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 guerrilla warfare

擊 = beat/strike. Drummers 擊鼓 (ji gu = beat-drum). Marksmen 擊中 (ji zhong = hit-on-mark) bull’s eye. Winners 擊敗 (ji bai = fight-defeat) opponents. Attacked, we 還擊 (huan ji = return-blow = fight back), 迎擊 (ying ji = welcome/face-attack = take on approaching enemy), 擊退 (ji tui = fight-retreat = fight/beat and drive away) attackers. Rockets 擊毀 (ji hui = hit-destroy) enemy tanks/planes, 擊斃 (ji bi = hit-dead = kill) enemy soldiers/civilians.

Financial crises 衝擊 (chong ji = rush-attack = challenge/shake/attack) the stock market, 打擊 (da ji = hit-beat = shakes up/weakens) consumers’ confidence

游击隊 (you ji dui = move-attack-team) = guerrilla army/squad. 游擊戰術 (you ji zhan shu = guerrilla-war-method) = guerrilla strategies.

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