

Easy Chinese

Teach Yourself Chinese Step By Step

Mandarin

Level 1

易
学
中
文

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第二课

Lesson 2

明

#13

明

míng

bright; light; clear; next;
obvious



明

What do the sun 日 and the moon 月 have in common? They both bring us *light*. When the sky is *clear*, you can *distinctly* see the sun *shining*; in the *bright* moonlight, you can *clearly* see the *brilliant* moon *shining* in the sky until the *next day*.

Do you now understand why 日 and 月 were combined to form 明? If you do, you are *obviously* an *intelligent* person.

明 明明明明明明 明明

Linking Past Learning with New Information (溫故知新)

Compound Words

明日	míng rì	tomorrow; the near future	明日
明月	míng yuè	bright moon	明月
明明	míng míng	obviously; undoubtedly	明明

Cumulative total

Characters	Compound words	Sentences
13	31	0



林

#14 林 lín forest; woods; grove; a surname



Two 木 (trees), standing side by side, form this character. By duplicating, the character implies that there are more than one thing. Thus, when we see many trees around, we call this a *grove*. If there are numerous trees, stretching for miles and miles, we call this a *forest*. When 林 is by itself, we usually think of it as a *grove*; when it is preceded by the character 森, the combination clearly indicates a *forest*.

林 林 林 林 林 林 林
林 林

Linking Past Learning with New Information (溫故知新)

Compound Words

林木	lín mù	woods; forest	林木
山林	shān ín	mountain and forest; wooded mountain	山林

Characters
14

Compound words
33

Sentences
0



森

#15

森

sēn

full of trees; luxuriant
vegetation; dark



木
林

The character 林 (grove) is formed with two 木 (trees) standing side by side. By placing another 木 on top of 林, we produce 森. If two trees suggest a grove, then what do three trees symbolize? 森 suggests a place full of *luxuriant vegetation*. When 森 and 林 are combined to form the disyllabic word 森林, they together mean *forest*.

森 木 木 木 木 木 木
林 林 林 林 林 林
木 木 木 木 木 木
林 林 林 林 林 林

Linking Past Learning with New Information (溫故知新)

Compound Words

森林	sēn lín	forest	森林
森森	sēn sēn	dense; thick	森森

Characters
15

Compound words
35

Sentences
0



炎

#16 炎 yán very hot; scorching; burning



炎

This character is made of two 火 (fires). If fire produces heat, then two 火 will generate more heat. Thus, if you come near a *blaze*, or expose yourself to the *very hot* sun on a *scorching* day, you may experience a *burning* sensation.

炎 炎 炎 炎 炎 炎 炎
炎 炎

Linking Past Learning with New Information (溫故知新)

Compound Words

炎炎

yán yán

very, very hot; scorching

炎炎

Characters
16

Compound words
36

Sentences
0



晶

#17

晶

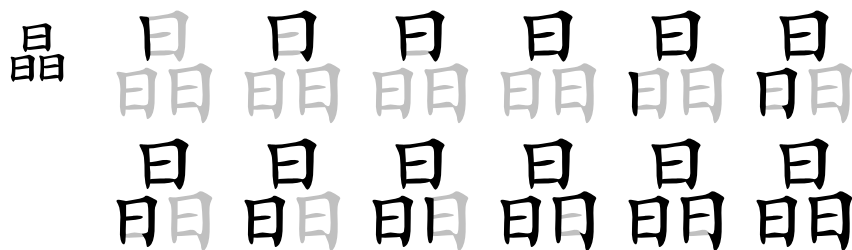
jīng

brilliant; sparking; radiant



晶

This character was formed by adding two more suns (日) to the original character (日). The resultant character 晶 can be used whenever we want to emphasize the *sparkling* nature of an object. Can many objects be used *brilliantly* or *crystal clear* without the *radiant* light from the sun? This character is often repeated to form the reiterative word (晶晶) which also means *bright* and *brilliant*.



Linking Past Learning with New Information (溫故知新)

Compound Words

晶晶

jīngjīng

particularly bright and
brilliant

晶晶

Characters
17

Compound words
37

Sentences
0



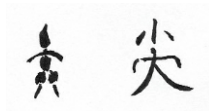
尖

#18

尖

jiān

point; tip; top; pointed; sharp



尖

尖 is made up of two independent characters: 小 (small) on the top and 大 (large) at the bottom. Something that has a small *tip* on one end and a relatively large handle on the other is a *sharp* and *pointed* object. 尖 is often used to describe a person who is the *best of their kind* and who asks *sharp* and *pointed* questions.

Does the character itself look *sharp* too?

尖 尖 尖 尖 尖 尖 尖

Linking Past Learning with New Information (溫故知新)

Compound Words

山尖

shānjiān

mountain top

山尖

Characters
18

Compound words
38

Sentences
0



#19

人

rén

a person; people



人

The profile of a *person's* body was depicted in these two early pictographic drawings. To maintain a proper posture, the hand was later transformed into a foot. Some ancient *people* even saw fit to omit the head of the *human being* and keep his upper body to a minimum in their pictographic representation of *Homo sapiens*.

人 人 人

Linking Past Learning with New Information (溫故知新)

Compound Words

人人	rénrén	everybody; everyone	人人
土人	tǔrén	aborigines; natives	土人
木人	mùrén	dull person; wooden man	木人
大人	dàrén	adult; a salutation for one's parents, seniors, etc.	大人
小人	xiǎorén	mean person; little person	小人

山人

shānrén

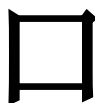
Hermit; mountaineer

山人

Characters
19

Compound words
44

Sentences
0



#20

口

kǒu

mouth; an opening





The pictographs show a *mouth* (口) with no teeth in it. 口 has also come to mean *opening* and *crack*. When we describe the number of people in the family, we also use 口 as the *counting unit*. The phrase 小两口, “little two mouths,” however, is used to refer to a young married couple, usually by their parents or other older family members.



Linking Past Learning with New Information (溫故知新)

Compound Words

人口	rén kǒu	population	人口
山口	shān kǒu	mountain pass	山口
口水	kǒu shuǐ	saliva	口水

Characters
20

Compound words
47

Sentences
0



子

#21

子

zi

child; son; seed; a suffix



子

The young *child* has a proportionately large head and a small trunk, as suggested in the two early pictographs. As the *child* grows older, the head has proportionately become smaller and the body longer. The smaller head shown in the later form is consistent with the basic principle of *child* development. Although all children are adorable, Chinese families traditionally tend to be biased toward the *son*. To many Chinese, the *son* and the *seed* are almost synonymous. It should come as no surprise that the character for both *son* and *seed* is 子.

子 子 子 子

Linking Past Learning with New Information (溫故知新)

Compound Words

口子	kǒu zi	opening; hole; seed; a suffix	口子
日子	rì zi	day; date; time; life	日子
月子	yuè zi	month of confinement after given a birth to a child	月子
小子	xiǎo zi	young fellow; one's children	小子
尖子	jiān zi	cream of the crop; very bright child	尖子

Characters
21

Compound words
52

Sentences
0



女

#2

女

nǚ

woman; female; daughter; girl



女

The pictograph shows a *woman* in a kneeling position, suggesting humility and dedicate health. The modern form shown above appropriately liberates the *female* from her old images by replacing the posture of kneeling with that of walking with big strides. Could it be that the individual who created the dern form was herself a *lady* or *daughter*, who believed that the old form was designed to pull all *girls* down?

女 女 女 女

Linking Past Learning with New Information (溫故知新)

Compound Words

女人	nǚ rén	woman; one's wife	女人
女子	nǚ zi	woman; girl; female	女子
子女	zi nǚ	son and daughter; children	子女

下女

xià nǚ

maid

下女

小女

xiǎo nǚ

my daughter (a self-depreciatory term)

小女

Characters

22

Compound words

57

Sentences

0



#23



tián

field; farmland; a surname





The pictographs depict the cross-paths of a *rice field*. A piece of *farmland* is usually subdivided into four equal plots to facilitate cultivation. The cross-paths can also be raised so that the farmers can walk on it to and from all four directions, including the neighboring *fields*.



Linking Past Learning with New Information (溫故知新)

Compound Words

水田

shuǐ tián

rice field; paddy field

水田

Characters
23

Compound words
58

Sentences
0



目

#24

目

mù

the eye; to look; to see



目

The three pictographs show the developmental stages in the formation of the character 目. The original pictograph had the eye pictured in its natural form. By rotating the eye to a vertical position, people are now forced *to see* and *look at* things from a different perspective.

Things are much easier *to see* and pleasant *to look at* when they are grouped into different *categories* or listed in a *table of contents*.

目 目 目 目 目 目

Linking Past Learning with New Information (溫故知新)

Compound Words

目下 mù xià at present; right now 目下

Characters
24

Compound words
59

Sentences
0



好

#25 好 hǎo good; fine; nice

好 好

好 This character is made up of two existent characters: 女 (daughter) and 子 (son). In the mind of the ancient people (and many modern people too), it was *good* 好 to have both a son and a daughter. It was *nice* to have a boy, but it was even better to have both a boy and a girl. No wonder why many parents feel *wonderful* and consider it a double blessing when a mother gives birth to a twin son and daughter.

It is proper to point out that the world will no longer be a *fine* place to live if it is very seriously imbalanced in gender distribution. We all know that the human race cannot survive with either sex alone.

好 好好好好好好

Linking Past Learning with New Information (溫故知新)

Compound Words

好人	hǎo rén	good person; healthy person	好人
好大	hǎo dà	how big; very big	好大

好日子	hǎo rì zi	good day; wedding day	好日子
好小子	hǎo xiǎo zi	good boy	好小子

Characters
25

Compound words
63

Sentences
0



#26

心

xīn

heart; mind; feeling



心 The early pictographs show the shape of the *heart* (心). From the pictographs, can you tell whether the ancient Chinese had some basic knowledge about the anatomy of the *heart*? The ancient Chinese assumed the *heart* to be the organ that houses the *mind*. The *heart* was thought to be the *center* of all *mental* activities, including *feeling* and *intention*. Perhaps for this reason, the character 心 refers not only to the *heart*, but to the *mind* as well.



Linking Past Learning with New Information (溫故知新)

Compound Words

心口	xīn kǒu	the pit of the stomach	心口
心目	xīn mù	mental view; frame of mind	心目
心田	xīn tián	heart; intention	心田
心上	xīn shàng	in one's heart; in one's mind	心上
人心	rén xīn	public feeling; human heart	人心
小心	xiǎo xīn	be careful; take care	小心
好心	hǎo xīn	good intention; good will	好心

心上人	xīn shàng rén	sweetheart	心上人
好心人	hǎo xīn rén	Kind-hearted person	好心人

Characters
26

Compound words
72

Sentences
0



Exercises Lesson 2

A. Identify the character that is related to each English concept.

1. people (a) 明 (b) 人 (c) 口 (d) 木
2. grove (a) 林 (b) 土 (c) 森 (d) 夫
3. heart (a) 火 (b) 心 (c) 炎 (d) 二
4. eye (a) 日 (b) 月 (c) 目 (d) 八
5. brilliant (a) 晶 (b) 六 (c) 出 (d) 晶
6. bright (a) 朋 (b) 明 (c) 炎 (d) 四
7. field (a) 口 (b) 由 (c) 田 (d) 用
8. good (a) 相 (b) 她 (c) 他 (d) 好
9. son (a) 字 (b) 子 (c) 入 (d) 才
10. girl (a) 女 (b) 下 (c) 四 (d) 日

A. Identify the character that is associated with each pinyin transcription.

1. rén
(a) 森 (b) 木 (c) 人 (d) 炎
2. tián
(a) 火 (b) 田 (c) 林 (d) 山
3. xīn
(a) 心 (b) 森 (c) 川 (d) 三
4. hǎo
(a) 月 (b) 土 (c) 好 (d) 女
5. mù
(a) 目 (b) 四 (c) 明 (d) 每
6. kǒu
(a) 高 (b) 可 (c) 口 (d) 中

B. Identify the pinyin transcription that is associated with each character.

1. 炎
(a) dà (b) mǎ (c) yán (d) mā
2. 森
(a) yì (b) dù (c) tǔ (d) sēn
3. 明
(a) sàn (b) míng (c) sān (d) shàn

4. 晶

(a) jīng (b) tū (c) tǔ (d) mó

5. 尖

(a) xià (b) xiá (c) jiān (d) dà

6. 子

(a) zǐ (b) mǎ (c) tǔ (d) shān

D. Identify the compound word or phrase that is associated with each English word or phrase.

1. forest

(a) 林木 (b) 山林 (c) 森林 (d) 森森

2. tomorrow

(a) 目下 (b) 明日 (c) 明月 (d) 日日

3. bright and brilliant

(a) 炎日 (b) 明天 (c) 月明 (d) 晶晶

4. population

(a) 人字 (b) 人口 (c) 山人 (d) 人人

5. hermit, mountaineer

(a) 山林 (b) 山人 (c) 山上 (d) 才子

6. children

(a) 人字 (b) 人口 (c) 子女 (d) 人人

E. Identify the compound word or phrase that is associated with each pinyin transcription.

1. shuǐ tián (a) 天上 (b) 口水 (c) 人口 (d) 水田
2. mù xià (a) 目下 (b) 下雨 (c) 下人 (d) 月下
3. xiǎo xīn (a) 小可 (b) 小心 (c) 小小 (d) 好心
4. kǒu zi (a) 人口 (b) 口水 (c) 口子 (d) 尖子
5. kǒu shuǐ (a) 大水 (b) 口水 (c) 月子 (d) 大口
6. rén xīn (a) 人人 (b) 好心 (c) 人心 (d) 中心

F. Identify the character that is different in tone from the others.

1. (a) 水 (b) 火 (c) 好 (d) 目
2. (a) 下 (b) 上 (c) 心 (d) 日
3. (a) 山 (b) 森 (c) 炎 (d) 晶
4. (a) 目 (b) 月 (c) 大 (d) 林
5. (a) 土 (b) 女 (c) 子 (d) 人

Answers

A.	B.	C.	D.	E.
1. b	1. c	1. c	1. c	C. d
2. a	2. b	2. d	2. b	D. a
3. b	3. a	3. b	3. d	E. b
4. c	4. c	4. a	4. b	F. c
5. d	5. a	5. c	5. b	G. b
6. b	6. c	6. a	6. c	H. c
7. c				
8. d				
9. b				
10. a				
F.				
1. d				
2. c				
3. d				
4. d				
5. d				

爸
口只
不人同
您是尖城
朋你没晶海
谁前十有炎候
生都昨九地森时
什说每来八天林次
那母儿亮今七门明共
年校书父妹很出六也小现
高期
星多文定太哥早了四牛下英
哪会个男吗的三外上教
么弟本晚它二中火谢
学美在她一心水久
国看们雨好土孕
友我家目木身
他妇田川语
夫女山言
子月和
日妈
见