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.

In Putonghua (the spoken form of Modern Standard Chinese) each zi is pronounced in one of four tones:

1st tone: 1 = diacritical mark — pitch: 5 to 5, highest prolonged

2nd tone: 2 = diacritical mark / pitch: 3 to 5, middle to high

3rd tone: 3 = diacritical mark U pitch: 2 to 1 to 4, low to lowest to high

4th tone: 4 = diacritical mark \ pitch: 5 to 1, highest to lowest

To pronounce each zi below, follow its pinyin and the given tone number. Light-sound words, which have no definite pitch, carry no diacritical mark and are marked by 0.

**喜悦**

Putonghua pronunciation: yue4
Cantonese pronunciation: yuet6
Meanings: fondness, pleasure, please, fond

喜悦 (radical ↑ = 心 xin1, heart) means feeling 喜悦 (xi3 yue4 = joy-pleasure): 大悦 (da4 yue4 = big/very-pleased), 不悦 (bu4 yue4 = not-pleased = dismayed). 和颜悦色 (he2 yan2 yue4 se1 = warm-countenance-pleased-color) = kind/friendly-looking.

喜悦 also means pleasing: 悦目 (yue4 mu4 = please-eyes = pretty-looking), 悦耳 (yue4 er3 = please-ears = sweet-sounding).

Lackey 取悦 (qu3 yue4 = obtain-fondness = curries favor with) boss to win 龍悦 (chong3 yue4 = doting-fondness). 賞心悦目 (shang3 xin1 yue4 mu4 = enjoy-heart-please-eyes) describes glamorous/entertaining scenery/show.

Couple in love 兩情相悦 (liang3 qing2 xiang1 yue4 = two/both-love-mutually-fond). 女為悦己者容 (nü3 wei4 yue4 ji3 zhe3 rong2 = woman-for-like-self-person-visage) describes woman donning best look/attire for admirer's eyes.

by Diana Yue