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 Easter**

活

Pronunciation: huo (Putonghua, 2\(^{nd}\) tone), woot (Cantonese, 6\(^{th}\) tone)

Basic meaning: life, livelihood, live, living, alive

Noun 活 = 生活 (sheng huo = born-live) means life/livelihood. 幹活 (gan huo = do-livelihood) = work, 幹粗活 (gan cu huo = do-rough-livelihood) means earning one's living by rough labor.

活躍 (huo yao = live-leap = active) people have 活力 (huo li = live-power = vitality/energy) for 活動 (huo dong = live-move = activities). 活學活用 (huo xue huo yong = live-learn/live-use = learn and apply pragmatically). 搞活經濟 (gao huo jing ji = stir-alive-economy) means stimulating/reviving the economy.

Life is beautiful, no one wants to 白活 (bai huo = white/empty/wasted-live = lead an uneventful/colorless life). 復活 (fu huo = resume/again-live) = rise/resurrected from the dead. 復活節 (fu huo jie = resume-life-festival) is Easter-tide.

by Diana Yue