

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 maps

界

Pronunciation: *jie* (Putonghua, 4th tone), *gai* (Cantonese, 3rd tone)
Basic meaning: limit, border, sector

界 = 界線 (*jie xian* = limit~line = border): 國界 (*guo jie* = national~border), 州界 (*zhou jie* = state~border). However, 世界 (*shi jie* = world~border) means world/world-wide/global.

界別 (*jie bie* = border~difference) means social sectors: 工商界 (*gong shang jie* = industry~commerce~sector = business sector), 金融界 (*jin rong jie* = gold/money~merge~sector = financial sector), 教育界 (*jiao yu jie* = teach~rear~sector = educational sector).

赤道 (*chi dao* = red/hot~route = equator), 回歸線 (*hui gui xian* = return~back~line = tropics) are 分界線 (*fen jie xian* = divide~border~lines) dividing 地球 (*di qiu* = land~ball = globe/Earth) into equatorial/tropical/temperate zones. 無國界醫生 (*wu guo jie yi sheng* = none~national~border~medicine~sir/ doctors) = Médecins Sans Frontières.

by Diana Yue