

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 slavery

Pronunciation: *chi* (Putonghua, 3rd tone), *chi* (Cantonese, 2nd tone)
Basic meaning: shame, humiliation

恥 = 羞恥之心 (*xiu chi zhi xin* = shy~shame~'s~heart) = shameful feeling. Women's pubic mound is 恥阜 (*chi bu* = shame~mound), pubic hair is 恥毛 (*chi mao* = shame~hair).

Unkind people 恥笑 (*chi xiao* = shame~laugh = jeer at) beggars. Victors inflict 恥辱 (*chi ru* = shame~insult = humiliation) on captives. Genocides/slavery are considered 文明的恥辱 (*wen ming de chi ru* = civilization~'s~shame). On 國恥日 (*guo chi ri* = state/national~humiliation~day) a country remembers its military defeat/surrender, vows to 雪恥 (*xue chi* = snow/wash-away~humiliation = revenge).

Traitors are 無恥 (*wu chi* = not-have~shame = shameless), patriots 恥與為伍 (*chi yu wei wu* = ashamed~with~be~company = consider it despicable to be in their company).