

Character Builder 您好嗎？

The basic unit of the Chinese language is the *zi* (字), i.e. a Chinese word. Each *zi* has a written form (called a character, made up of strokes), a sound (made up of consonant and vowel) and a meaning (or multiple meanings). When we speak or write Chinese, we string *zi* together to form terms, phrases and sentences.

This week: Words about Easter

活

Pronunciation: *huo* (Putonghua, 2nd tone), *woot* (Cantonese, 6th tone)
Basic meaning: life, livelihood, live, living, alive

Noun 活 = 生活 (*sheng huo* = born-live) means life/livelihood. 幹活 (*gan huo* = do-livelihood) = work, 幹粗活 (*gan cu huo* = do-rough-livelihood) means earning one's living by rough labor.

活躍 (*huo yao* = live-leap = active) people have 活力 (*huo li* = live-power = vitality/energy) for 活動 (*huo dong* = live-move = activities). 活學活用 (*huo xue huo yong* = live-learn-live-use = learn and apply pragmatically). 搞活經濟 (*gao huo jing ji* = stir-alive-economy) means stimulating/reviving the economy.

Life is beautiful, no one wants to 白活 (*bai huo* = white/empty/wasted-live = lead an uneventful/colorless life). 復活 (*fu huo* = resume/again-life) = rise/resurrected from the dead. 復活節 (*fu huo jie* = resume-life-festival) is Easter-tide.

by Diana Yue