

# 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 news reportage

傳

Pronunciation: *chuan* (Putonghua, 2<sup>nd</sup> tone), *chuen* (Cantonese, 4<sup>th</sup> tone)  
Basic meaning: spread, inherit, pass on

傳 = pass on. 傳統 (*chuan tong* = pass-on~centralized-core) = tradition. 遺傳 (*yi chuan* = leave-behind~pass-on) = hereditary. 傳染病 (*chuan ran bing* = pass-on~dye/contract~illness) = epidemic. Basketball players 傳球 (*chuan qiu* = pass~ball): 傳來 (*chuan lai* = pass-to~here), 傳去 (*chuan qu* = pass-to~there).

民間傳說 (*min jian chuan shuo* = people~among~pass-on~sayings) mean folklores and legends. Vivid portraits 傳神 (*chuan shen* = pass-on~spirit = capture life-like expression). Skills/crafts/kung-fu need 傳人 (*chuan ren* = pass-on~person = followers/disciples), otherwise they will 失傳 (*shi chuan* = lose~pass-on = no longer remembered/practiced).

Couriers 傳遞 (*chuan di* = pass-on~deliver) documents/parcels. 傳真機 (*chuan zhen ji* = pass-on~authentic~machine) = fax machine. 傳理學 (*chuan li xue* = pass-on~rationale~study) = communication studies.