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 the beaches

裸 means naked: 裸露 (luo lu = naked-expose = bare-skinned), 裸體 (luo ti = naked-body = nude), 裸睡 (luo shui = naked-sleep = sleeping naked), 裸泳 (luo yong = naked-swim = swimming naked). 裸跑者 (luo pao zhe = nude-run-person) = nude runner.

Artists paint 裸體模特兒 (luo nu mo te er = naked-body-“model”-transliterated = nudes). Girls wearing 比基尼 (bi ji ni = “bikini”-transliterated) are more than 半裸 (ban luo = half-naked). 天體主義者 (tian ti zhu yi zhe = sky/nature-body-main-concept-person = nudism-followers = nudists) walk about 全裸 (quan luo = completely-naked).

When Hercules Poirot investigates murders/thefts, facts are 赤裸裸暴露 (chi luo luo bao lu = bare-naked-naked-expose-show = laid bare).

by Diana Yue