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 cartoons

趣

Pronunciation: qu (Putonghua, 4th tone), chui (Cantonese 3rd tone)
Basic meaning: interesting aspect, enjoyment, amusement, pleasure, fun

Someone/something with 趣 (= 趣味 qu wei = amusement-taste = interesting aspect) is described as 有趣 (you qu = has-interest = interesting), e.g. art/writings/hobbies/cartoons/conversations etc. 低級趣味 (di ji qu wei = low-class-amusement-taste) describes vulgar choice of dress/hangouts/manner of speech etc. 趣事 (qu shi = funny-event) means amusing/ funny incident.

濃厚興趣 (nong hou xing qu = rich-thick-elation-enjoyment) means deep interest. 樂趣 (le qu = joy-interest/fun) means pleasure. Shopping, wine-tasting and other small pleasures of life are 生活情趣 (sheng huo qing qu = life-live-feeling-enjoyment). Interesting ink-splashes in a Chinese water-and-ink painting show 墨趣 (mo qu = ink-pleasure).

自討沒趣 (zi tao mei qu = self-ask/beg-no-fun) describes someone who invited an insult (He asked for it!).

by Diana Yue