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 dancing

拍 = tapping/clapping/beating. 拍掌 (pai zhang = clap-palms) = clap-hands/applaud. 拍賣行 (pai mai hang = bang-sell-companies) = auction houses. 我拍案 (pai an = bang-the-table) to express awe/anger.


不合拍 (bu he pai = no-follow/fit-beat = incompatible) partners 一拍兩散 (yi pai liang san = one-bang-two-split = break/split up).

by Diana Yue