

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 Victoria Harbour

港

Pronunciation: *gang* (Putonghua, 3rd tone), *gong* (Cantonese 2nd tone)
Basic meaning: port, harbour

海港 (*hai gang* = sea~port) = seaport/harbour.
Victoria Harbour is “維多利亞港” (*wei duo li ya gang* = Victoria-transliterated~harbour), shortened to “維港” (*wei gang*).

The Chinese name “香港” (*Xiang Gang* / Hong Kong = fragrant~harbour) is shortened to “港”: 港元 (*gang yuan* = Hongkong~dollar), 港商 (*gang shang* = Hongkong merchants), 港龍 (*gang long* = Hongkong~dragon = Dragonair).

港 = 港口 (*gang kou* = port/harbour~mouth) means port. 轉口港 (*zhuan kou gang* = transfer~mouth~port = entrepot), 貨櫃港 (*huo gui gang* = goods~cup-board~port = container port), 空港 (*kong gang* = air~port) all facilitate 物流服務業 (*wu liu fu wu ye* = things~flow~service~profession = logistics service profession).

by Diana Yue