

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 cartoons

漫

Pronunciation: *man* (Putonghua, 4th tone), *maan* (Cantonese 6th tone)
Basic meaning: flowing, rambling, loose

漫 (radical 氵 = 水 *shui* = water) means freely flowing.
漫遊 (*man you* = freely-travel) means roaming.

漫畫 (*man hua* = free-drawing/painting) = Japanese “manga” = cartoons/comics. 政治漫畫 (*zheng zhi man hua* = administration-rule-free-drawing) means political cartoons. The New Yorker Magazine is 紐約客 (*niu yue ke* = “New York”-transliterated-guest). 三毛流浪記 (*san mao liu lang ji* = three-hairs-drift-wave-record) is the famous Chinese 連環圖 (*lian huan tu* = linked-circles-pictures = cartoon strip) telling the humiliating adventures of the homeless kid 三毛 (*San Mao*) in 1930s Shanghai.

動漫 (*dong man* = move-cartoon) = 卡通片 (*ka tong pian* = “cartoon”-transliterated-film) = animation cartoons, e.g. 迪士尼 (*di shi ni* = “Disney”-transliterated) productions.

by Diana Yue