temple fair!

professor chen 经过一千年风雨的洗礼，这座寺还在这儿。对很多人来说，这里是一个神圣的地方，也是这片土地的灵魂。

jīngguò yìqiān nián fēngyǔ de xǐlǐ zhè zuò sì hái zài zhèr duì hěn duō rén lái shuō zhèlǐ shì yí gè shénshèng de dìfang yě shì zhè piàn tǔdì de línghún · After a thousand years of wind and rain, this temple is still standing. For many people it's a sacred place, and the soul of this land.

write it trace the grey, then write your own

茎 jīng stem, stalk												
蔓 wàn creeper												
绽 zhàn split open												
耕 gēng to plough, till												

good to know · Visiting a temple: step over the high threshold (门槛), never on it, don't point at statues, and ask before taking photos inside a hall. Many "religious" words live on in everyday Chinese: 白衣天使 (nurses), 购物天堂 (shopping paradise), 魔鬼训练 (brutal training), 神仙一样的日子 (a life of ease).

From phoenixes to 老天保佑, you can now follow the old stories that colour everyday Chinese.
Do this day interactively, with audio and games, free at **wishyou.today/learning**

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day 83 customs and wisdom

Chinese HSK 7–9 in 193 days
unit 11 · Chinese culture

Talk about customs, taboos and old wisdom, and define a term with 所谓……，就是……

Taboos and old sayings shape how people give gifts, choose homes and argue: knowing them saves you from awkward moments.

words

word	pinyin	meaning	example
迷信	míxìn	to be superstitious; superstition	现在很少有人迷信这些老规矩了。 Few people take these old rules seriously any more.
风水	fēngshuǐ	feng shui	老人买房子的时候，常常讲究风水。 Older people often care about feng shui when they buy a house.
占卜	zhānbǔ	to tell fortunes, divine	古代人用乌龟壳占卜。 In ancient times people told the future with tortoise shells.
预兆	yùzhào	omen, sign; to foreshadow	冬天下大雪，农民觉得是丰收的预兆。 Farmers take heavy winter snow as a sign of a good harvest.
兆头	zhàotou	omen, sign (spoken)	开门红，这可是个好兆头！ A great start: that's a good sign!
忌	jì	to avoid, steer clear of	医生说他最近忌辣。 The doctor says he should avoid spicy food for now.
忌讳	jìhuì	taboo; to avoid (saying or doing)	送东西的时候，中国人忌讳送钟。 Chinese people avoid giving a clock as a present.
禁忌	jìnjì	taboo, prohibition	每个地方都有自己的饮食禁忌。 Every place has its own food taboos.
风貌	fēngmào	look, character (of a place or era)	这条老街保留了一百年前的风貌。 This old street still looks the way it did a hundred years ago.
风情	fēngqíng	local flavour, charm	云南的小城充满了民族风情。 Yunnan's little towns are full of local ethnic charm.
底蕴	dǐyùn	deep inner richness, heritage	这座城市有很深厚的文化底蕴。 This city has a rich cultural heritage.
积淀	jīdiàn	to build up over time; accumulation	这些习俗是几千年历史的积淀。 These customs are the sediment of thousands of years of history.
精髓	jīngsuǐ	essence, quintessence	这本书讲的是中国文化的精髓。 This book is about the essence of Chinese culture.
渊源	yuānyuán	origin, deep connection	这两个城市的渊源很深。 These two cities have long, deep ties.

国学	guóxué	traditional Chinese learning (classics)	他在大学里教国学。 He teaches the Chinese classics at university.
圣贤	shèngxián	sages and worthies	读圣贤书，学做人的道理。 Read the books of the sages and learn how to live.
君子	jūnzǐ	a gentleman, a person of virtue	君子动口不动手。 A gentleman argues with words, not fists.
中庸	zhōngyōng	the golden mean; moderate	中庸之道就是做事不走极端。 The doctrine of the mean is about never going to extremes.
哲理	zhélǐ	philosophy, wisdom (in a saying)	这句老话里有很深的哲理。 There's deep wisdom in this old saying.
太极	tàijí	the Supreme Ultimate; tai chi	公园里每天早上都有人打太极。 Every morning there are people doing tai chi in the park.
文人	wénrén	man of letters, scholar	古代的文人喜欢喝茶、写诗、画画。 Scholars of old liked drinking tea, writing poems and painting.
弟子	dìzǐ	disciple, pupil	据说孔子有三千弟子。 Confucius is said to have had three thousand disciples.
传人	chuánrén	successor, heir (of a craft)	她是这位老画家唯一的传人。 She is the old painter's only true successor.
弘扬	hóngyáng	to promote, carry forward (formal)	我们要弘扬传统文化。 We should promote traditional culture.
发扬	fāyáng	to carry on, develop (a tradition)	这种好的传统应该发扬下去。 Good traditions like this should be carried on.
糟粕	zāopò	dregs; the worthless part	对传统文化，要留下好的，去掉糟粕。 With tradition, keep the best and throw out the rest.
华侨	huáqiáo	overseas Chinese (Chinese citizens abroad)	每年春节，很多华侨都回国过年。 Every Spring Festival many overseas Chinese come home for New Year.
华人	huárén	ethnic Chinese (anywhere)	世界上很多城市都有华人。 There are ethnic Chinese in many cities around the world.
华裔	huáyì	person of Chinese descent	她是在英国长{zhang3}大的华裔，中文说得很好。 She grew up in the UK, of Chinese descent, and speaks good Chinese.
瞻仰	zhānyǎng	to pay respects to, look at with reverence	每年都有很多人来这里瞻仰这位诗人住过的地方。 Every year many people come here to pay their respects at the poet's old home.

pattern 所谓……，就是……: what is called … means …

所谓 term ，就是 what it means

所谓 picks out a term or a saying, and 就是 explains it: “what we call X is simply Y”. Put the term in quotation marks when it is a saying. Speakers use it to define a word before they argue about it.

所谓“国学”，就是中国传统的学问。 **suǒwèi guóxué jiùshì Zhōngguó chuántǒng de xuéwen** What is called “guoxue” is traditional Chinese learning.

所谓好兆头，就是让人觉得会有好事的东西。 **suǒwèi hǎo zhàotou jiùshì ràng rén juéde huì yǒu hǎo shì de dōngxi** A “good sign” is simply something that makes you feel good things are coming.

所谓“入乡随俗”，就是到一个地方，就按那里的习惯做。 **suǒwèi rù xiāng suí sú jiùshì dào yí gè dìfang jiù àn nàlǐ de xíguàn zuò** “When in Rome” means doing things the local way wherever you go.

dialogue what not to do at new year

ms zhang 安娜，明天是正月初一，有几个忌讳你得知道：不能扫地，说话忌说不吉利的字，碗也千万别打破。

Ānnà míngtiān shì zhēngyuè chū yī yǒu jǐ gè jìhuì nǐ děi zhīdào bù néng sǎo dì shuōhuà jì shuō bù jílì de zì wǎn yě qiānwàn bié dǎpò · Anna, tomorrow is the first day of the year, and there are a few taboos you should know: no sweeping, no unlucky words, and whatever you do, don't break a bowl.

anna 为什么不能扫地？这是迷信吗？

wèi shénme bù néng sǎo dì zhè shì míxìn ma · Why no sweeping? Is that a superstition?

ms zhang 老人说，初一扫地会把福气扫走。年轻人不一定信，不过大家还是按老规矩来，图个好兆头。

lǎorén shuō chū yī sǎo dì huì bǎ fúqi sǎo zǒu niánqīng rén bù yídìng xìn búguò dàjiā háishi àn lǎo guīju lái tú gè hǎo zhàotou · Old people say sweeping on the first day sweeps your luck away. Young people don't always believe it, but everyone still follows the old rules for a good omen.

xiaoming 我奶奶还会看风水，家里的床放在哪儿，都得她说了算。

wǒ nǎinai hái huì kàn fēngshuǐ jiā lǐ de chuáng fàng zài nǎr dōu děi tā shuō le suàn · My grandma even reads feng shui: where the beds go is up to her.

little sister 奶奶还说，属相不合的人不能结婚。

nǎinai hái shuō shǔxiàng bù hé de rén bù néng jiéhūn · Grandma also says people whose zodiac signs don't match shouldn't marry.

professor chen 这些禁忌和风水的说法，跟古代的占卜有很深的渊源。古人觉得天上的变化是人间事情的预兆。

zhèxiē jìnjì hé fēngshuǐ de shuōfǎ gēn gǔdài de zhānbǔ yǒu hěn shēn de yuānyuán gǔrén juéde tiānshàng de biànhuà shì rénjiān shìqing de yùzhào · These taboos and feng shui ideas go back a long way, to ancient divination. People of old saw changes in the sky as omens of things on earth.

anna 陈教授，您觉得这些都是糟粕吗？

Chénjiàoshòu nín juéde zhèxiē dōu shì zāopò ma · Professor Chen, do you think all this is rubbish?

professor chen 不能都这么说。所谓传统，就是一代一代传下来的东西，好的我们发扬，不好的就放下。

bù néng dōu zhème shuō suǒwèi chuántǒng jiùshì yídài yídài chuán xialai de dōngxi hǎo de wǒmen fāyáng bù hǎo de jiù fàng xià · You can't lump it all together. Tradition is simply what is handed down from generation to generation: we carry on the good and let go of the bad.

little sister 像我外婆，生病了忌口，这个有道理。可是不能吃梨，因为“梨”和“离”听起来一样，这个就没什么道理了。

xiàng wǒ wàipó shēngbìng le jìkǒu zhège yǒu dàolǐ kěshì bù néng chī lí yīnwèi lí hé lí tīng qǐlai yíyàng zhège jiù méi shénme dàolǐ le · Like my grandma: avoiding certain foods when she's ill makes sense. But not eating pears because 梨 sounds like 离 “part”: there's nothing to that.

xiaoming 你别忘了，你还给我讲过“送钟”的忌讳呢。

nǐ bié wàng le nǐ hái gěi wǒ jiǎng guo sòng zhōng de jìhuì ne · Don't forget, you're the one who told me about the clock taboo.

professor chen 说到底，这些习俗是几千年文化的积淀。比如“君子”“中庸”，都是国学的精髓，圣贤书里讲了很多做人的哲理。

shuō dàodǐ zhèxiē xísú shì jǐ qiān nián wénhuà de jīdiàn bǐrú jūnzǐ zhōngyōng dōu shì guóxué de jīngsuǐ shèngxián shū lǐ jiǎng le hěn duō zuò rén de zhélǐ · In the end, these customs are thousands of years of culture built up layer on layer. Ideas like the gentleman and the golden mean are the essence of the classics: the books of the sages are full of wisdom about how to live.

anna 所谓中庸，就是不走极端，对吗？

suǒwèi zhōngyōng jiùshì bù zǒu jíduān duì ma · The golden mean is about not going to extremes, right?

professor chen 对。公园里打太极的老人，动作不快也不慢，刚刚好，也有这个意思。

duì gōngyuán lǐ dǎ tàijí de lǎorén dòngzuò bú kuài yě bú màn gāng gānghǎo yě yǒu zhège yìsi · Right. The old

people doing tai chi in the park, moving neither too fast nor too slow, just right: that's the same idea.

xiaoming 陈教授的爷爷是一位有名的文人，他自己也收了不少弟子，算是国学的传人了。
Chénjiàoshòu de yéye shì yí wèi yǒumíng de wénrén tā zìjǐ yě shōu le bù shǎo dìzǐ suànshì guóxué de chuánrén le · Professor Chen's grandfather was a famous scholar, and he has taken on quite a few students himself: you could call him an heir to the classics.

professor chen 哪里哪里。我只是想弘扬一点儿传统文化。我有个学生是华裔，在英国长大的，她说海外的华人、华侨过春节，贴对联、放鞭炮，比我们还讲究。
nǎlǐ nǎlǐ wǒ zhǐshì xiǎng hóngyáng yìdiǎnr chuántǒng wénhuà wǒ yǒu gè xuéshēng shì huáyì zài Yīngguó zhǎng dà de tā shuō hǎiwài de huárén huáqiáo guò Chūnjié tiē duìlián fàng biānpào bǐ wǒmen hái jiǎngjiu · I wouldn't say that. I just want to spread a little traditional culture. One of my students is of Chinese descent and grew up in the UK: she says Chinese communities abroad celebrate the New Year, with couplets and firecrackers, even more carefully than we do.

anna 真的！英国的中国城一到春节，到处都是红灯笼，很有中国风情。
zhēn de Yīngguó de Zhōngguó chéng yí dào Chūnjié dàochù dōu shì hóng dēnglong hěn yǒu Zhōngguó fēngqíng · It's true! When Spring Festival comes, Chinatown in the UK is full of red lanterns: it has real Chinese charm.

professor chen 过完年，我带你们去城南的老街看看，我们还可以去瞻仰一位老画家住过的房子。
guò wán nián wǒ dài nǐmen qù chéng nán de lǎo jiē kàn kan wǒmen hái kěyǐ qù zhānyǎng yí wèi lǎo huàjiā zhù guo de fángzi · After New Year I'll take you to the old street in the south of the city, and we can pay our respects at an old painter's former home.

little sister 那条老街现在都是商店了，没什么看头儿了吧?
nà tiáo lǎo jiē xiànzài dōu shì shāngdiàn le méi shénme kàntour le ba · Isn't that street all shops now? Hardly worth seeing.

professor chen 不会。那儿还保留着一百年前的风貌，很有文化底蕴。
bú huì nàr hái bǎoliú zhe yìbǎi nián qián de fēngmào hěn yǒu wénhuà dǐyùn · Not at all. It still looks as it did a hundred years ago, steeped in culture.

ms zhang 任你们怎么逛，晚上也得回来吃饺子！这是我们家的惯例。
rèn nǐmen zěnme guàng wǎnshang yě děi huílái chī jiǎozi zhè shì wǒmen jiā de guànlì · Wander as much as you like, but you must be back for dumplings tonight! That's our family custom.

write it trace the grey, then write your own

锄
chú
hoe; to hoe, weed

灌
guàn
to fill, pour into

粪
fèn
dung, manure

禾
hé
grain plant

good to know · Gift taboos: no clocks (送钟 sounds like 送终), no pears to share (分梨 sounds like 分离 “separate”), no sets of four (四 sounds like 死). 华侨 are Chinese citizens abroad, 华人 are ethnic Chinese anywhere, 华裔 are people of Chinese descent, usually with another nationality.

Taboos, omens and the golden mean: you can now see the old wisdom behind everyday habits.
Do this day interactively, with audio and games, free at **wishyou.today/learning**

day 84 heritage and crafts

Talk about museums, antiques and traditional crafts, and say “why not?” with 有何X.

Museums, old streets and craft workshops are where Chinese history becomes something you can see and touch.

words

word	pinyin	meaning	example
宝库	bǎokù	treasure house, treasury	这座图书馆是一座知识的宝库。 This library is a treasure house of knowledge.
瑰宝	guībǎo	treasure, gem (of culture)	京剧是中国文化的瑰宝。 Peking opera is a gem of Chinese culture.
古董	gǔdǒng	antique	他家里收藏了不少古董。 He has quite a few antiques at home.
古籍	gǔjí	ancient books	图书馆里保存着很多珍贵的古籍。 The library keeps many precious ancient books.
藏品	cángpǐn	item in a collection	这家博物馆有两万多件藏品。 The museum has more than twenty thousand items in its collection.
珍藏	zhēncáng	to treasure; treasured collection	这封信她一直珍藏着。 She has kept this letter safe all along.
陈列	chénliè	to display, exhibit	这些古董都陈列在二楼。 These antiques are all on display on the first floor.
出土	chūtǔ	to be unearthed	这件青铜器是五十年前出土的。 This bronze was unearthed fifty years ago.
发掘	fājué	to excavate; discover (talent)	考古学家在这里发掘出了一座古城。 Archaeologists dug up an ancient town here.
青铜器	qīngtóngqì	bronze ware, bronze object	三千年前的青铜器就已经非常精美了。 Bronzes were already exquisite three thousand years ago.
陶瓷	táocí	pottery and porcelain, ceramics	中国的陶瓷在世界上很有名。 Chinese ceramics are famous all over the world.
窑	yáo	kiln	这些瓷器都是在这个窑里烧出来的。 All this porcelain was fired in this kiln.
玉	yù	jade	奶奶送给我一块玉。 Grandma gave me a piece of jade.
丝绸	sīchóu	silk	这条丝绸围巾摸起来很舒服。 This silk scarf feels lovely.
刺绣	cìxiù	embroidery; to embroider	这幅刺绣花了她半年时间。 This embroidery took her half a year.
绣	xiù	to embroider	她在手帕上绣了一朵花。 She embroidered a flower on the handkerchief.

印章	yìnzhāng	seal, stamp (name seal)	古代的书画上常常有作者的印章。 Old paintings and calligraphy often carry the artist's seal.
算盘	suànpán	abacus	我小时候学过打算盘。 I learned to use an abacus as a child.
工匠	gōngjiàng	craftsman, artisan	这座桥是古代工匠修的，一千年了还很结实。 Ancient craftsmen built this bridge, and after a thousand years it's still solid.
手艺	shǒuyì	craft, skill, workmanship	这位师傅做菜的手艺特别好。 This chef's cooking is superb.
失传	shīchuán	to be lost (no longer handed down)	有些老手艺已经失传了。 Some old crafts have already died out.
城墙	chéngqiáng	city wall	西安的城墙保存得非常完整。 Xi'an's city wall is remarkably well preserved.
宫殿	gōngdiàn	palace	这座宫殿有六百年的历史。 This palace is six hundred years old.
殿堂	diàntáng	palace hall; (figurative) the hall of fame	她终于走进了音乐的殿堂。 She finally made it to the very top of the music world.
亭子	tíngzi	pavilion	湖边有一个小亭子，我们去那儿休息一下吧。 There's a little pavilion by the lake: let's rest there.
碑	bēi	stone tablet, stele	这块碑上刻着一千年前的文字。 This stone tablet is carved with writing from a thousand years ago.
纪念碑	jìniànbēi	monument, memorial	广场中间立着一座纪念碑。 A monument stands in the middle of the square.

pattern 有何x: what x is there?

有何 **不可 / 难 / 区别 / 意义**

何 is a written "what", so 有何X means "what X is there?", a rhetorical question that expects "none". 有何不可 "why not?", 有何难 "what's hard about it?", 有何区别 "what's the difference?". It sounds a little bookish, which is part of the fun. Its spoken cousin is 有什么 + verb + 头儿 "what's the point of …?".

周末去看展览，有何不可？ **zhōumò qù kàn zhǎnlǎn yǒu hé bù kě** Going to an exhibition at the weekend: why not?

这两种瓷器有何区别？ **zhè liǎng zhǒng cíqì yǒu hé qūbié** What's the difference between these two kinds of porcelain?

这种电影有什么看头儿？ **zhè zhǒng diànyǐng yǒu shénme kàntour** What's the point of watching a film like this?

dialogue the old street of crafts

professor chen 这条街以前全是工匠的小店：刻印章的、做刺绣的、卖陶瓷的。现在还有几家老店，手艺都是祖传的。
zhè tiáo jiē yǐqián quán shì gōngjiàng de xiǎo diàn kè yìnzhāng de zuò cìxiù de mài táocí de xiànzài hái yǒu jǐ jiā lǎo diàn shǒuyì dōu shì zǔchuán de · This street used to be all craftsmen's little shops: seal carvers, embroiderers, pottery sellers. A few old shops are still here, with skills handed down in the family.

anna 正月初三，老街上到处是年画，真喜庆。
zhēngyuè chū sān lǎo jiē shàng dàochù shì niánhuà zhēn xǐqìng · The third day of New Year, and the old street is covered in New Year pictures: so festive.

little sister 您看这家刺绣！上面的仙女绣得跟真的一样。
nín kàn zhè jiā cìxiù shàngmiàn de xiānnǚ xiù de gēn zhēn de yíyàng · Look at this embroidery! The fairy on it is stitched so well she looks real.

anna 我也想学刺绣，可是我手太笨了。
wǒ yě xiǎng xué cìxiù kěshì wǒ shǒu tài bèn le · I'd love to learn embroidery, but I'm so clumsy.

professor chen 有何不可？师傅说初学的人先绣一片叶子就行。
yǒu hé bù kě shīfu shuō chū xué de rén xiān xiù yí piàn yèzi jiù xíng · Why not? The master says beginners just start with a single leaf.

little sister 这儿还有刻印章的！安娜，给你刻一个中文名字的印章吧。
zhèr hái yǒu kè yìnzhāng de Ānnà gěi nǐ kè yí gè Zhōngwén míngzi de yìnzhāng ba · And here's a seal carver! Anna, let's get a seal made with your Chinese name.

anna 好啊！以后我写书法，就可以在上面盖章了。
hǎo a yǐhòu wǒ xiě shūfǎ jiù kěyǐ zài shàngmiàn gài zhāng le · Great! Then I can stamp it on my calligraphy.

professor chen 可惜很多老手艺都快失传了，年轻人不太愿意学。
kěxī hěn duō lǎo shǒuyì dōu kuài shīchuán le niánqīng rén bú tài yuànyì xué · Sadly many old crafts are close to dying out: young people aren't keen to learn.

little sister 那边的店里卖算盘，现在还有人用吗？一个算盘有什么看头儿？
nàbiān de diàn lǐ mài suànpán xiànzài hái yǒu rén yòng ma yí gè suànpán yǒu shénme kàntour · That shop over there sells abacuses: does anyone still use them? What's there to see in an abacus?

professor chen 别小看算盘，它是古人的“电脑”。走，前面就是博物馆了。
bié xiǎokàn suànpán tā shì gǔrén de diànnǎo zǒu qiánmiàn jiùshì bówùguǎn le · Don't look down on the abacus: it was the ancients' computer. Come on, the museum is just ahead.

anna 门口这块碑是什么时候的？
ménkǒu zhè kuài bēi shì shénme shíhou de · How old is the stone tablet by the entrance?

professor chen 一千年前的。这座博物馆是一座宝库，有两万多件藏品，很多是从附近发掘出来的。
yìqiān nián qián de zhè zuò bówùguǎn shì yí zuò bǎokù yǒu liǎng wàn duō jiàn cángpǐn hěn duō shì cóng fùjìn fājué chulai de · A thousand years old. This museum is a treasure house: more than twenty thousand items, many of them excavated nearby.

anna 这件青铜器上有好多花纹，颜色也变了。
zhè jiàn qīngtóngqì shàng yǒu hǎoduō huāwén yánsè yě biàn le · This bronze is covered in patterns, and its colour has changed.

professor chen 它是五十年前出土的，有三千年了。二楼陈列着陶瓷和玉，还有古代的丝绸。
tā shì wǔshí nián qián chūtǔ de yǒu sānqiān nián le èr lóu chénliè zhe táocí hé yù hái yǒu gǔdài de sīchóu · It was unearthed fifty years ago and it's three thousand years old. Upstairs they display ceramics and jade, and ancient silk too.

little sister 这些碗是在哪个窑烧的？
zhèxiē wǎn shì zài nǎge yáo shāo de · Which kiln were these bowls fired in?

professor chen 就在城外，那个古窑现在还在。旁边那个柜子里是这里珍藏的古籍，有的记着古代的节气和风水，都是国家的瑰宝。
jiù zài chéng wài nàge gǔ yáo xiànzài hái zài pángbiān nàge guìzi lǐ shì zhèlǐ zhēncáng de gǔjí yǒude jì zhe

gǔdài de jiéqì hé fēngshuǐ dōu shì guójiā de guībǎo · Just outside the town: the old kiln is still there. The case next to it holds the museum's treasured ancient books, some recording the old solar terms and feng shui: national treasures, all of them.

anna 还有一张老照片：古代的城墙、宫殿、寺庙，还有湖边的亭子。

hái yǒu yì zhāng lǎo zhàopiàn gǔdài de chéngqiáng gōngdiàn sìmiào hái yǒu hú biān de tíngzi · And here's an old photo: the ancient city wall, the palace, temples, and a pavilion by the lake.

professor chen 城墙只剩一小段了，现在那儿立着一座纪念碑。说到底，博物馆不只是古董的殿堂，也是我们记住历史的地方。

chéngqiáng zhǐ shèng yì xiǎo duàn le xiànzài nàr lì zhe yí zuò jìniànbēi shuō dàodǐ bówùguǎn bù zhǐshì gǔdǒng de diàntáng yě shì wǒmen jì zhù lìshǐ de dìfang · Only a short stretch of the wall is left, and there's a monument there now. In the end, a museum isn't just a hall of antiques: it's where we remember our history.

write it trace the grey, then write your own

栽
zāi
to plant, grow

坑
kēng
pit, hole; to cheat

淌
tǎng
to drip, trickle, flow

霜
shuāng
frost

good to know · 有何不可 and 有何难 are bookish: perfect when you want to sound playfully grand. In everyday speech: 为什么不行？, 有什么难的？ Craft verbs: 绣 embroider, 刻 carve, 烧 fire (pottery), 织 weave. The craftsman is 工匠 or 师傅, the craft 手艺.

Bronze, jade, silk and seals: you can now walk through a Chinese museum and talk about what you see.
Do this day interactively, with audio and games, free at **wishyou.today/learning**

day 85 grand and beautiful

Describe grand sights, beautiful scenery and striking looks, and say “I’d rather … than …” with 宁可……也不……

When you travel, you want more than 很漂亮: Chinese has a precise word for every kind of beauty and grandeur.

words

word	pinyin	meaning	example
宏伟	hóngwěi	grand, magnificent (building, plan)	这座宏伟的建筑是新的国家图书馆。 This magnificent building is the new national library.
雄伟	xióngwěi	imposing, majestic	雄伟的长城在山上一直伸向远方。 The majestic Great Wall stretches over the mountains into the distance.
壮观	zhuàngguān	spectacular; a spectacular sight	山上看日出的景色特别壮观。 The sunrise from the mountain is spectacular.
壮丽	zhuànglì	magnificent, glorious (scenery)	这首诗写出了祖国山河的壮丽。 This poem captures the glory of the country’s mountains and rivers.
庄严	zhuāngyán	solemn, dignified	升国旗的时候，现场气氛非常庄严。 When the national flag is raised, the atmosphere is very solemn.
气派	qìpài	impressive, stylish; grand style	这家酒店的大门真气派。 This hotel’s entrance is really impressive.
气势	qìshì	momentum, imposing power	瀑布从山上冲下来，气势非常大。 The waterfall crashes down the mountain with tremendous force.
豪华	háohuá	luxurious	他们住在一家很豪华的酒店。 They’re staying in a very luxurious hotel.
秀丽	xiùlì	beautiful, graceful (scenery)	这里的山水非常秀丽。 The hills and streams here are beautifully graceful.
秀美	xiùměi	graceful, lovely (scenery)	这个小镇风景秀美。 This little town is set in lovely scenery.
美妙	měimiào	wonderful, beautiful (sound, moment)	那是我一生中最美妙的一个晚上。 It was the most wonderful evening of my life.
奇妙	qímiào	marvellous, wonderful (strange and good)	大自然真是奇妙。 Nature is truly marvellous.
奇特	qítè	peculiar, unusual	这块石头的样子很奇特，像一只猴子。 This rock has an unusual shape: it looks like a monkey.
别致	biézhì	unique, original (design)	这家咖啡店装修得很别致。 This café has a really original design.
新奇	xīnqí	novel, new and strange	孩子们对什么都觉得新奇。 Children find everything new and exciting.

新式	xīnshì	new-style, modern	老城旁边建起了一片新式住宅。 A modern housing estate has gone up beside the old town.
标致	biāozhì	pretty (of a woman)	那个姑娘长{zhang3}得很标致。 That girl is very pretty.
俊	jùn	handsome, good-looking	这个小伙子长{zhang3}得真俊！ What a handsome young man!
俊俏	jùnqiào	good-looking, pretty	她女儿长{zhang3}得很俊俏。 Her daughter is very pretty.
英俊	yīngjùn	handsome (of a man)	照片上的爸爸年轻时很英俊。 Dad was very handsome when he was young, in this photo.
甜美	tiánměi	sweet (voice, smile)	导游的声音很甜美。 The guide has a sweet voice.
诱人	yòurén	tempting, attractive	烤红薯的香味太诱人了。 The smell of roast sweet potatoes is so tempting.
抢眼	qiǎngyǎn	eye-catching, striking	她的红大衣在雪地里特别抢眼。 Her red coat really stands out against the snow.
显眼	xiǎnyǎn	conspicuous, easy to see	把钥匙放在显眼的地方，别又忘了。 Put the keys somewhere you can see them, so you don't forget them again.
醒目	xǐngmù	eye-catching, clear (sign)	出口的标志很醒目。 The exit signs are very clear.
突兀	tūwù	abrupt, out of place	老街中间建了一座高楼，看起来很突兀。 A tower block in the middle of the old street looks out of place.
赫然	hèrán	strikingly, suddenly (there)	打开盒子，里面赫然是一块古玉。 I opened the box, and there, to my amazement, was a piece of ancient jade.
卓越	zhuóyuè	outstanding, brilliant	他为这座城市做出了卓越的贡献。 He made an outstanding contribution to the city.
非凡	fēifán	extraordinary	这位作家有非凡的想象力。 This writer has an extraordinary imagination.
无比	wúbǐ	incomparably, unmatched	站在长城上，我心里激动无比。 Standing on the Great Wall, I was thrilled beyond words.
顶级	dǐngjí	top-level, top-notch	这是一家顶级餐厅。 This is a top restaurant.
顶尖	dǐngjiān	top, the very best	她是世界顶尖的钢琴家。 She is one of the world's top pianists.
头号	tóuhào	number one, top	堵车是过年出门的头号问题。 Traffic jams are the number-one problem when you travel at New Year.
名贵	míngguì	precious, rare and valuable	这棵树是很名贵的品种。 This tree is a rare and valuable variety.
莫大	mòdà	greatest, enormous (honour, help)	能在这里演出，是我莫大的荣幸。 Performing here is the greatest honour.

pattern 宁可 / 宁愿……，也不……: would rather … than …

宁可 / 宁愿 | the hard choice you accept | ，也不 | what you refuse

宁可 or 宁愿 puts the price you are willing to pay first; 也不 gives what you refuse to do. Both halves have the same subject. The first half is usually something unpleasant: that is what makes the choice strong.

我宁可多走几步，也不坐那个缆车。 **wǒ nìngkě duō zǒu jǐ bù yě bú zuò nàge lǎnchē** I'd rather walk a bit further than take that cable car.

他宁愿自己累一点儿，也不让孩子受委屈。 **tā nìngyuàn zìjǐ lèi yìdiǎnr yě bú ràng háizi shòu wěiqu** He would rather wear himself out than let his children be hard done by.

我宁可不拍照，也不在那么危险的地方停下来。 **wǒ nìngkě bù pāizhào yě bú zài nàme wēixiǎn de dìfang tíng xialai** I'd rather skip the photo than stop somewhere that dangerous.

dialogue up on the great wall

little sister 六点就出发，太早了吧！
liù diǎn jiù chūfā tài zǎo le ba · Leaving at six? That's way too early!

xiaoming 我宁可早起两个小时，也不想堵在路上。过年出门，堵车是头号问题。
wǒ nìngkě zǎo qǐ liǎng gè xiǎoshí yě bù xiǎng dǔ zài lùshang guònián chūmén dǔchē shì tóuhào wèntí · I'd rather get up two hours early than be stuck in traffic. Jams are the number-one problem when you travel at New Year.

anna 路上那座宏伟的建筑是什么？
lùshang nà zuò hóngwěi de jiànzhù shì shénme · What was that magnificent building on the way?

xiaoming 新的体育馆。到了！入口的标志很醒目，票我放在包里最显眼的地方了。
xīn de tǐyùguǎn dào le rùkǒu de biāozhì hěn xǐngmù piào wǒ fàng zài bāo lǐ zuì xiǎnyǎn de dìfang le · The new stadium. We're here! The entrance signs are nice and clear, and I've put the tickets where I can see them in my bag.

anna 门口的牌子上写着：“凡是带学生证的游客，均可免费参观。”妹妹，你带了吗？
ménkǒu de páizi shàng xiě zhe fánshì dài xuéshēng zhèng de yóukè jūn kě miǎnfèi cānguān mèimei nǐ dài le ma · The sign at the gate says: "All visitors with a student card may enter free." Did you bring yours?

little sister 带了！省下的钱给我买烤红薯吧，那个香味太诱人了。
dài le shěng xià de qián gěi wǒ mǎi kǎo hóngshǔ ba nàge xiāng wèi tài yòurén le · I did! Spend the money we save on roast sweet potatoes: that smell is too tempting.

little sister 快看！一转弯，长城就赫然出现在眼前了。
kuài kàn yì zhuǎn wān Chángchéng jiù hèrán chūxiàn zài yǎnqián le · Look! Round the bend, and there's the Great Wall right in front of us.

anna 天哪，太壮观了！雄伟的长城在山上一直伸向远方，雪里的景色真是壮丽。
tiān na tài zhuàngguān le xióngwěi de Chángchéng zài shān shàng yìzhí shēn xiàng yuǎnfāng xuě lǐ de jǐngsè zhēnshi zhuànglì · Wow, it's spectacular! The majestic wall stretches over the mountains into the distance: the snowy view is glorious.

xiaoming 这段长城修在山顶上，气势非凡。古代工匠能在这么高的地方修城墙，手艺真是卓越。
zhè duàn Chángchéng xiū zài shāndǐng shàng qìshì fēifán gǔdài gōngjiàng néng zài zhème gāo de dìfang xiū chéngqiáng shǒuyì zhēnshi zhuóyuè · This stretch is built along the ridge: it's extraordinarily imposing. Ancient builders raising walls this high up: their skill was outstanding.

little sister 这儿有一块碑，上面写着这段长城是明朝修的。
zhèr yǒu yí kuài bēi shàngmiàn xiě zhe zhè duàn Chángchéng shì Míngcháo xiū de · There's a stone tablet here: it says this stretch of the wall was built in the Ming dynasty.

anna 站在这儿，我心里激动无比。大自然和人一起，创造了这么奇妙的东西。对我来说，这里的一切都很新奇。
zhàn zài zhèr wǒ xīnlǐ jīdòng wúbǐ dàzìrán hé rén yìqǐ chuàngzào le zhème qímiào de dōngxi duì wǒ lái shuō zhèlǐ de yíqiè dōu hěn xīnqí · Standing here, I'm thrilled beyond words. Nature and people together made something this marvellous. Everything here feels new and exciting to me.

little sister 安娜，你的红大衣在雪地里特别抢眼，站那儿别动，我给你拍一张！
Ānnà nǐ de hóng dàyī zài xuě dì lǐ tèbié qiǎngyǎn zhàn nàr bié dòng wǒ gěi nǐ pāi yì zhāng · Anna, your red coat really stands out in the snow: stay there and I'll take a picture!

anna 小心，这儿很滑，别踏在冰上。我宁可不拍照，也不想你摔倒。
xiǎoxīn zhèr hěn huá bié tà zài bīng shàng wǒ nìngkě bù pāizhào yě bù xiǎng nǐ shuāi dǎo · Careful, it's slippery here: don't step on the ice. I'd rather skip the photo than have you fall.

xiaoming 长城不只是风景，也是一个庄严的地方，更是中华文化的瑰宝。一代一代的人在这里保护过国家。
Chángchéng bù zhǐshì fēngjǐng yě shì yí gè zhuāngyán de dìfang gèng shì Zhōnghuá wénhuà de guībǎo yídài yídài de rén zài zhèlǐ bǎohù guo guójiā · The wall isn't just scenery: it's a solemn place too, and a gem of Chinese culture. Generation after generation, people stood guard here.

anna 我们终于一步一步攀上了最高的地方！
wǒmen zhōngyú yí bù yí bù pān shàng le zuì gāo de dìfang · We've finally climbed, step by step, to the highest point!

xiaoming 你们看远处那块石头，样子很奇特，像一只坐着的猴子。
nǐmen kàn yuǎn chù nà kuài shítou yàngzi hěn qítè xiàng yì zhī zuò zhe de hóuzi · Look at that rock in the distance: it has an unusual shape, like a monkey sitting down.

little sister 那边那个导游声音好甜美，长得也很标致。旁边那个小伙子是她同事吧？长得真俊。
nàbiān nàge dǎoyóu shēngyīn hǎo tiánměi zhǎng de yě hěn biāozhì pángbiān nàge xiǎohuǒzi shì tā tóngshì ba zhǎng de zhēn jùn · That guide over there has such a sweet voice, and she's pretty too. Is the young man next to her her colleague? He's really good-looking.

xiaoming 你看风景还是看人？你自己长得也挺俊俏，别老看别人。哥哥年轻的时候，可比他英俊多了。
nǐ kàn fēngjǐng háishi kàn rén nǐ zìjǐ zhǎng de yě tǐng jùnqiào bié lǎo kàn biérén gēge niánqīng de shíhou kě bǐ tā yīngjùn duō le · Are you here for the view or the people? You're pretty good-looking yourself: stop staring at others. When I was young I was far more handsome than him.

little sister 哈哈，你现在也才三十！
hā hā nǐ xiànzài yě cái sānshí · Ha, you're only thirty now!

anna 下山以后去哪儿吃饭？
xià shān yǐhòu qù nǎr chī fàn · Where shall we eat after we come down?

xiaoming 山下新开了一家酒店，大门特别气派，里面的餐厅是顶级的，听说厨师是全国顶尖的，用的都是名贵的材料。不过太豪华了，也太贵了。
shān xià xīn kāi le yì jiā jiǔdiàn dà mén tèbié qìpài lǐmiàn de cāntīng shì dǐngjí de tīngshuō chúshī shì quán guó dǐngjiān de yòng de dōu shì míngguì de cáiliào búguò tài háohuá le yě tài guì le · A new hotel has opened at the foot of the mountain: the entrance is so grand, and its restaurant is top-notch, with one of the best chefs in the country, they say, and only the finest ingredients. But it's too luxurious, and too pricey.

little sister 我知道一家小饭馆，院子装修得很别致，里面还有个小亭子，菜也好吃。
wǒ zhīdào yì jiā xiǎo fànguǎn yuànzi zhuāngxiū de hěn biézhì lǐmiàn hái yǒu gè xiǎo tíngzi cài yě hǎochī · I know a little restaurant: the courtyard is decorated in a really original way, with a little pavilion, and the food's great.

anna 好！对了，山下那座新式酒店在古村旁边，跟村子的风貌不太协调，看起来有点儿突兀。
hǎo duì le shān xià nà zuò xīnshì jiǔdiàn zài gǔ cūn pángbiān gēn cūn zi de fēngmào bú tài xiétiáo kàn qǐlai yǒudiǎnr tūwù · Great! By the way, that modern hotel right next to the old village doesn't fit the village's character: it looks a bit out of place.

xiaoming 是啊。还是这边的小村子风景秀美，山水秀丽。
shì a háishi zhèbiān de xiǎo cūn zi fēngjǐng xiùměi shān shuǐ xiùlì · True. The little villages round here, in their lovely hills and streams, are much nicer.

anna 今天是我在中国最美妙的一天。能和你们一起登上长城，是我莫大的福气。
jīntiān shì wǒ zài Zhōngguó zuì měimiào de yì tiān néng hé nǐmen yìqǐ dēng shàng Chángchéng shì wǒ mòdà de fúqi · Today has been my most wonderful day in China. Climbing the Great Wall with you is the greatest stroke of luck.

write it trace the grey, then write your own

泻
xiè
to pour down, rush down

晶
jīng
crystal, bright

屡
lǚ
repeatedly (written)

灿
càn
bright

good to know · Scale words: 宏伟 and 雄伟 for buildings and mountains, 壮观 for a sight, 壮丽 for landscapes, 秀丽 and 秀美 for gentle, graceful scenery. Looks: 英俊 for men, 标致 and 俊俏 for women (a little old-fashioned), 俊 for anyone in northern speech.

Majestic, graceful, eye-catching, out of place: you can now describe a view with real precision.
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day 86 idioms with a story

Use 34 idioms that come with a story, and give your opinion with 要(让)我说.

Idioms with a story are the spice of educated Chinese: one 画蛇添足 says what takes a sentence in English.

words

word	pinyin	meaning	example
守株待兔	shǒuzhūdàitù	to wait for luck instead of working	找工作不能守株待兔，要主动去找机会。 You can't just wait for a job to fall into your lap: go out and look for chances.
刻舟求剑	kèzhōuqiújiàn	to cling to rules when things have changed	时代变了，还用老办法，就是刻舟求剑。 Times have changed: sticking to the old methods is like marking the boat to find the sword.
亡羊补牢	wángyángbǔláo	better late than never (fix it after a loss)	丢过一次钱包以后，他出门总要检查一遍，也算亡羊补牢。 Since losing his wallet once, he always checks before going out: better late than never.
画蛇添足	huàshétiānzú	to spoil something by adding too much	文章写到这儿就很好了，再加一段就是画蛇添足。 The essay is good as it is: another paragraph would spoil it.
画龙点睛	huàlóngdiǎnjīng	the finishing touch that brings it to life	最后这句话真是画龙点睛。 That last line is the perfect finishing touch.
对牛弹琴	duìniútánqín	to talk to someone who can't understand	跟他讲古典音乐，简直是对牛弹琴。 Talking classical music with him is like playing the zither to an ox.
掩耳盗铃	yǎněrdàolíng	to fool yourself (cover your ears)	不复习就说考试不难，这不是掩耳盗铃吗? Saying the exam won't be hard without revising: isn't that just fooling yourself?
南辕北辙	nányuánběizhé	to act against your own goal	想减肥又天天吃夜宵，这不是南辕北辙吗? Trying to lose weight while snacking every night? That's working against yourself.
纸上谈兵	zhǐshàngtánbīng	armchair strategy, theory with no practice	没做过实际工作，只会纸上谈兵可不行。 Without real experience, just theorising won't get you anywhere.
朝三暮四	zhāosānmùsì	to keep changing your mind	他做事朝三暮四，一个计划从来坚持不了一个月。 He keeps changing his mind: he never sticks with a plan for a month.
狼吞虎咽	lángtūnhǔyàn	to wolf down food	他饿坏了，狼吞虎咽地吃了三碗面。 He was starving and wolfed down three bowls of noodles.
千钧一发	qiānjūnyīfà	hanging by a thread, critical moment	在这千钧一发的时候，司机停住了车。 At that critical moment, the driver stopped the bus.
千军万马	qiānjūnwànmǎ	a mighty army; a huge crowd	每年高考，千军万马都想进好大学。 Every year, a huge army of students sits the college entrance exam, all aiming for top universities.

汗马功劳	hànmǎgōngláo	great service, hard-won achievements	这次项目成功，他立下了汗马功劳。 He did a huge amount for this project's success.
运筹帷幄	yùnchóuwéiwò	to plan a strategy from headquarters	她运筹帷幄，整个活动安排得井井有条。 She masterminded it all: the whole event ran like clockwork.
开天辟地	kāitiānpìdì	since the world began; unprecedented	他主动洗碗，这可是开天辟地头一回！ He offered to do the washing-up: a first since the dawn of time!
对症下药	duìzhèngxiàyào	to find the right remedy for the problem	解决问题要对症下药，先找到原因。 To solve a problem, find the cause and treat that.
有的放矢	yǒudìfàngshǐ	to speak or act with a clear target	提意见要有的放矢，不要随便批评。 Make your comments targeted: don't just criticise at random.
一针见血	yīzhēnjiànxiě	to hit the nail on the head	他一针见血地指出了问题。 He put his finger right on the problem.
断章取义	duànzhāngqǔyì	to quote out of context	他的话被人断章取义了。 His words were quoted out of context.
颠倒黑白	diāndǎohēibái	to turn the truth upside down	这篇文章颠倒黑白，大家都很生气。 This article twists the facts, and everyone is furious.
冰山一角	bīngshānyījiǎo	the tip of the iceberg	这些问题只是冰山一角。 These problems are just the tip of the iceberg.
雪上加霜	xuěshàngjiāshuāng	one disaster after another	车坏了，又下起了大雨，真是雪上加霜。 The car broke down, then it started pouring: one thing after another.
锦上添花	jǐnshàngtiānhuā	to make something good even better	有你的帮助，真是锦上添花。 Your help makes it even better.
水涨船高	shuǐzhǎngchuángāo	to rise along with everything else	房价涨了，房租也水涨船高。 House prices went up, and rents rose with them.
水落石出	shuǐluòshíchū	the truth comes out	事情总有水落石出的一天。 The truth will come out one day.
来龙去脉	láilóngqùmài	the whole story, ins and outs	你先把事情的来龙去脉说清楚。 Tell me the whole story from the beginning.
根深蒂固	gēnshēndìgù	deep-rooted	有些老观念根深蒂固，很难改变。 Some old ideas are so deep-rooted they're hard to change.
潜移默化	qiányímòhuà	to influence quietly over time	父母的习惯会潜移默化地影响孩子。 Parents' habits quietly shape their children.
举一反三	jǔyīfǎnsān	to learn one thing and apply it to others	学语言要举一反三，学会一个句子，就能说十个。 With a language, learn one sentence and work out ten more.
顾名思义	gùmíngsīyì	as the name suggests	火锅，顾名思义，就是在火上的锅里煮菜。 Hotpot, as the name suggests, is food cooked in a pot over a fire.
引经据典	yǐnjīngjùdiǎn	to quote the classics	陈教授说话喜欢引经据典。 Professor Chen loves to quote the classics.

博大精深	bódàjīngshēn	broad and profound	中国文化博大精深。 Chinese culture is vast and profound.
源远流长	yuányuǎnliúcháng	of ancient origin, long history	中国的茶文化源远流长。 China's tea culture goes back a very long way.

pattern 要(让)我说: if you ask me

要我说 / 让我说 , **your opinion**

要我说 or 让我说 opens your opinion: "if you ask me, the way I see it". It is friendly and direct, perfect for giving advice or a verdict in a discussion.

要我说，这个计划是纸上谈兵。 **yào wǒ shuō zhège jìhuà shì zhǐshàng tánbīng** If you ask me, this plan is all theory.

让我说，你们俩都有道理。 **ràng wǒ shuō nǐmen liǎ dōu yǒu dàolǐ** The way I see it, you both have a point.

要我说，解决问题得对症下药。 **yào wǒ shuō jiějué wèntí děi duìzhèng xiàyào** If you ask me, you have to treat the cause of a problem.

dialogue the idiom game

little sister 我们玩个游戏吧：每人讲一个成语故事，再用它说一句话。我先来：守株待兔。一个人在树下捡到一只撞死的兔子，以后天天在那儿等。

wǒmen wán gè yóuxì ba měi rén jiǎng yí gè chéngyǔ gùshi zài yòng tā shuō yí jù huà wǒ xiān lái shǒuzhū dàitù yí gè rén zài shù xià jiǎn dào yì zhī zhuàng sǐ de tùzi yǐhòu tiān tiān zài nàr děng · Let's play a game: everyone tells the story of an idiom, then uses it in a sentence. Me first: "watching the stump for a hare". A man found a hare that had run into a tree and died, so he waited there every day after.

xiaoming 要我说，妹妹找实习就是守株待兔，天天等别人打电话。

yào wǒ shuō mèimei zhǎo shíxí jiùshì shǒuzhū dàitù tiān tiān děng biérén dǎ diànhuà · If you ask me, my sister's internship hunt is exactly that: waiting every day for someone to call.

little sister 你才是！我说一个刻舟求剑：剑掉进河里，他在船边刻了一下，船停了才下去找。你们公司那些老规定就是刻舟求剑。

nǐ cái shì wǒ shuō yí gè kèzhōu qiújiàn jiàn diào jìn hé lǐ tā zài chuán biān kè le yíxià chuán tíng le cái xiàqù zhǎo nǐmen gōngsī nàxiē lǎo guīdìng jiùshì kèzhōu qiújiàn · You're one to talk! Here's "marking the boat to find the sword": a man dropped his sword in a river, made a cut in the side of the boat, and only searched once the boat had stopped. Those old rules at your company are just that.

anna 我知道亡羊补牢！羊丢了再修羊圈，还不晚。上次电脑坏了，文件全没了，我才开始把文件多存一份。

wǒ zhīdào wángyáng bǔláo yáng diū le zài xiū yáng juàn hái bù wǎn shàng cì diànnǎo huài le wénjiàn quán méi le wǒ cái kāishǐ bǎ wénjiàn duō cún yí fèn · I know "mending the pen after losing a sheep"! It's still not too late. Last time my computer died I lost all my files: only then did I start keeping a second copy.

professor chen 很好。还有画蛇添足：几个人比赛画蛇，有人先画完了，又给蛇画上脚，结果输了。安娜，你那篇写长城的文章，开头写得气势非凡，最后一段就有点儿画蛇添足。

hěn hǎo hái yǒu huàshé tiānzú jǐ gè rén bǐsài huà shé yǒu rén xiān huà wán le yòu gěi shé huà shàng jiǎo jiéguǒ shū le Ānnà nǐ nà piān xiě Chángchéng de wénzhāng kāitóu xiě de qìshì fēifán zuìhòu yí duàn jiù yǒudiǎnr huàshé tiānzú · Very good. There's also "drawing legs on a snake": in a snake-drawing contest, the first to finish added feet and lost. Anna, your essay on the Great Wall opens in a wonderfully imposing way, but the last paragraph is a bit like that.

anna 那反过来，画龙点睛就是最后一笔让整个作品活起来？

nà fǎn guolai huàlóng diǎnjīng jiùshì zuìhòu yì bǐ ràng zhěnggè zuòpǐn huó qǐlai · And the opposite, "dotting the dragon's eyes", is the final touch that brings the whole work to life?

professor chen 没错，你真会举一反三。顾名思义，龙有了眼睛，就飞走了。

méi cuò nǐ zhēn huì jǔyì fǎnsān gùmíng sīyì lóng yǒu le yǎnjing jiù fēi zǒu le · Exactly: you're good at working things out. As the name says, once the dragon had eyes, it flew away.

little sister 上次我给哥哥讲古典音乐，他一点儿也听不懂，简直是对牛弹琴。

shàng cì wǒ gěi gēge jiǎng gǔdiǎn yīnyuè tā yìdiǎnr yě tīng bu dǒng jiǎnzhí shì duìniú tánqín · Last time I talked to my brother about classical music, he didn't get a word: like playing the zither to an ox.

xiaoming 那你考试前不复习，还说“老师不会考”，不是掩耳盗铃吗？

nà nǐ kǎoshì qián bú fùxí hái shuō lǎoshī bú huì kǎo bú shì yǎněr dàolíng ma · And you skipping revision and saying "the teacher won't test it": isn't that covering your ears to steal a bell?

ms zhang 好了好了，你们俩别吵了，这么诱人的菜都要凉了。小明，慢一点儿吃，别狼吞虎咽的！

hǎo le hǎo le nǐmen liǎ bié chǎo le zhème yòurén de cài dōu yào liáng le Xiǎomíng màn yìdiǎnr chī bié lángtūn hǔyàn de · All right, you two, stop bickering: this lovely food is getting cold. Xiaoming, slow down, don't wolf it!

professor chen 让我说，你们俩都有道理。做事方向错了，越努力离目标越远，那就是南辕北辙。只会说不会做，叫纸上谈兵。

ràng wǒ shuō nǐmen liǎ dōu yǒu dàolǐ zuò shì fāngxiàng cuò le yuè nǔlì lí mùbiāo yuè yuǎn nà jiùshì nányuán běizhé zhǐ huì shuō bú huì zuò jiào zhǐshàng tánbīng · The way I see it, you both have a point. If you head the wrong way, the harder you try the farther you get from your goal: that's "shafts south, tracks north". All talk and no action is "fighting wars on paper".

anna 朝三暮四呢？我以为是说一个人老是改主意。
zhāosān mùsì ne wǒ yǐwéi shì shuō yí gè rén lǎoshì gǎi zhǔyi · What about “three in the morning, four in the evening”? I thought it meant someone who keeps changing their mind.

professor chen 现在是这个意思。原来的故事是一个人喂猴子：早上三个，晚上四个，猴子不高兴；改成早上四个，晚上三个，猴子就高兴了。
xiànzài shì zhège yìsi yuánlái de gùshi shì yí gè rén wèi hóuzi zǎoshang sān gè wǎnshang sì gè hóuzi bù gāoxìng gǎi chéng zǎoshang sì gè wǎnshang sān gè hóuzi jiù gāoxìng le · That’s what it means now. The original story is about a man feeding monkeys: three in the morning and four in the evening made them angry; four in the morning and three in the evening made them happy.

anna 上个月我们的项目也是千钧一发，差点儿来不及。刘经理运筹帷幄，同事们加班加点，都立下了汗马功劳。
shàng gè yuè wǒmen de xiàngmù yě shì qiānjūn yífà chàdiǎnr láibují Liújīnglǐ yùnchóu wéiwò tóngshìmen jiābān jiā diǎn dōu lì xià le hànmǎ gōngláo · Our project last month hung by a thread too: we nearly missed the deadline. Manager Liu planned it all, and my colleagues worked overtime: they all did heroic work.

little sister 我们高考那年，千军万马都想进好大学，压力太大了。
wǒmen gāokǎo nà nián qiānjūn wànmǎ dōu xiǎng jìn hǎo dàxué yālì tài dà le · The year I sat the college entrance exam, a whole army of us were fighting for the top universities: so much pressure.

xiaoming 妈妈，您看，我今天主动洗碗，这可是开天辟地头一回！
māma nín kàn wǒ jīntiān zhǔdòng xǐ wǎn zhè kěshì kāitiān pìdì tóu yì huí · Mum, look, I’m doing the washing-up without being asked: a first since the world began!

ms zhang 那是锦上添花。你要是每天都洗，我就更高兴了。
nà shì jǐnshàng tiānhuā nǐ yàoshi měi tiān dōu xǐ wǒ jiù gèng gāoxìng le · That’s the icing on the cake. If you did it every day, I’d be happier still.

professor chen 说到网上的事：有人把别人的话断章取义，甚至颠倒黑白。我们看到的，常常只是冰山一角。
shuō dào wǎngshang de shì yǒu rén bǎ biérén de huà duànzhāng qǔyì shènzhì diāndǎo hēibái wǒmen kàn dào de chángcháng zhǐshì bīngshān yìjiǎo · Speaking of the internet: some people quote others out of context, or even twist the facts. What we see is often just the tip of the iceberg.

anna 要我说，与其相信网上的评论，宁可自己去查清楚事情的来龙去脉。事情总有水落石出的一天。
yào wǒ shuō yǔqí xiāngxìn wǎngshang de pínglùn nìngkě zìjǐ qù chá qīngchu shìqing de láilóng qùmài shìqing zǒng yǒu shuǐluò shíchū de yì tiān · If you ask me, rather than trusting online comments, better to find out the whole story yourself. The truth always comes out in the end.

professor chen 你这句话一针见血。解决问题也一样，要对症下药，有的放矢。
nǐ zhè jù huà yìzhēn jiànxiě jiějué wèntí yě yíyàng yào duìzhèng xiàyào yǒudì fàngshǐ · You’ve hit the nail on the head. Solving problems is the same: treat the real cause, and aim before you shoot.

ms zhang 说起难事，我们公司今年又涨工资又涨房租，真是水涨船高；上个月有个大客户走了，更是雪上加霜。
shuō qǐ nán shì wǒmen gōngsī jīnnián yòu zhǎng gōngzī yòu zhǎng fángzū zhēnshi shuǐzhǎng chuángāo shàng gè yuè yǒu gè dà kèhù zǒu le gèng shì xuěshàng jiāshuāng · Talking of hard things, at our company salaries and rents both went up this year: everything rises together. And last month a big client left, which made it even worse.

professor chen 有些观念根深蒂固，可是孩子会受父母潜移默化的影响。你们家这么爱读书，就是最好的例子。
yǒuxiē guānniàn gēnshēn dìgù kěshì háizi huì shòu fùmǔ qiányí mòhuà de yǐngxiǎng nǐmen jiā zhème ài dúshū jiùshì zuìhǎo de lìzi · Some ideas are deep-rooted, but children are quietly shaped by their parents. Your family’s love of reading is the best example.

xiaoming 陈教授说话总是引经据典，今天我们可是学了一晚上的成语。
Chénjiàoshòu shuōhuà zǒngshì yǐnjīng jùdiǎn jīntiān wǒmen kěshì xué le yì wǎnshang de chéngyǔ · Professor Chen always quotes the classics: we’ve had a whole evening of idioms today.

anna 中国文化真是博大精深，源远流长。这样一来，我写文章也有好多新词可以用了！

Zhōngguó wénhuà zhēnshi bódà jīngshēn yuányuǎn liúcháng zhèyàng yì lái wǒ xiě wénzhāng yě yǒu hǎoduō xīn cí kěyǐ yòng le · Chinese culture really is vast and ancient. And now I have loads of new phrases for my essays!

write it trace the grey, then write your own

辉 huī radiance	
煌 huáng bright	
耀 yào shine	
焕 huàn shining	

good to know · Idioms come in pairs of opposites: 画蛇添足 (spoil by adding) vs 画龙点睛 (the perfect final touch); 雪上加霜 (bad to worse) vs 锦上添花 (good to better). Watch the readings: 有的(dì)放矢, 一针见血(xiě in speech), 朝(zhāo)三暮四.

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chapter 1 chapter 1: new year's eve

anna 叔叔、阿姨，新春快乐！这是我从英国带来的茶，祝你们新的一年有福气！
shūshu āyí xīnchūn kuàilè zhè shì wǒ cóng Yīngguó dài lái de chá zhù nǐmen xīn de yì nián yǒu fúqi · Happy New Year! This is tea I brought from the UK: wishing you good fortune in the new year!

dr li 安娜来了！快进来。你看，门两边的对联是小明写的，墙上的年画是他妹妹贴的。
Ānnà lái le kuài jinlai nǐ kàn mén liǎng biān de duìlián shì Xiǎomíng xiě de qiáng shàng de niánhuà shì tā mèimei tiē de · Anna's here! Come in. Look: Xiaoming wrote the couplets by the door, and his sister put up the New Year pictures.

anna 家里挂满了红灯笼，真喜庆！
jiā lǐ guà mǎn le hóng dēnglong zhēn xǐqìng · Red lanterns everywhere: it's so festive!

anna 对联写得真好！话又说回来，小明的字以前可没这么好看。
duìlián xiě de zhēn hǎo huà yòu shuō huilai Xiǎomíng de zì yǐqián kě méi zhème hǎokàn · The couplets are beautifully written! Then again, Xiaoming's handwriting didn't used to be this good.

xiaoming 我从腊月开始，天天练字。这叫亡羊补牢，为时不晚。
wǒ cóng làyuè kāishǐ tiān tiān liàn zì zhè jiào wángyáng bǔláo wèi shí bù wǎn · I've practised every day since the twelfth month began. Better late than never.

little sister 安娜，你今天穿汉服啦？真像画里的仙女！现在穿汉服过年成了一种新风尚。我穿了红旗袍，今年是我的本命年，属相是龙，图个吉利。
Ānnà nǐ jīntiān chuān Hànfú la zhēn xiàng huà lǐ de xiānnǚ xiànzài chuān Hànfú guònián chéng le yì zhǒng xīn fēngshàng wǒ chuān le hóng qípáo jīnnián shì wǒ de běn mìng nián shǔxiàng shì lóng tú gè jílì · Anna, you're wearing Hanfu today? You look like a fairy from a painting! Wearing Hanfu for New Year is the new trend. I'm in my red qipao: it's my zodiac year, I'm a Dragon, so it's for luck.

xiaoming 红旗袍配绿色的鞋？有点儿俗吧。
hóng qípáo pèi lǜsè de xié yǒudiǎnr sú ba · A red qipao with green shoes? A bit tacky, isn't it?

little sister 你懂什么！对牛弹琴。
nǐ dǒng shénme duìniú tánqín · What would you know! Like playing the zither to an ox.

ms zhang 按照惯例，年夜饭全家一定要在一起吃。今天是一年里最隆重的一顿饭。
ànzhào guànlì niányèfàn quán jiā yídìng yào zài yìqǐ chī jīntiān shì yì nián lǐ zuì lóngzhòng de yí dùn fàn · By custom, the whole family has to eat New Year's Eve dinner together. It's the grandest meal of the year.

dr li 以前过年去饭店，吃得很豪华。要我说，再好的饭店也比不上家里的饺子。
yǐqián guònián qù fàndiàn chī de hěn háohuá yào wǒ shuō zài hǎo de fàndiàn yě bǐ bu shàng jiā lǐ de jiǎozi · We used to go to a restaurant at New Year and eat in luxury. If you ask me, even the best restaurant can't beat dumplings at home.

anna 这么多菜，太诱人了！这条鱼一定有讲究吧？
zhème duō cài tài yòurén le zhè tiáo yú yídìng yǒu jiǎngjiu ba · So many dishes: it all looks so tempting! The fish must mean something?

ms zhang 鱼就是“余”，年年有余。还有，明天是正月初一，千万别忘了那几个禁忌：不扫地，说话忌说不吉利的字。碗打破了，被看作不好的预兆，老人特别忌讳。
yú jiùshì yú nián nián yǒu yú hái yǒu míngtiān shì zhēngyuè chū yī qiānwàn bié wàng le nà jǐ gè jìnjì bù sǎo dì shuōhuà jì shuō bù jílì de zì wǎn dǎpò le bèi kànzuò bù hǎo de yùzhào lǎorén tèbié jìhuì · Fish 鱼 sounds like 余 “surplus”: plenty every year. And tomorrow is the first day of the first month, so don't forget the taboos: no sweeping, and no unlucky words. A broken bowl is seen as a bad omen: older people really avoid it.

little sister 妈妈，这些都是迷信。
māma zhèxiē dōu shì míxìn · Mum, it's all superstition.

ms zhang 迷信不迷信，图个好兆头嘛。
míxìn bù míxìn tú gè hǎo zhàotou ma · Superstition or not, it's for a good omen.

anna 今年春节在阳历二月，可是你们过节都按农历算吧？
jīnnián Chūnjié zài yánglì èr yuè kěshì nǐmen guòjié dōu àn nónglì suàn ba · This year Spring Festival is in February by the Western calendar, but you count festivals by the lunar calendar, don't you?

ms zhang 对，我妈妈过生日也按阴历。过了年，没几天就是第一个节气了。老天保佑，新的一年全家平安！

duì wǒ māma guò shēngrì yě àn yīnlì guò le nián méi jǐ tiān jiùshì dì yī gè jiéqì le lǎo tiān bǎoyòu xīn de yì nián quán jiā píngān · Yes, and my mum counts her birthday by the lunar calendar too. A few days after New Year comes the first solar term. Heaven bless us all with a safe and peaceful year!

xiaoming 吃完饭看春节晚会，那可是全国人民的盛会。

chī wán fàn kàn Chūnjié wǎnhuì nà kěshì quán guó rénmín de shènghuì · After dinner we watch the Spring Festival Gala: the whole country's big night.

anna 城里不让燃放烟花爆竹，大家怎么庆贺呢？

chéng lǐ bú ràng ránfàng yānhuā bàozhú dàjiā zěnme qìnghè ne · Fireworks and firecrackers are banned in the city: how do people celebrate?

dr li 郊区有一个盛大的烟花晚会，电视上能看。市区不放鞭炮，这样一来，空气好了，大白也不害怕了。

jiāoqū yǒu yí gè shèngdà de yānhuā wǎnhuì diànshì shàng néng kàn shìqū bú fàng biānpào zhèyàng yì lái kōngqì hǎo le Dàbái yě bú hàipà le · There's a huge fireworks show out of town that you can watch on TV. No firecrackers in the city, so the air's better and Dabai isn't scared.

little sister 十二点要许愿。安娜，你许愿了吗？

shíèr diǎn yào xǔyuàn Ānnà nǐ xǔyuàn le ma · At midnight you make a wish. Anna, did you make a wish?

anna 当然！不过说出来就不灵了。

dāngrán búguò shuō chulai jiù bù líng le · Of course! But if I tell you, it won't come true.

chapter 2 chapter 2: a notice for the temple fair

anna （读）“新春庙会通知：为庆贺新春佳节，本公园将于正月初一至初五举办新春庙会。庙会有扭秧歌、太极表演、传统手艺展示等活动，并有刺绣、印章、陶瓷、丝绸等摊位。

dú xīnchūn miàohuì tōngzhī wèi qìnghè xīnchūn jiājié běn gōngyuán jiāng yú zhēngyuè chū yī zhì chū wǔ jǔbàn xīnchūn miàohuì miàohuì yǒu niǔ yāngge tàijí biǎoyǎn chuántǒng shǒuyì zhǎnshì děng huódòng bìng yǒu cìxiù yìnzhāng táocí sīchóu děng tān wèi · (reading) “Spring Festival temple fair notice: to celebrate the New Year, the park will hold a temple fair from the first to the fifth of the first month. Events include yangge dancing, tai chi, and traditional craft demonstrations, with stalls for embroidery, seals, ceramics and silk.

anna 凡是穿汉服、旗袍的游客，均可免费领取吉祥物一个。园内禁止燃放烟花爆竹。请保管好随身物品，祝大家新春快乐，万事如意！”

fánshì chuān Hànfú qípáo de yóukè jūn kě miǎnfèi lǐngqǔ jíxiángwù yí gè yuán nèi jìnzhǐ ránfàng yānhuā bàozhú qǐng bǎoguǎn hǎo suíshēn wùpǐn zhù dàjiā xīnchūn kuàilè wàn shì rúyì · All visitors in Hanfu or a qipao may collect a free mascot. Fireworks and firecrackers are not allowed in the park. Please look after your belongings. Happy New Year, and may everything go your way!”

little sister 穿汉服送吉祥物！这样一来，我们俩都有了。

chuān Hànfú sòng jíxiángwù zhèyàng yì lái wǒmen liǎ dōu yǒu le · A free mascot if you wear Hanfu! That means we both get one.

xiaoming 庙会人山人海，跟狂欢节一样，简直是一个中国式的嘉年华。

miàohuì rénshān rénhǎi gēn kuánghuān jié yíyàng jiǎnzhí shì yí gè Zhōngguó shì de jiāniánhuá · The temple fair is packed: like a carnival, a Chinese-style one.

anna 所谓庙会，就是在庙旁边办的市场吗？

suǒwèi miàohuì jiùshì zài miào pángbiān bàn de shìchǎng ma · Is a temple fair just a market held next to a temple?

xiaoming 以前是这样。现在很多庙会在公园里，和宗教没什么关系了，主要是热闹、好玩。

yǐqián shì zhèyàng xiànzài hěn duō miàohuì zài gōngyuán lǐ hé zōngjiào méi shénme guānxì le zhǔyào shì rènao hǎowán · It used to be. Now many are in parks and have little to do with religion: they’re mainly about fun.

anna 要我说，这比英国过新年还热闹！

yào wǒ shuō zhè bǐ Yīngguó guò xīnnián hái rènao · If you ask me, it’s livelier than New Year in the UK!

chapter 3 chapter 3: at the temple fair

little sister 快看，刺绣的摊位！这只凤凰绣得跟活的一样。
kuài kàn cìxiù de tān wèi zhè zhī fènghuáng xiù de gēn huó de yíyàng · Look, the embroidery stall! This phoenix is stitched so well it looks alive.

anna 凤凰是美丽和吉祥的化身，对吧？
fènghuáng shì měilì hé jíxiáng de huàshēn duì ba · The phoenix is the embodiment of beauty and good luck, right?

xiaoming 你现在比我们还懂。那边是刻印章的，师傅是这门手艺的第三代传人。
nǐ xiànzài bǐ wǒmen hái dǒng nàbiān shì kè yìnzhāng de shīfu shì zhè mén shǒuyì de dì sān dài chuánrén · You know more than we do now. Over there is the seal carver: the master is the third generation in his craft.

anna 我上次刻的印章已经用上了。可惜这些老手艺快失传了。
wǒ shàng cì kè de yìnzhāng yǐjīng yòng shàng le kěxī zhèxiē lǎo shǒuyì kuài shīchuán le · I already use the seal I had made last time. Shame these old crafts are dying out.

professor chen 所以要弘扬啊。好的传统要发扬下去，糟粕就不要了。安娜，新年好！
suǒyǐ yào hóngyáng a hǎo de chuántǒng yào fāyáng xiaqu zāopò jiù búyào le Ānnà xīnnián hǎo · That's why we need to promote them. Carry on the good traditions and drop the rubbish. Anna, Happy New Year!

anna 陈教授！您也来逛庙会？
Chénjiàoshòu nín yě lái guàng miàohuì · Professor Chen! You're at the temple fair too?

professor chen 每年都来。前面那座寺庙有六百年了，寺里还有几位和尚。里面有佛像，也有菩萨像。我们去看看建筑吧，不过要安静一点儿。
měi nián dōu lái qiánmiàn nà zuò sìmiào yǒu liùbǎi nián le sì lǐ hái yǒu jǐ wèi héshang lǐmiàn yǒu fó xiàng yě yǒu púsà xiàng wǒmen qù kàn kan jiànzhù ba búguò yào ānjìng yìdiǎnr · Every year. That temple ahead is six hundred years old, and a few monks still live there. Inside there are statues of the Buddha and of bodhisattvas. Let's go and look at the architecture, but keep your voices down.

little sister 庙里有一位老奶奶，好虔诚，在祈祷家人平安。
miào lǐ yǒu yí wèi lǎo nǎinai hǎo qiánchéng zài qídǎo jiārén píngān · There's an old lady in the temple, very devout, praying for her family's safety.

professor chen 每个人的信仰不同，我们尊重就好。对很多老人来说，这是一个神圣的地方。
měi gè rén de xìnyǎng bù tóng wǒmen zūnzhòng jiù hǎo duì hěn duō lǎorén lái shuō zhè shì yí gè shénshèng de dìfang · Everyone's beliefs are different: we just respect them. For many older people, this is a sacred place.

anna 以前这座寺里住着很多僧人吗？
yǐqián zhè zuò sì lǐ zhù zhe hěn duō sēngrén ma · Did many monks live in this temple in the past?

professor chen 几百个。旁边还有一个古代的坛，是祈祷丰收的地方。这座寺经过几百年风雨的洗礼，还是老样子。庙会就是老北京的灵魂，很有老北京的风情。
jǐ bǎi gè pángbiān hái yǒu yí gè gǔdài de tán shì qídǎo fēngshōu de dìfang zhè zuò sì jīngguò jǐ bǎi nián fēngyǔ de xǐlǐ háishi lǎo yàngzi miàohuì jiùshì lǎo Běijīng de línghún hěn yǒu lǎo Běijīng de fēngqíng · Hundreds. Next to it there's an ancient altar where people prayed for good harvests. After centuries of wind and rain, the temple is just as it was. Temple fairs are the soul of old Beijing, full of its old charm.

xiaoming 那边有个算命的，说能占卜、看风水。
nàbiān yǒu gè suàn mìng de shuō néng zhānbǔ kàn fēngshuǐ · There's a fortune-teller over there who says he can read the future and do feng shui.

professor chen 那是老习俗了，玩玩可以，别太相信。
nà shì lǎo xísú le wán wan kěyǐ bié tài xiāngxìn · That's an old custom: fine for fun, but don't believe it too much.

little sister 我想去看儿童区的魔法表演，演的是神仙打败魔鬼和妖怪的故事，还有阎王和地狱！
wǒ xiǎng qù kàn értóng qū de mófǎ biǎoyǎn yǎn de shì shénxiān dǎbài móguǐ hé yāoguài de gùshi hái yǒu Yánwang hé dìyù · I want to see the magic show in the children's area: gods defeating devils and demons, and Yama and the underworld too!

xiaoming 你都大学生了，还看这个？
nǐ dōu dàxuéshēng le hái kàn zhège · You're at university and you still want to watch that?

little sister 故事有魔力嘛，世间的孩子都爱听，大孩子也一样。
gùshi yǒu mólì ma shìjiān de háizi dōu ài tīng dà háizi yě yíyàng · Stories have a magic of their own: children everywhere love them, big children too.

xiaoming 这儿简直是小吃的天堂。这家烤红薯是庙会上的头号小吃，老板每年都在这儿，从来不用守株待兔，客人自己就来了。
zhèr jiǎnzhí shì xiǎochī de tiāntáng zhè jiā kǎo hóngshǔ shì miàohuì shàng de tóuhào xiǎochī lǎobǎn měi nián dōu zài zhèr cónglái búyòng shǒuzhū dàitù kèrén zìjǐ jiù lái le · This place is a paradise for snacks. This roast sweet potato stall is the fair's number-one treat: the owner is here every year and never has to wait for customers, they just come.

anna 你们看那个扭秧歌的姑娘，长得真标致，笑得也很甜美。旁边那个小伙子也挺俊的。
nǐmen kàn nàge niǔ yāngge de gūniang zhǎng de zhēn biāozhì xiào de yě hěn tiánměi pángbiān nàge xiǎohuǒzi yě tǐng jùn de · Look at that girl doing the yangge: she's so pretty, with such a sweet smile. The young man next to her is quite handsome too.

little sister 安娜，你比他们还抢眼！穿着汉服走在人群里，特别显眼。
Ānnà nǐ bǐ tāmen hái qiǎngyǎn chuān zhe Hànfú zǒu zài rénqún lǐ tèbié xiǎnyǎn · Anna, you stand out more than they do! In your Hanfu you're so easy to spot in the crowd.

xiaoming 人越来越多了，简直是千军万马。过年的时候东西也水涨船高，烤红薯都涨价了。
rén yuè lái yuè duō le jiǎnzhí shì qiānjūn wànmǎ guònián de shíhou dōngxi yě shuǐzhǎng chuángāo kǎo hóngshǔ dōu zhǎngjià le · More and more people: it's like a mighty army. Prices rise with everything at New Year: even the sweet potatoes cost more.

anna 那个烤红薯好香！我宁可排半个小时队，也要买一个。
nàge kǎo hóngshǔ hǎo xiāng wǒ nìngkě pái bàn gè xiǎoshí duì yě yào mǎi yí gè · That roast sweet potato smells amazing! I'd rather queue for half an hour than miss out.

xiaoming 你吃得狼吞虎咽的，小心烫！
nǐ chī de lángtūn hǔyàn de xiǎoxīn tàng · You're wolfing it down: careful, it's hot!

chapter 4 chapter 4: the palace museum

professor chen 今天带你们来看这座宫殿。它已经有六百年了，是古代建筑的宝库，也是中国建筑的殿堂。旁边的城墙也很雄伟。
jīntiān dài nǐmen lái kàn zhè zuò gōngdiàn tā yǐjīng yǒu liùbǎi nián le shì gǔdài jiànzhù de bǎokù yě shì Zhōngguó jiànzhù de diàntáng pángbiān de chéngqiáng yě hěn xióngwěi · Today I've brought you to see this palace. It's six hundred years old: a treasure house of ancient architecture, the pinnacle of Chinese building. The city wall beside it is majestic too.

anna 太宏伟了！宫殿又高又宽，气势非凡，前面的广场显得特别庄严。
tài hóngwěi le gōngdiàn yòu gāo yòu kuān qìshì fēifán qiánmiàn de guǎngchǎng xiǎnde tèbié zhuāngyán · It's magnificent! The halls are so tall and wide, extraordinarily imposing, and the square in front feels so solemn.

little sister 宫殿的顶都是黄色的，在雪里特别醒目，壮观极了。
gōngdiàn de dǐng dōu shì huángsè de zài xuě lǐ tèbié xǐngmù zhuàngguān jí le · The roofs are all yellow: they stand out against the snow. It's spectacular.

xiaoming 门口这么气派，跟外面新式的高楼一比，一点儿也不突兀，反而很配。
ménkǒu zhème qìpài gēn wàimiàn xīnshì de gāo lóu yì bǐ yìdiǎnr yě bù tūwù fǎnér hěn pèi · The entrance is so grand, and next to the modern tower blocks outside it doesn't look out of place at all: they suit each other.

professor chen 这儿的藏品有一百多万件：青铜器、陶瓷、玉、古籍、古董、名贵的丝绸……很多是从全国各地发掘出土的，都是国家的瑰宝。
zhèr de cángpǐn yǒu yìbǎi duō wàn jiàn qīngtóngqì táocí yù gǔjí gǔdǒng míngguì de sīchóu hěn duō shì cóng quán guó gèdì fājué chūtǔ de dōu shì guójiā de guībǎo · The collection has over a million items: bronzes, ceramics, jade, ancient books, antiques, precious silk… many excavated all over the country. National treasures, every one.

anna 这件瓷器是在哪个窑烧的？颜色真美妙。
zhè jiàn cíqì shì zài nǎge yáo shāo de yánsè zhēn měimiào · Which kiln was this porcelain fired in? The colour is wonderful.

professor chen 南方的一个官窑。古代工匠的手艺卓越，连现在顶尖的专家也觉得奇妙。
nánfāng de yí gè guān yáo gǔdài gōngjiàng de shǒuyì zhuóyuè lián xiànzài dǐngjiān de zhuānjiā yě juéde qímiào · An imperial kiln in the south. The skill of the old craftsmen was outstanding: even today's top experts find it marvellous.

xiaoming 这个房间陈列着皇帝珍藏的书画，每一幅上都有好几个印章。
zhège fángjiān chénliè zhe huángdì zhēncáng de shūhuà měi yì fú shàng dōu yǒu hǎo jǐ gè yìnzhāng · This room displays paintings and calligraphy the emperors treasured: each one has several seals on it.

professor chen 古代的文人喜欢在自己喜欢的画上盖章，这也是一种习惯。
gǔdài de wénrén xǐhuan zài zìjǐ xǐhuan de huà shàng gài zhāng zhè yě shì yì zhǒng xíguàn · Scholars of old liked to stamp the paintings they loved: that was a custom too.

anna 那边那个亭子样子很奇特，很别致。
nàbiān nàge tíngzi yàngzi hěn qítè hěn biézhì · That pavilion over there has an unusual shape: very original.

professor chen 那是皇帝下雪天看风景的地方。还有那块碑，上面刻着圣贤的话，讲君子之道、中庸之道，都是国学的精髓，也是几千年文化的积淀。那些话里有很深的哲理。
nà shì huángdì xià xuě tiān kàn fēngjǐng de dìfang hái yǒu nà kuài bēi shàngmiàn kè zhe shèngxián de huà jiǎng jūnzǐ zhī dào zhōngyōng zhī dào dōu shì guóxué de jīngsuǐ yě shì jǐ qiān nián wénhuà de jīdiàn nàxiē huà lǐ yǒu hěn shēn de zhélǐ · That's where the emperors watched the snow. And that stone tablet is carved with the words of sages, about the gentleman's way and the golden mean: the essence of the classics, built up over thousands of years. There's deep wisdom in those words.

little sister 陈教授说话总是引经据典。您的弟子们一定都很怕您吧？
Chénjiàoshòu shuōhuà zǒngshì yǐnjīng jùdiǎn nín de dìzǐmen yídìng dōu hěn pà nín ba · Professor Chen, you're always quoting the classics. Your students must all be scared of you!

professor chen 哈哈，顾名思义，“弟子”就像我的孩子，怎么会怕我？
hā hā gùmíng sīyì dìzǐ jiù xiàng wǒ de háizi zěnme huì pà wǒ · Ha ha, as the word says, 弟子 are like my children: why would they be scared of me?

anna 所谓中庸，就是不走极端。我上次学过！
suǒwèi zhōngyōng jiùshì bù zǒu jíduān wǒ shàng cì xué guo · The golden mean is about not going to extremes. I learned that last time!

little sister 你看，那边几个外国游客拍照拍得好开心。还有几个华裔小朋友，中文说得真好。
nǐ kàn nàbiān jǐ gè wàiguó yóukè pāizhào pāi de hǎo kāixīn hái yǒu jǐ gè huáyì xiǎopéngyǒu Zhōngwén shuō de zhēn hǎo · Look, those foreign tourists are having fun taking photos. And some kids of Chinese descent there speak really good Chinese.

professor chen 很多华侨、华人带孩子回来过年，让他们看看这里的风貌，了解中国文化的底蕴。
hěn duō huáqiáo huárén dài háizi huílái guònián ràng tāmen kàn kan zhèlǐ de fēngmào liǎojiě Zhōngguó wénhuà de dǐyùn · Many overseas Chinese bring their children home for New Year, to see the place as it is and get a feel for the depth of Chinese culture.

anna 出去的时候，我们能去宫殿后面，瞻仰一下那块古碑吗？
chūqù de shíhou wǒmen néng qù gōngdiàn hòumiàn zhānyǎng yíxià nà kuài gǔ bēi ma · On the way out, can we go behind the palace and have a respectful look at that old stone tablet?

professor chen 当然。这座宫殿和那块古碑的渊源很深，一会儿我给你们讲讲来龙去脉。
dāngrán zhè zuò gōngdiàn hé nà kuài gǔ bēi de yuānyuán hěn shēn yíhuìr wǒ gěi nǐmen jiǎng jiang láilóng qùmài · Of course. The palace and that old tablet have a deep connection: I'll tell you the whole story in a minute.

anna 站在这儿，我心里激动无比。能看到这么多宝贝，真是莫大的福气。
zhàn zài zhèr wǒ xīnlǐ jīdòng wúbǐ néng kàn dào zhème duō bǎobèi zhēnshi mòdà de fúqi · Standing here, I'm thrilled beyond words. Seeing so many treasures is such good fortune.

chapter 5 chapter 5: the lantern festival

xiaoming 今天正月十五，元宵节，春节的最后一天。看灯去！

jīntiān zhēngyuè shíwǔ yuánxiāo jié Chūnjié de zuìhòu yì tiān kàn dēng qù · It's the fifteenth of the first month, the Lantern Festival, the last day of New Year. Let's see the lanterns!

anna 太美了！湖边、亭子上全挂着灯，秀丽极了。那盏龙灯好抢眼！

tài měi le hú biān tíngzi shàng quán guà zhe dēng xiùlì jí le nà zhǎn lóng dēng hǎo qiǎngyǎn · So beautiful! Lanterns all round the lake and on the pavilions: absolutely lovely. That dragon lantern really stands out!

professor chen 这个公园白天山水秀美，晚上有了灯，更是锦上添花。

zhège gōngyuán báitiān shān shuǐ xiùměi wǎnshang yǒu le dēng gèng shì jǐnshàng tiānhuā · This park is lovely by day, and at night the lanterns make it even better.

little sister 我还看见一个大算盘做的灯，好新奇！

wǒ hái kànjiàn yí gè dà suànpán zuò de dēng hǎo xīnqí · And I saw a lantern made like a giant abacus: so new and fun!

little sister 画龙点睛！你看，龙的眼睛还会发光。

huàlóng diǎnjīng nǐ kàn lóng de yǎnjing hái huì fāguāng · Dotting the dragon's eyes! Look, the eyes even light up.

professor chen 元宵节源远流长，有两千多年了。古人看灯、猜灯谜，我们今天也来猜一个。

yuánxiāo jié yuányuǎn liúcháng yǒu liǎngqiān duō nián le gǔrén kàn dēng cāi dēng mí wǒmen jīntiān yě lái cāi yí gè · The Lantern Festival goes back over two thousand years. People of old watched lanterns and solved lantern riddles: let's solve one today.

anna 这个灯谜写着：“羊丢了再修圈”，打一个成语。是亡羊补牢！

zhège dēng mí xiě zhe yáng diū le zài xiū juàn dǎ yí gè chéngyǔ shì wángyáng bǔláo · This riddle says: “mend the pen after losing a sheep”, guess the idiom. It's 亡羊补牢!

professor chen 对！你真会举一反三。

duì nǐ zhēn huì jǔyì fǎnsān · Correct! You really can work things out.

xiaoming 安娜这个春节学的东西，可以写一本书了。

Ānnà zhège Chūnjié xué de dōngxi kěyǐ xiě yì běn shū le · Anna has learned enough this Spring Festival to write a book.

anna 要我说，中国文化博大精深，我学到的只是冰山一角。

yào wǒ shuō Zhōngguó wénhuà bódà jīngshēn wǒ xué dào de zhǐshì bīngshān yìjiǎo · If you ask me, Chinese culture is so vast that what I've learned is only the tip of the iceberg.

professor chen 学文化不能纸上谈兵，要来生活里看、来过节。这样一来，文化才会潜移默化地变成你自己的东西。

xué wénhuà bù néng zhǐshàng tánbīng yào lái shēnghuó lǐ kàn lái guòjié zhèyàng yì lái wénhuà cái huì qiányí mòhuà de biànchéng nǐ zìjǐ de dōngxi · You can't learn culture from books alone: you have to see it in life and celebrate the festivals. That way it quietly becomes part of you.

little sister 话又说回来，安娜，你吃了那么多饺子，回去以后不会想家吗？

huà yòu shuō huilai Ānnà nǐ chī le nàme duō jiǎozi huíqù yǐhòu bú huì xiǎng jiā ma · Then again, Anna, after all those dumplings, won't you be homesick when you go back?

xiaoming 我也要谢谢安娜。这个春节，你帮我妈妈运筹帷幄，买菜、做饭、招待客人，立下了汗马功劳。

wǒ yě yào xièxie Ānnà zhège Chūnjié nǐ bāng wǒ māma yùnchóu wéiwò mǎi cài zuòfàn zhāodài kèrén lì xià le hànmǎ gōngláo · And I want to thank Anna. This New Year you masterminded everything with my mum: shopping, cooking, looking after guests. You did heroic work.

ms zhang 你也不错，主动洗了一次碗，开天辟地头一回！

nǐ yě búcuò zhǔdòng xǐ le yí cì wǎn kāitiān pìdì tóu yì huí · You weren't bad either: you washed up once without being asked, a first since the world began!

anna 这儿就是我的家呀。我今天还给奶奶发了消息：“奶奶，新春快乐！今年我在北京过了一个地道的中国年，贴对联、逛庙会、看宫殿、猜灯谜。我穿了汉服，大家都说我

像仙女。祝您身体健康，万事如意！”

zhèr jiùshì wǒ de jiā yā wǒ jīntiān hái gěi nǎinai fā le xiāoxi nǎinai xīnchūn kuàilè jīnnián wǒ zài Běijīng guò le yí gè dìdao de Zhōngguó nián tiē duìlián guàng miàohuì kàn gōngdiàn cāi dēng mí wǒ chuān le Hànfú dàjiā dōu shuō wǒ xiàng xiānnǚ zhù nín shēntǐ jiànkāng wàn shì rúyì · This is my home now. I sent Grandma a message today: “Grandma, Happy New Year! This year I had a real Chinese New Year in Beijing: couplets, a temple fair, a palace and lantern riddles. I wore Hanfu, and everyone said I looked like a fairy. Wishing you good health and every success!”

ms zhang 大家都来吃元宵吧！吃了元宵，一年团团圆圆。

dàjiā dōu lái chī yuánxiāo ba chī le yuánxiāo yì nián tuántuányuányuán · Come and have some sweet dumplings, everyone! Eat them, and the family stays together all year.

You’ve just lived a Chinese New Year from first couplet to last lantern, in Chinese.
Do this day interactively, with audio and games, free at **wishyou.today/learning**