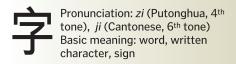
Character Builder 您好參?《

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 books



漢字 (Han-zi = Han-Chinese-characters) were developed by 象形 (xiang xing = resembling-shapes), 指事 (zhi shi = indicating-things), 形聲 (xing sheng = portraying-sounds), 會意 (hui yi = referring-to-ideas, 轉注 (zhuan zhu = transferring-explanations), 假借 (jia jie= borrowing-loaning-from-homophones). 字典 (zi dian = words-collections/dictionaries) explain them all.

繁體字 ($fan\ ti\ zi$ = elaborate-form-words = unsimplified characters) are modified into 簡體字 ($jian\ ti\ zi$ = simplied-form-words = simplified characters). 拉丁字母 ($La\ Ding\ zi\ mu$ = Latin-transliterated-words-mother) = Latin alphabet. 打字 ($da\ zi$ = hit-words) = typing/typesetting.

Christians, praying, 劃十字 (hua shi zi = draw~"十" /"cross"~sign = cross themselves). Sanskrit anti-clockwise 卍字 (wan zi = swastika~symbol) symbolizes Buddhist virtue; clockwise = Nazi symbol.