

Character Builder 您好嗎? 呀

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 staple foods



Pronunciation: *feng* (Putonghua, 1st tone), *fung* (Cantonese 1st tone)
Basic meaning: abundant

Signifying abundance, 豐 is 丰 (*feng* = grain) + 豆 (*dou* = bean). 豐年 (*feng nian* = abundant~year) means year of good harvest, praised by folksongs titled “慶豐收” (*qing feng shou* = rejoice/celebrate~abundant~retrieve/ harvest).

A hero's 豐功偉績 (*feng gong wei ji* = abundant~achievements~great~records) are eulogized. 豐富 (*feng fu* = abundant~rich) describes meals/nutrition/gifts/legacies. 豐盛 (*feng sheng* = abundant~prosperous) describes God's grace/banquets. 豐厚 (*feng hou* = abundant~thick/solid) describes pay/ reward. 豐滿 (*feng man* = abundant~full) describes a woman's big busts or a plump/fat woman's figure. Breast implant plastic surgery is 豐胸 (*feng xiong* = abundant/ enrich~breasts) = 隆胸 (*long xiong* = raise~breasts).

匯豐銀行 (*hui feng yin hang* = foreign-exchange~abundant~silver~company = foreign-exchange~abundant~bank) is the Chinese name of HSBC.

by Diana Yue