



Expanding Horizons: Integrating Literature in Language Learning

Jane Woo

Head of Mandarin, Christ's College Finchley
MSc, University of Oxford

Sophia Lam

Assistant Professor,
The Education University of Hong Kong

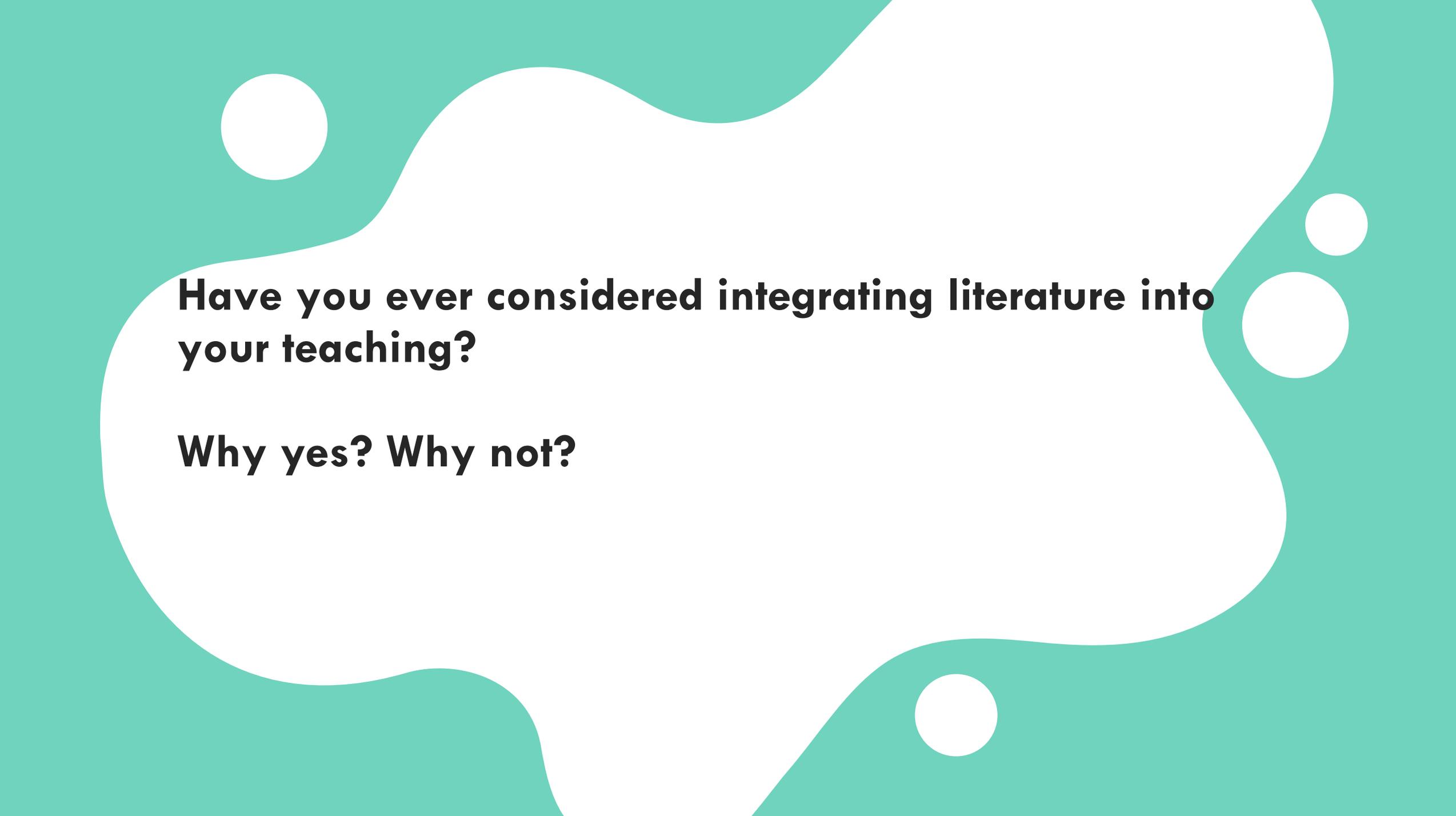
PhD, UCL Institute of Education

Aims

Challenge the idea that literature is only for advanced learners by showing its benefits from the start.

Use literature to boost linguistic, cultural, and aesthetic skills.

Apply teaching methods to enhance learning for students at all levels.

The background is a solid teal color. It features several white, organic, wavy shapes that resemble liquid droplets or bubbles. There are also four white circles of varying sizes scattered across the teal background. The text is centered within one of the larger white shapes.

Have you ever considered integrating literature into your teaching?

Why yes? Why not?

Benefits of teaching/learning literature

Why teach literature?

Ruth Heilbronn (2019) “Literature, Culture and Democratic Citizenship”

- The power in stories: *“We can capture what has happened and is happening to us personally and to the world as a whole.”* (p.13)
- Moral imagination – develop empathy
- Nourish human needs/human development
- Cultural references – debate and discussions – critical thinking

The story of the box & nails; The story of a grandpa & his addiction.

What kind(s) of literature can you think of?

Original texts – Translated texts

Fiction – Non-fiction

Classical poetry – modern poetry

Picture books – E-books

Sample activity: 猜诗题



猜诗题

《爸爸》



生气时的爸爸

像火山爆发

谁碰到了

谁就倒霉

猜诗题

《游戏》

小弟弟，我们来游戏。

我当老师，

你当学生。

姊姊，那么，小妹妹呢？

小妹妹太小了，

她什么都不会做。

我看——

让她当校长算了。

猜诗题

《雨》



滴滴答答的落下来

人们说：烦死了

雨听到了

哭得更大声！

猜诗题

《雪》



咦？

明明今天是圣诞节

可是外面都是汤圆

难道

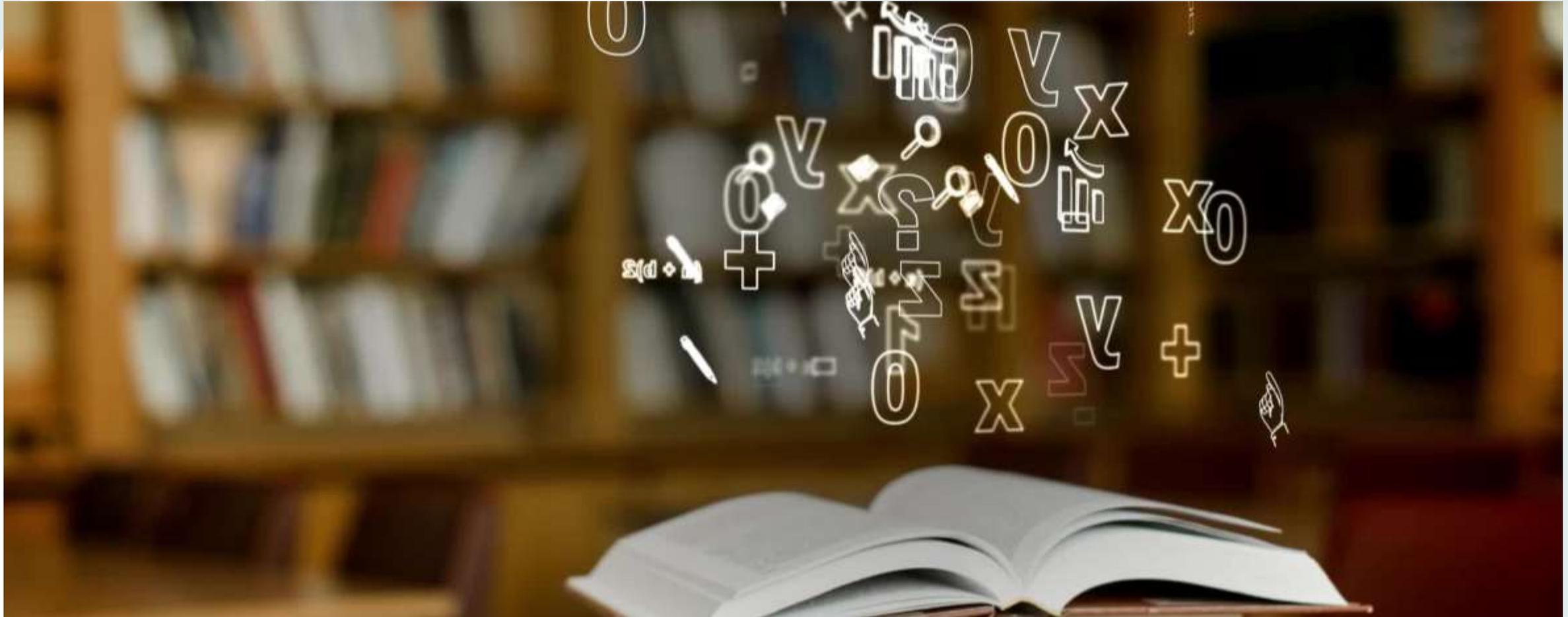
时间婆婆搞错了吗？

猜诗题

《蜜蜂》

蜜蜂是个采花贼
也是个工人
又是个大媒人
真奇怪！

Sample activity: Book club



The Ventriloquist's Daughter, by Lin Man-Chiu

Translated by Helen Wang (Balestier Press 2017)

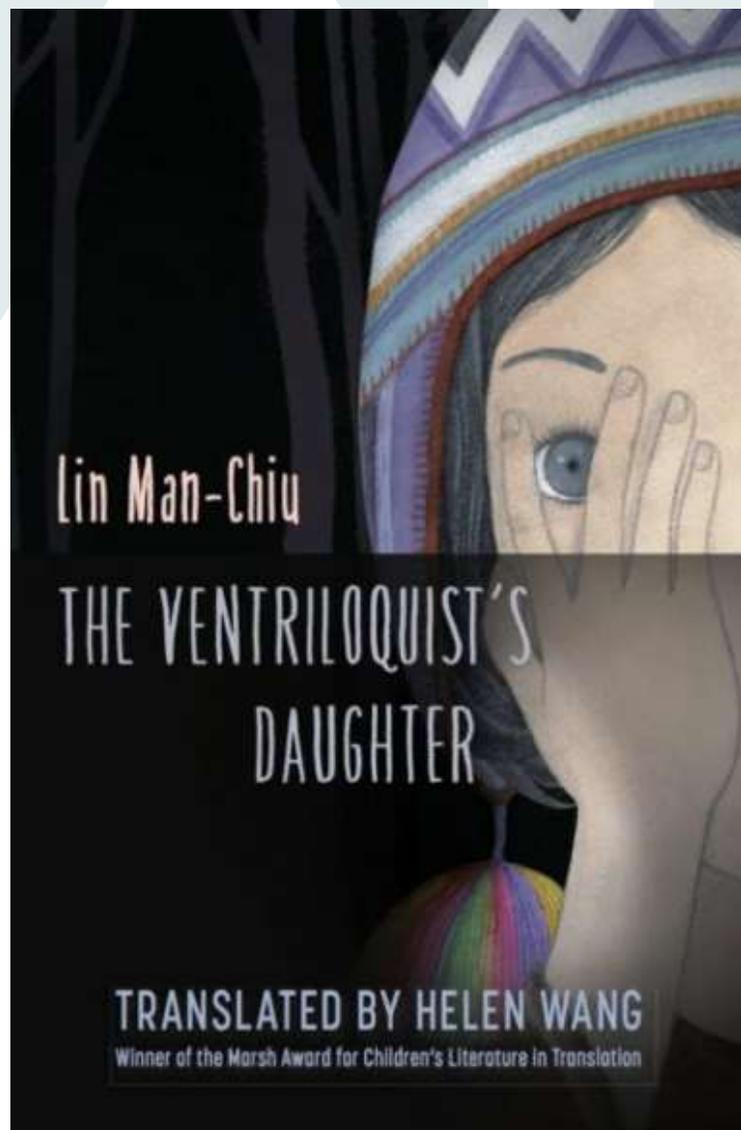
See our Author of the Month feature on Lin Man-Chiu [here](#).

Publisher's blurb

After the tragic death of Liur's mother, her father, a thwarted artist working as a doctor in the family hospital, is overcome with grief. He goes to study in America, leaving six-year-old Liur in the care of her grandparents, promising to return with a special doll for her.

But instead of studying, her father travels to the Andes, where he meets a mysterious ventriloquist who takes him as a pupil.

Five years later, he returns home, bringing with him one of the ventriloquist's dolls. But it is not a present for Liur; instead, it becomes a menacing presence in the house, causing strife within the family.



Reading Chinese School Bookclub Reviews

Reviews from Y8, Ipswich High School, 14/4/19



Video Reviews from Jordanhill School Bookclub, 10/10/18



Review from Sophie Mitchell, Y10 (S3), Jordanhill School, Glasgow, 10/10/18



Reviews from Y9, Devonport High School for Girls, 16/5/18



Reviewed by Amna Khan, Y7, The Crossley Heath School, 14/5/18



A teacher's perspective: by Jane Woo, Christ's College Finchley, 19/4/18



Reviewed by Mira Boka, Y7, Christ's College Finchley, 19/4/18



Reviewed by Miran Beka, Y7, Christ's College, Finchley, 19/4/18



Summary: *The Ventriloquist's Daughter* is about a doll that was possessed. It tried to kill and replaced a girl whose father was confused about the two.

What I liked about the book was the similarity between the girl and the doll's destiny: the girl's baby brother died so did the doll's sisters. I found it fascinating that both of them crossed path in such a mysterious way.

My favourite part was when the father saved the daughter in the end instead of the doll because he knew which one meant more to him and his life. It was suspenseful and very touching.

Star Rating (out of 5): 5/5 I will definitely read it again

Reviewed by Miran Beka, Y7, Christ's College, Finchley (Mandarin Excellence Programme)

Reviewed by Dike Onyemelukwe, Y7, Christ's College, Finchley, 19/4/18



The Ventriloquist's Daughter is a very intriguing book. It is about a little girl and her father.

The girl's mother died and her dad travelled to America for 5 years. While he was there, the daughter received a postcard from her father; she was overjoyed. However, when he returned, she knew that he was not the same anymore. Her father had become a ventriloquist and a doll called Carola had moved in. A series of mysterious events then spiralled into the family.

I was gripped by the book and could not resist reading it. It is filled with suspense which can be frightening sometimes, but it was heart-warming and moving at times.

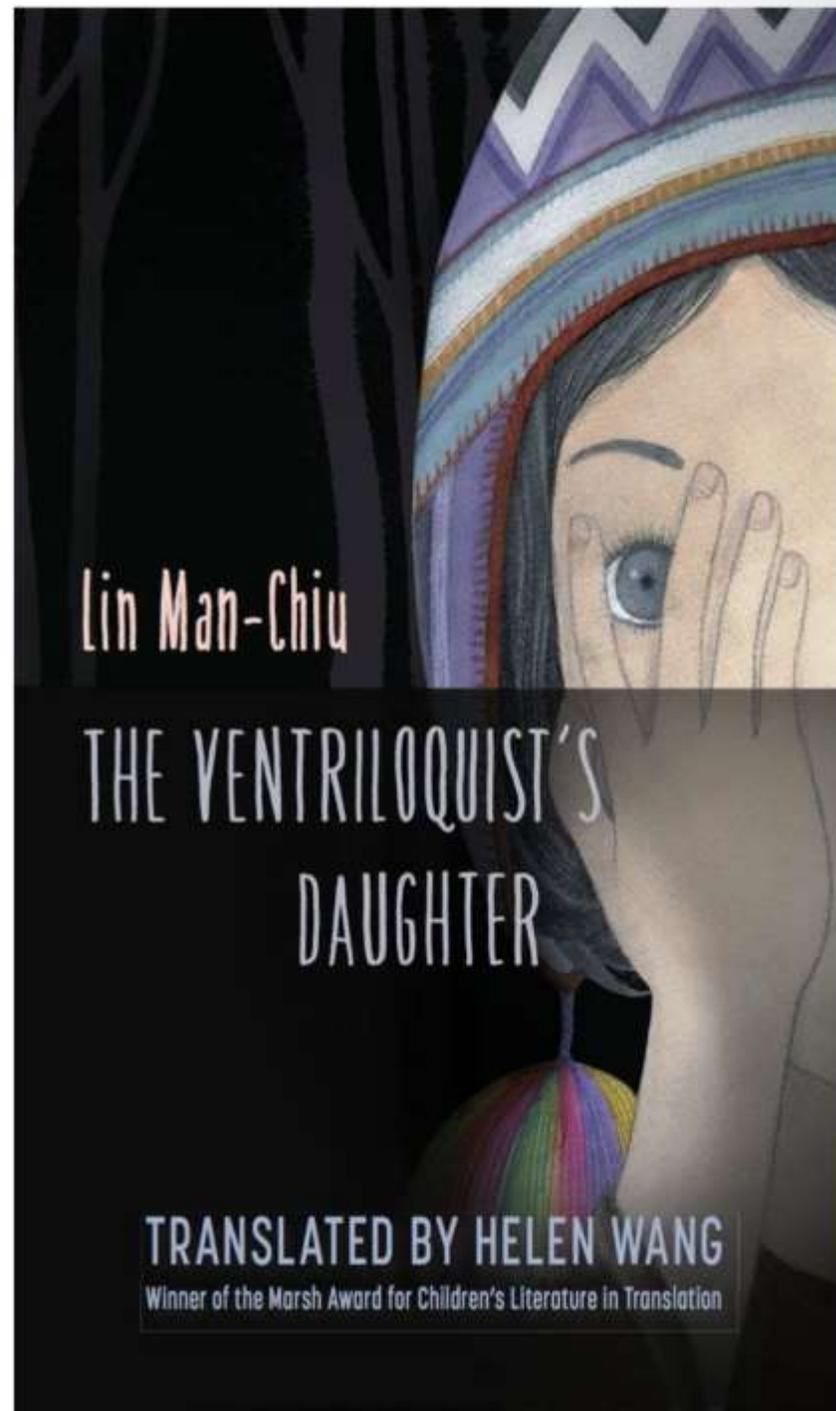
In my opinion, I think that this book is great as it is an action-packed book with both heartening and scary moments.

I would recommend this book to someone who enjoys a little fright and learn more about the Chinese culture.

Reviewed by Dike Onyemelukwe, Y7, Christ's College, Finchley (Mandarin Excellence Programme)

Book club

你好！我叫
你好！我叫
你好！我叫



What it was about

This year we started a book club, we read a book called "The Ventriloquist's daughter". The book was about a girl whose dad went away because he lost his wife. When he returned, he brought back a creepy doll that started a series of unfathomable events in the household.

What we learned

We learned that unity is a very important element in Chinese family; families tend to stay together and make mend with each other even when they have disagreements.

We also noticed that parents' expectation of their children in Chinese families can be different. For example, the grandfather told the dad that he was disappointed that his son did not follow his foot steps to become a doctor.

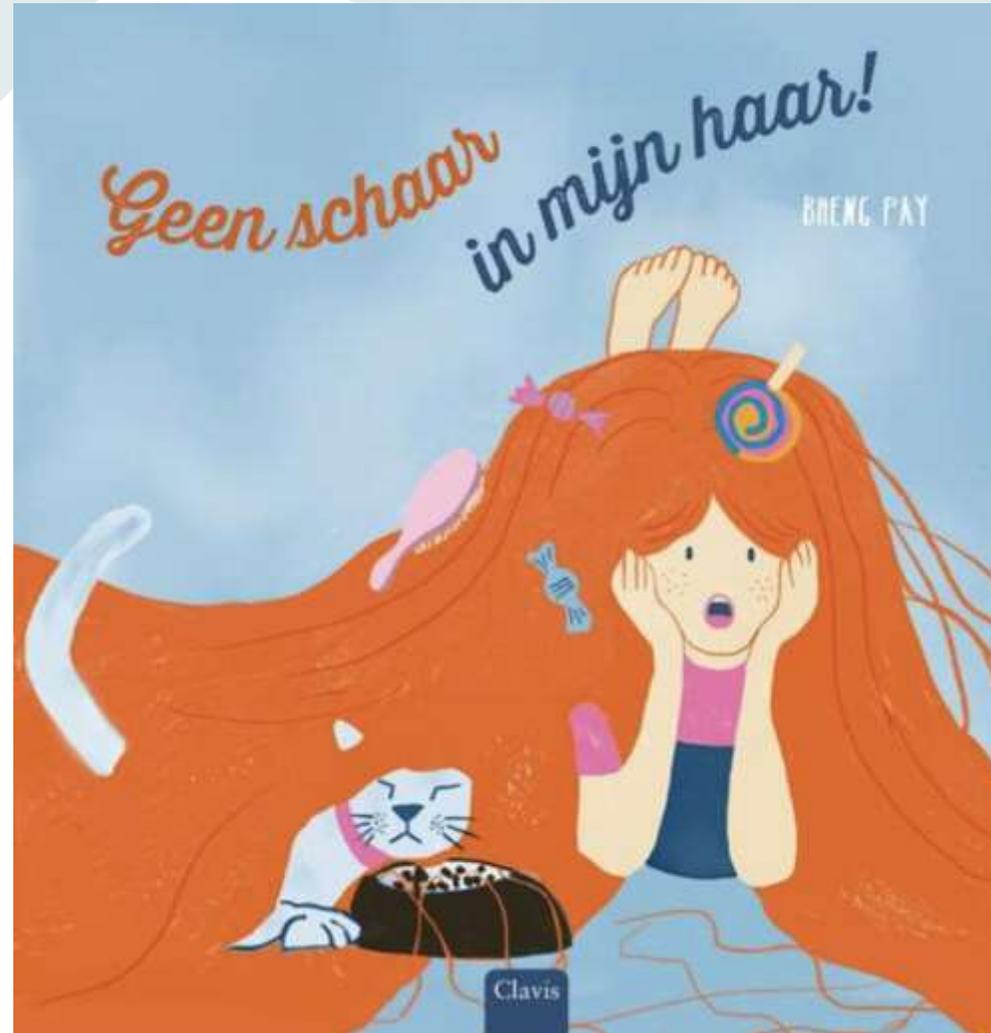
What we enjoyed...

We enjoyed the storyline very much and we found the Chinese family culture very interesting. It was culturally enriching and made our lessons even more interesting.

That's the end of our
presentation.

谢谢！

Sample lesson: Picture book



谁最高

梅子涵 / 著 [德] 川村八夜 / 绘



中国少年儿童新闻出版总社
中国少年儿童出版社

橱比桌子高。



爸爸比妈妈高。



桌子比椅子高。



妈妈比我高。



Title page:

谁最高

shéi zuì gāo

Who's the tallest?

3 people

我叫 Miss Woo.

wǒ jiào

我爸爸叫 ...

我朋友叫 ...

péng yǒu
= friend.

A 比 B + adj

bi
= compared to

x 2 - 3 sentences

人最高!

人又 adj 又 adj

How to make a story book (video)



Students' work



Students' work – by Kor



Students' work – by Kor

爸爸比我高
BaBa bi wo gao

Dad is taller
than me



妈妈比我高
Mama bi wo gao

Mum is taller
than me



Students' work – by Kor

我比猫高

~~Wo bi mao gao~~

Wo bi mao gao

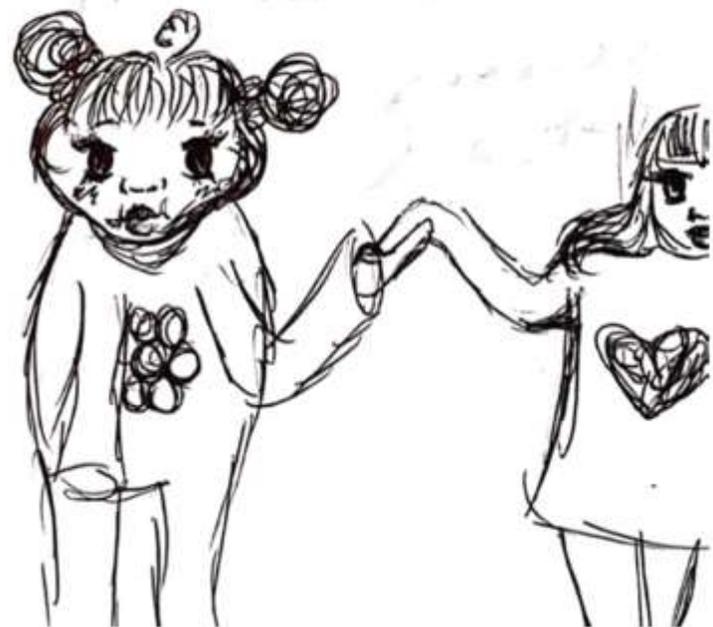
I am taller than
the cat.



我比我朋友

高 wo bi wo pengyou
gao

I am taller than
my friend



Students' work

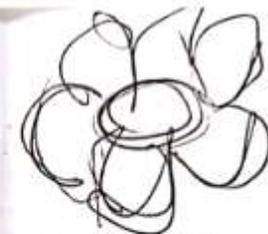
我比散热器
高

wo bi sanre qi
gao. ~~wo bi sanre qi~~
I am taller than
radiator



我和孪生兄
弟一样大

wo he luansheng
xiongdi yiyang da
I am same size as
twin brother



Students' work

结束

Jieshu

THE
END !!

Sample lesson: Calligram (Poetry)



Calligram

Lesson plan

Topic: "Symbols, imagery and emotions" + "Let the pictures speak"			
Date: 29/06/2022	Duration: 1hour	Class: Year 9	Venue: N/A
Lesson in Unit: 2nd out of 3			
Previous knowledge: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Students have known some basic Chinese vocabulary2. Students have learnt the analogy of poems			
Learning objectives: <p>At the end of the lesson, students should be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Understand the meaning of the chosen poems and appreciate the language used (“寂寞”&“流浪人”: illustrate the feeling of loneliness; “風景No.2”&“戰爭交響曲”: illustrate the landscape of windbreaker and the casualties that are brought by war)2. Understand the sentiments, emotions or philosophy delivered by the poems3. Investigate the imagery or symbolic meaning of the poems4. Investigate the pattern and rhythm of the Calligram5. Investigate the cultural elements in relation to the poems			
Learning problems/needs expected: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Students may have difficulties in understanding the meaning of the poems because of the difficult words2. The literary texts selected may not meet the learning interests or abilities of the students3. Students may encounter difficulties when analyzing the patterns of the Calligram			
Time:	Learning stage/ learning goals:	Teaching content:	Resources/remarks:
10'	Lead-in	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Ask students: Have you ever experienced the feeling of	

“Let the pictures speak”



Lesson 2 (29th, June)



Have you ever
imagined drawing
pictures using
words / poems?



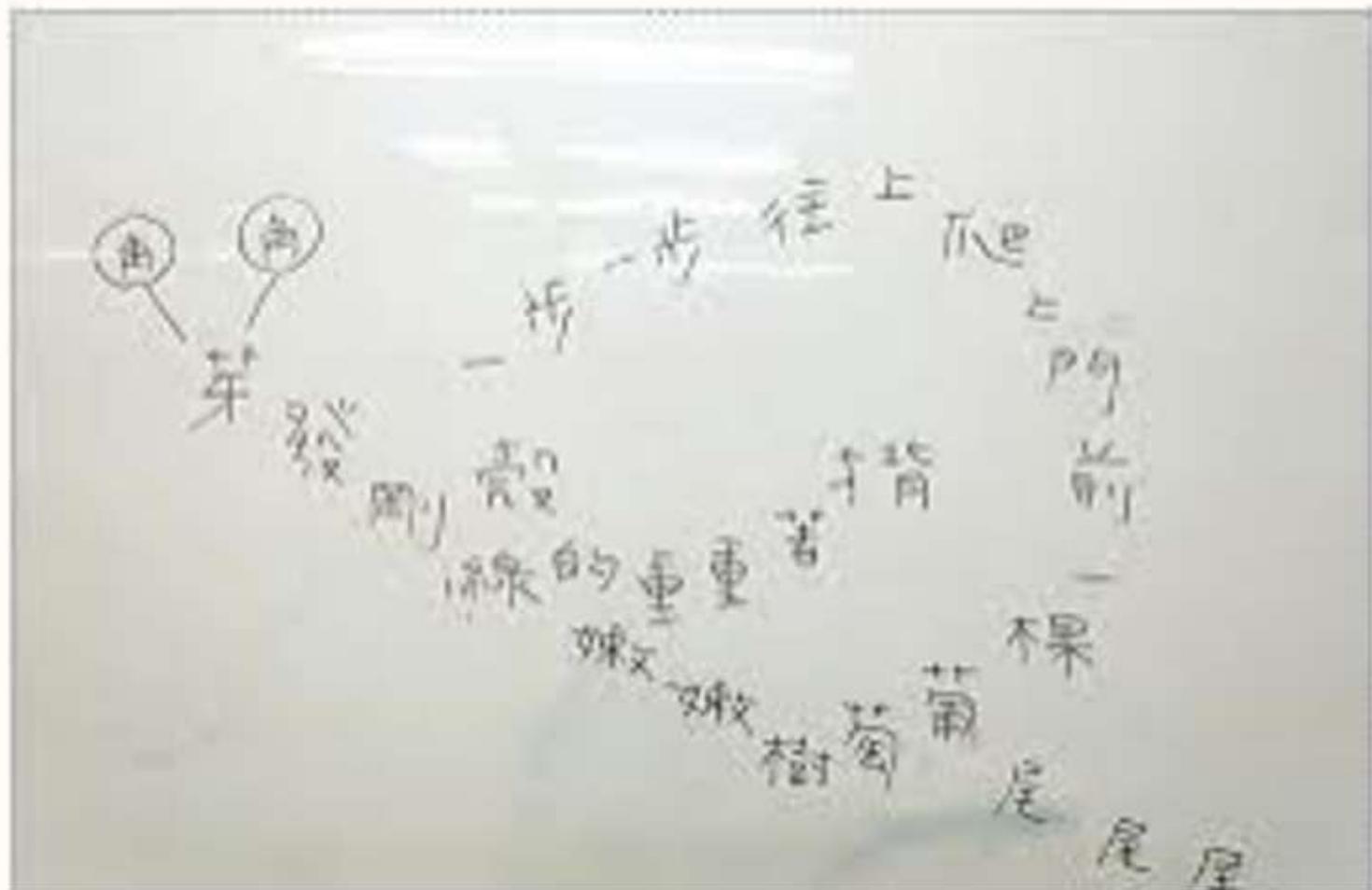
这是什么形状？

xíng zhuàng = shape

街 奮力 呼呼呼 滴滴答答 風也參賽了 主人迫不及待拉著我和雨精靈賽跑 終於下雨了 在牆角哭 沒有雨 晴天 唉

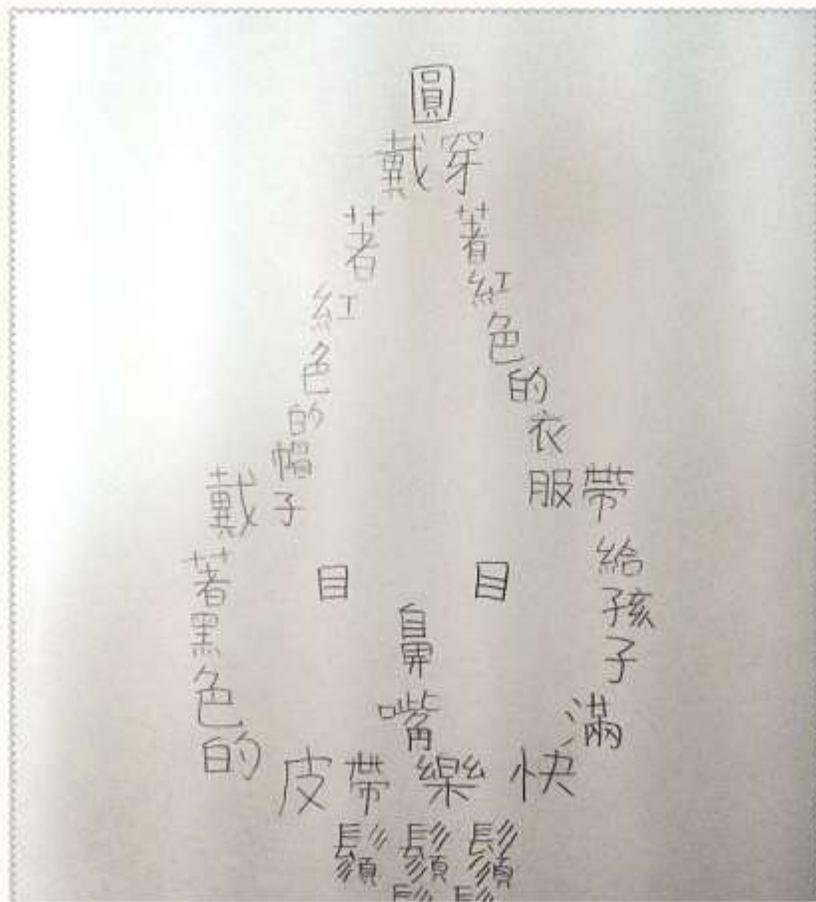
这是什么形状？

xíng zhuàng = shape



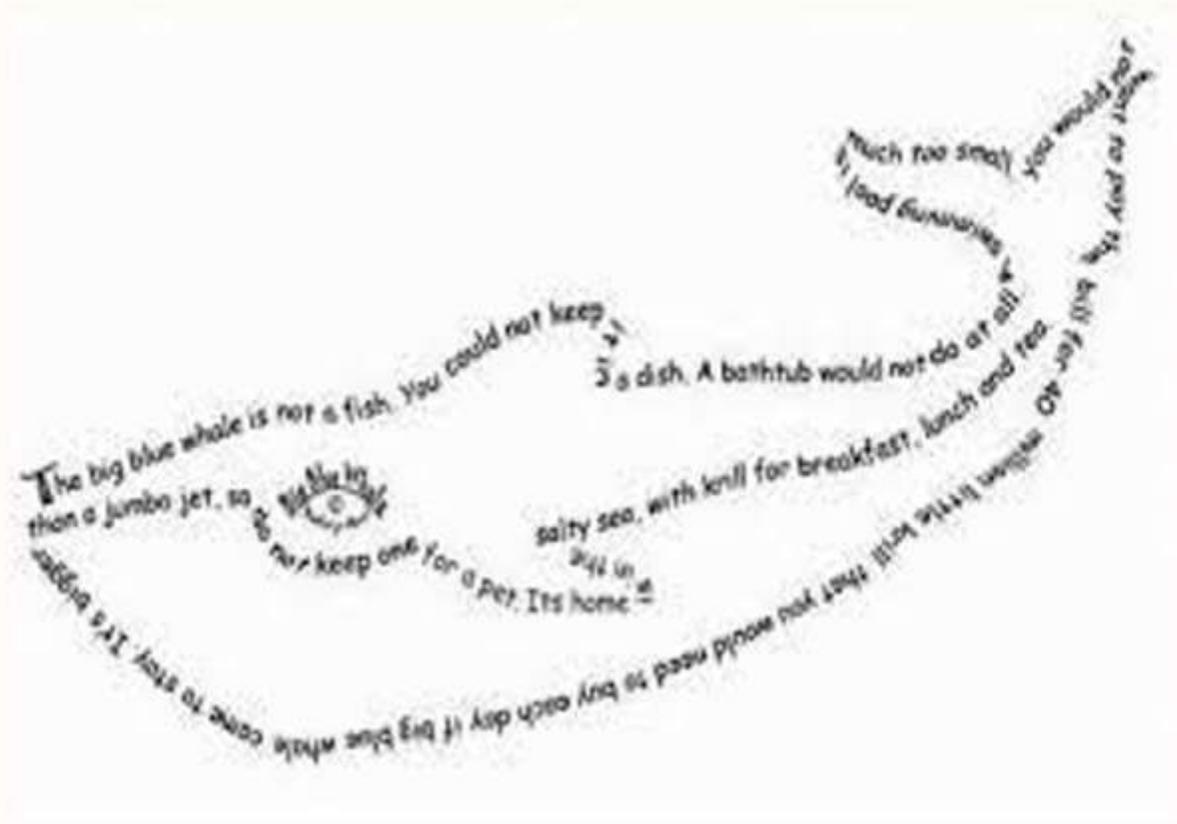
这是什么形状？

xíng zhuàng = shape

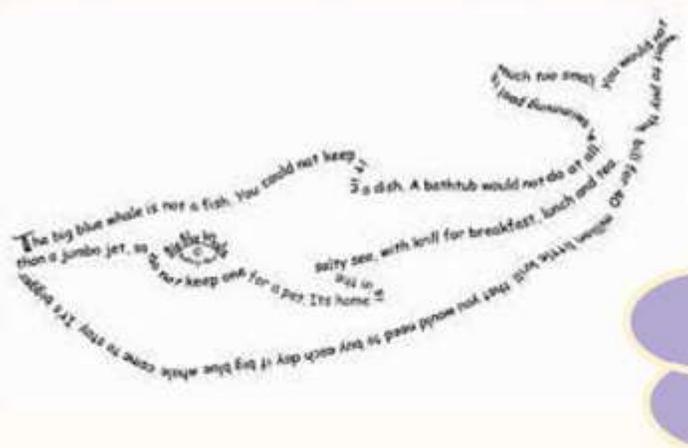


这是什么形状？

xíng zhuàng = shape



街力呼呼
 滴滴答答
 風也參賽了
 主人迫不及待拉著我和雨精靈賽跑
 終於下雨了
 在淪角哭
 沒有雨
 晴天
 唉

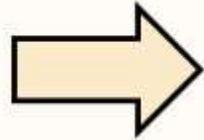


What are the origin
 and characteristics
 of calligram?

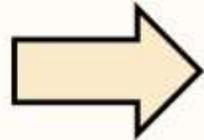
Cultural component

中文

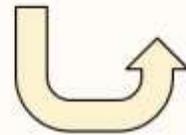
Chinese character



Square words
(方塊字)

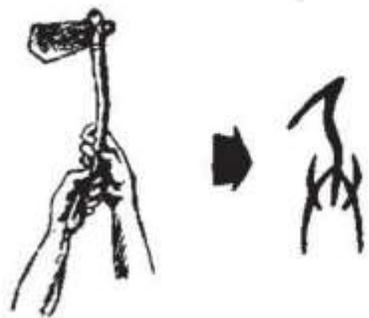


Hieroglyph
(象形字)



created based on
the shape of objects

兵 bīng



“兵”的本义是“兵器”。《荀子》：“古之兵，戈、矛、弓、矢而已矣”。后来才引申为“兵士”。字的上部是“斤”字，就是一把斧状的武器（参见“斤”字条）；下部是两只握武器的手。

兵 兵 兵 兵 兵 兵 兵

丘 丘 丘 丘 丘 丘 丘

丘 qiū



象形字。本义是“小土山”。甲骨文的字形很形象地表示出两座小山的样子；金文和小篆逐渐有了变化，到隶书以后就变得不象了。

Cultural component

诸葛亮

zhū gě liàng



大英博物馆: <https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/term/BIOG3226>

草船借箭: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9nhh43WEWF0>

金城武 jīn chéng wǔ

Takeshi Kaneshiro



Cultural component



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jZjj5y-7e9Q>

Have you ever
listened to a
symphony?

Does this poem fit
your imagination
of "symphony"?



Cultural component

兵 兵 兵 丘



鈸



鈸鑼



拍板



祝

打擊樂器



鼓



雲鑼



**Chinese
percussion**

<https://www.hkco.org/tc/Instrument-Rd/Chinese-Instruments/Percussion-Instruments.html>

Pick an object (e.g.
animal/tool) that represents
your group or yourself



Create a calligram that
demonstrates your group's
characteristics/spirit or your
current feelings

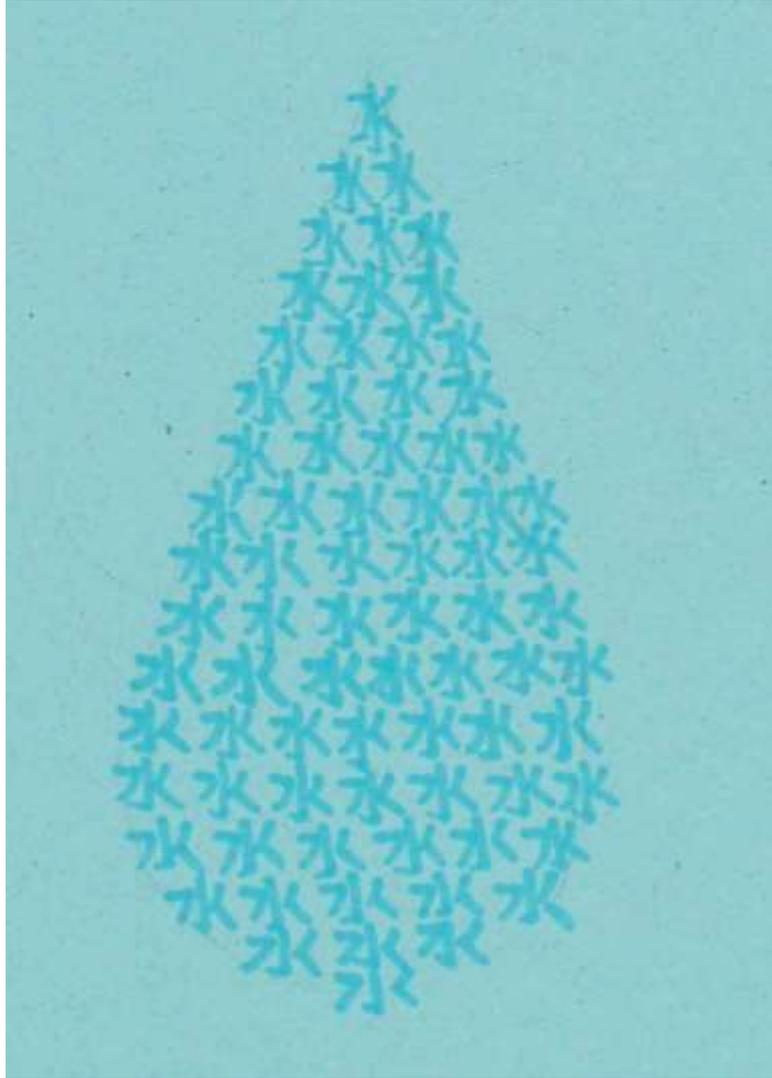


Write in characters, add pinyin
& meaning.

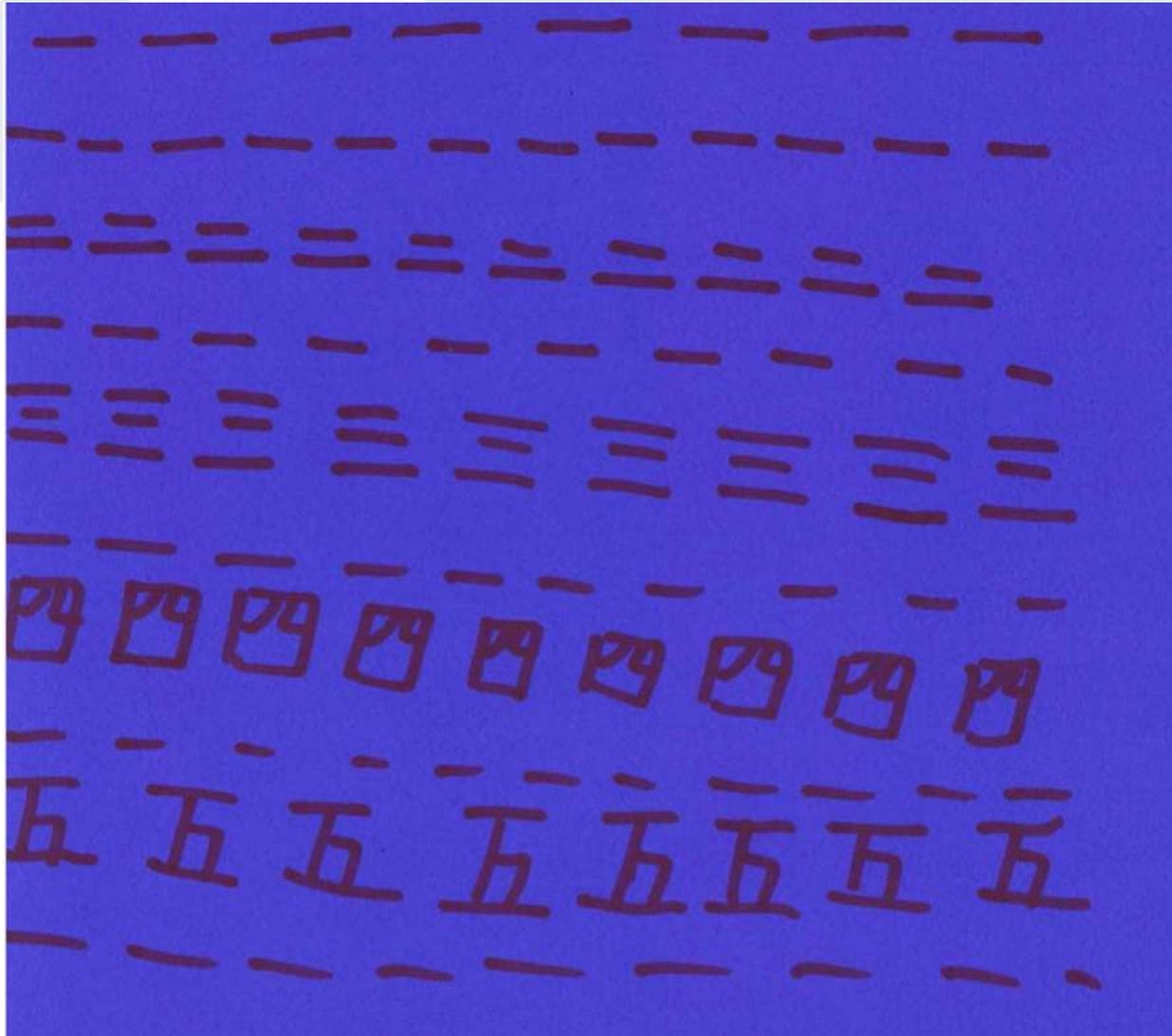
小组活动，请用字典。
xiǎo zǔ huó dòng , qǐng yòng zì diǎn .



Students' work – Poems & Calligram



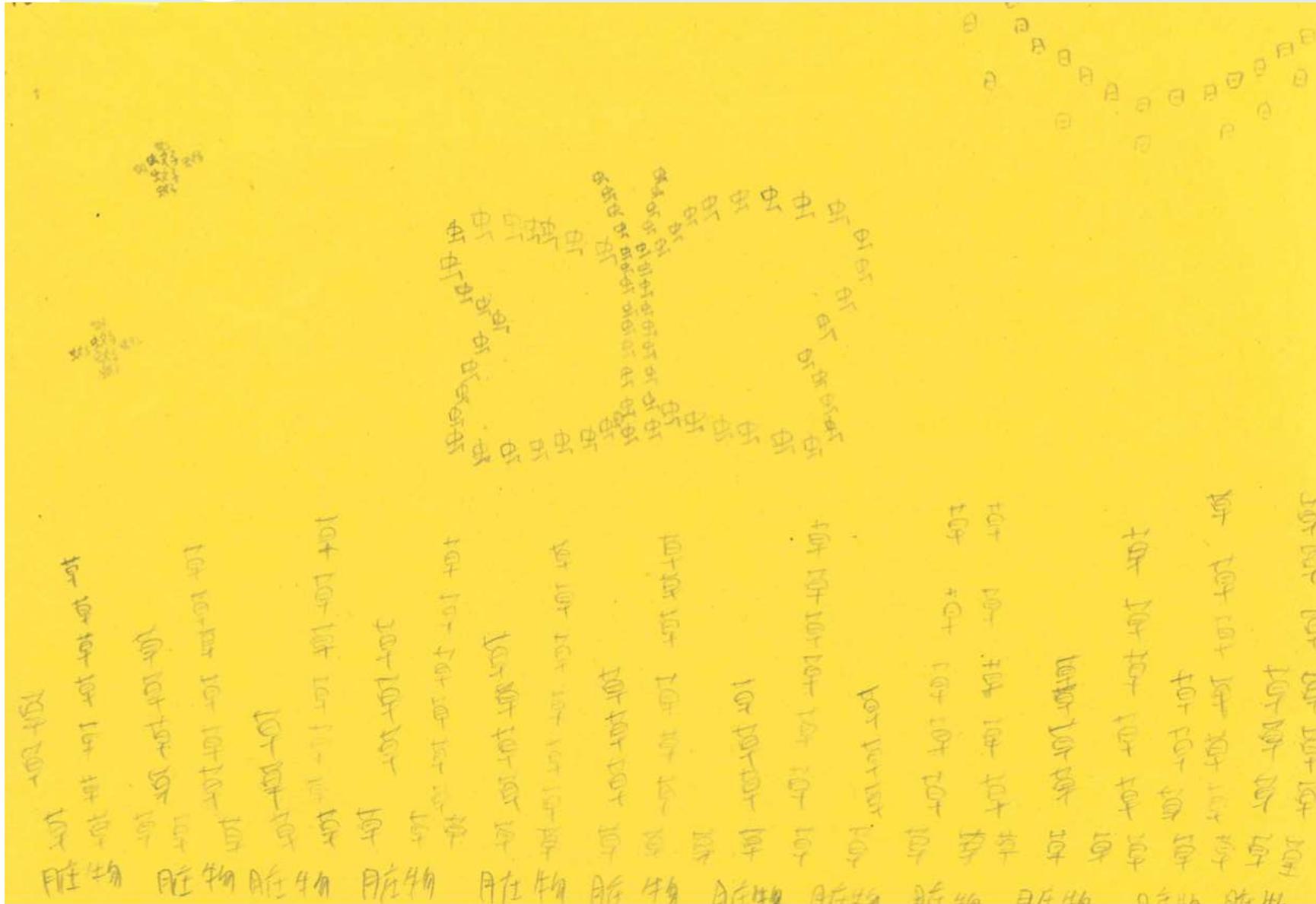
Students' work – Poems & Calligram



Students' work – Poems & Calligram



Students' work – Poems & Calligram



Assessment

Any ideas?

Think creative and diverse assessments.

What have we seen so far?

Book club learning outcomes

Discussions

Book reviews:

<https://writingchinese.leeds.ac.uk/book-reviews/the-ventriloquists-daughter/>

Mandarin showcase (student presentation)

Beyond the book club...

Student testimonials, e.g.,

7 years after this book club, a post A-level student who was in the book club when he was in Year 7, said to me, “Miss, I’m reading this book that mentioned the foot-binding culture, it’s really interesting... you should do the book club again, Miss!”

Picture book / Poetry learning outcomes

Students work:

Picture books

Poems

Grammar, writing/speaking skills, creativity, cultural understanding, critical thinking skills, curiosity, and maybe, even deeper learning?

Other Assessment Ideas

- Chatterpix Kids
- Reflective journal
- Edited videos (by the teacher)

Chatterpix Kids



Reflective journal

Literature commentary or critique in L1

Sample guided questions:

- What is the overall theme or central message of the work?
- What is the main narrative or sequence of ideas presented in the poem?
- What are the key images, symbols, or metaphors used in the poem?
- How does the poet's use of language, including diction, syntax, and figurative language, contribute to the meaning and mood of the poem?
- What deeper interpretations or connotations can be drawn from the poet's choices in language and form?
- Does the poem resonate with you personally, and why or why not?

Edited videos



动物赛跑



Animal Race

Your turn!

Write a poem / calligram:

How would you present this poem using calligram?

Teachers can change the poem if you like.

Discuss:

Which literature activity do you like/dislike?

How would you modify it to suit your workload and students' interests?

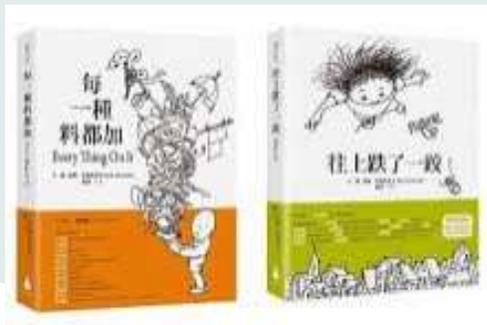
《彩虹》
彩虹是一个糊涂的画家
一不小心
就把水彩倒在身上

《爬山》
爬山
真辛苦!
山先生
你为什么不矮一点?
偏偏要那么高
让我累得半死了。

Resources

Children's e-book: <https://children.moc.gov.tw/index>

Free picture books with voice over, extended reading activity, games, etc.

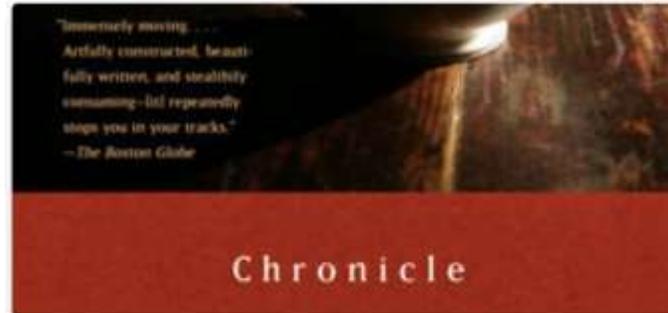


Resources

Book club

<https://writingchinese.leeds.ac.uk/book-club/>

<https://writingchinese.leeds.ac.uk/schools/school-bookclubs/>



Chronicle of a Blood Merchant, by Yu Hua

translated by Andrew Jones;

Anchor Books, 2003



The Ventriloquist's Daughter, by Lin Man-chiu

translated by Helen Wang;

Balestier Press, 2017



Bronze and Sunflower, by Cao Wenxuan

translated by Helen Wang;

Walker Books, 2015



Short Story Hub Reviews: from Read Paper Republic

Various authors and translators

2015/16



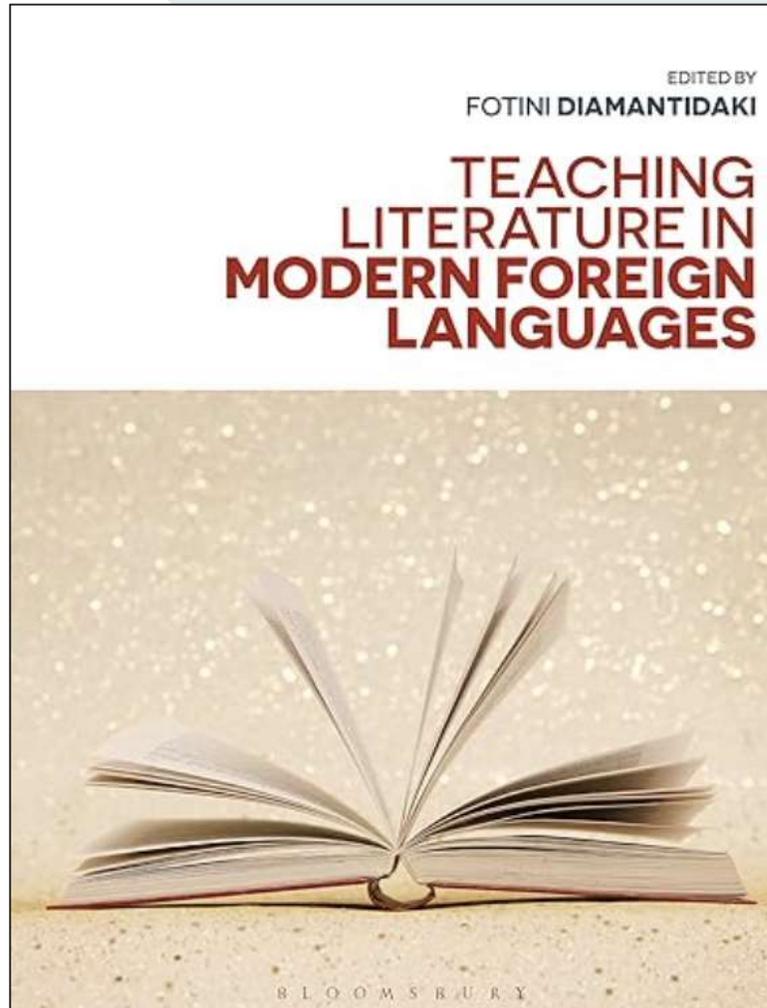
The Bear Whispers to Me, by Chang Ying-tai

Translated by Darryl Sterk;

Balestier Press, 2015

Resources

Diamantidaki, F. (Ed.). (2019).
*Teaching literature in modern
foreign languages*. Bloomsbury
Publishing.



Contents

Acknowledgements vi
Notes on Contributors vii

Introduction Fotini Diamantidaki 1

- 1 Literature, Culture and Democratic Citizenship**
Ruth Heilbronn 5
- 2 Literature in Primary Languages Classrooms** Jane Jones 25
- 3 Literature and Drama for Transfer** Jennifer Eddy 45
- 4 The Storyline Approach and Literature** Verna Brandford 63
- 5 Literature in Non-European Languages**
Frances Weightman 79
- 6 Teaching Poetry in Modern Foreign Languages**
Fotini Diamantidaki 97
- 7 Literature and the Target Language** Colin Christie 113
- 8 Teachers Supporting Teachers** Steven Fawkes 139

Index 141

Resources

Diamantidaki, F., Pan, L., & Carruthers, K.
(2018). *Mandarin Chinese Teacher Education Issues and solutions* (Vol. 1). UCL IOE Press.



Mandarin Chinese Teacher Education

Issues and solutions

Edited by Fotini Diamantidaki, Lin Pan
and Katharine Carruthers

Resources

IOE Mars – MEP projects



Mandarin
Excellence
Programme

Level:

My MEP Projects

Project: Chinese Literature
Series: Culture



Name: _____

Literature is what brings a language alive and can make it sound beautiful. And you can't beat a good story, right?

So far, you have been doing very well at studying the Chinese language and the culture of China. This Project is going to change the way you see Chinese as you go deeper into how the language is used in poetry and stories. This Project is quite simply a delicious mixture of words.

You are also going to embark on a journey to learn how to translate well. That's a real bonus, because translating is an excellent skill to have, both for your exams in the future, and for real-life situations too.

Go for it!

1. Little poem

This is one of the cutest and most amusing little poems you might ever read! It's called 鸡和蛋 jī hé dàn. Translate the title into English.

Answer: _____

2. Introducing the poem

First spend a few moments getting to know these words that are used in the poem:

鸡 jī = chicken
蛋 dàn = egg
生 shēng = to give birth to, to hatch
到底 dào dǐ = in the end, finally (or this word can just show emphasis)
有 yǒu = to exist, there is, there are
当然 dāng rán = of course
一定 yí dìng = for sure, definitely
不一定 bù yí dìng = not necessarily
先 xiān = first
才 cái = only then



Now go to the link below (ignore all the ads!) and read the poem once through. Try to only read the characters the first time round and **not** the pinyin. If you like you can have the audio track playing while you read.

<http://chinese-at-ease.com/learn-chinese-online-chicken-and-the-egg/>

★ Task 1 complete

3. Translation

Maybe you understood quite a few lines of the poem, maybe you didn't understand much at all. That doesn't matter. You're now going to do a translation of the poem into English.

The poem has been broken into chunks in the grid below to help you translate it. You'll notice that the second column is called 'Literal translation'. A literal translation is where you translate each word from Chinese without changing the order of the words and without trying to make it sound like good English. For example, 忙不忙? literally translated is 'Busy not busy?'

When you have done a literal translation of a sentence, you then need to make it sound more English. Do this in the last column, 'My version'. Here 忙不忙 could be translated as, 'Are you busy?' Sometimes it might be hard to re-write the literal translation, just write what you think it probably means for 'My version'.

The first and third lines have been done for you. Do the second and other lines.

Chinese	Literal translation	My version (sounds more English)
一二三, 鸡生蛋,	One two three, chicken birth egg	One, two, three, the chicken lays an egg.
三二一, 蛋生鸡,		

Resources

IOE Mars:

<https://ci.ioe.ac.uk/mandarin-resources-for-schools/>

Search “MEP projects” or

Tick “Student project”

The screenshot displays the website for the Institute of Education (IOE) Confucius Institute for Schools, which is part of UCL. The navigation bar includes links for About Us, Teacher Training, Teaching Materials, Events, Research, and Mandarin Excellence Programme. A search bar is available for finding resources by keywords. Below the search bar, there are filters for 'Search by category' with the following options:

- Language Skills (43): Speaking (13), Writing (40), Reading (42), Listening (18)
- MEP Level (43): MEP Year 9 (12), MEP Year 10 (12), MEP Year 11 (19)
- Qualification (47): KS0 (30), GCSE (33)
- Textbook (28): Other (28)
- Type of Resources (43): Multimedia (3), Worksheet (22), Student Project (43)
- Topics (41): School (7), Future Plans (2), Myself, Family and Friends (1), Everyday Life and Weather (5), Food and Drink (6), Sports and Hobbies (1), Local Area (8), Holiday and Travel (4), Culture and Other (8)

The main content area shows a grid of 15 project cards, each with a title, a brief description, and a 'Read More' button. The projects include:

- [GCSE] [Other] A more sustainable neighbourhood (Student Project)
- [GCSE] [Other] Basketball (Student Project)
- [GCSE] [Other] Chinese Speaking Communities (Student Project)
- [GCSE] [Other] Create your own Project (Student Project)
- [GCSE] [Other] Destination Paris (Student Project)
- [GCSE] [Other] Dream School (Student Project)
- [GCSE] [Other] Environment 1 Global Starter (Student Project)
- [GCSE] [Other] Environment 2 Global Shake-up 2.1 (Student Project)
- [GCSE] [Other] Environment 3 Global Shake-up 2.2 (Student Project)
- [GCSE] [Other] The Cooker
- Presenting good mental health

Resources

IOE Mars – MEP projects

 **Mandarin Excellence Programme**

Level: 

My MEP Projects



Project: Chinese Literature
Series: Culture

Name: _____

Literature is what brings a language alive and can make it sound beautiful. And you can't beat a good story, right?

So far, you have been doing very well at studying the Chinese language and the culture of China. This Project is going to change the way you see Chinese as you go deeper into how the language is used in poetry and stories. This Project is quite simply a delicious mixture of words.

You are also going to embark on a journey to learn how to translate well. That's a real bonus, because translating is an excellent skill to have, both for your exams in the future, and for real-life situations too.

Go for it!

1. Little poem

This is one of the cutest and most amusing little poems you might ever read! It's called 鸡和蛋 jī hé dàn. Translate the title into English.

Answer: _____

2. Introducing the poem

First spend a few moments getting to know these words that are used in the poem:

鸡 jī = chicken
蛋 dàn = egg
生 shēng = to give birth to, to hatch
到底 dào dī = in the end, finally (or this word can just show emphasis)
有 yǒu = to exist, there is, there are
当然 dāng rán = of course
一定 yí dìng = for sure, definitely
不一定 bù yí dìng = not necessarily
先 xiān = first
才 cái = only then



Now go to the link below (ignore all the ads!) and read the poem once through. Try to only read the characters the first time round and **not** the pinyin. If you like you can have the audio track playing while you read.

<http://chinese-at-ease.com/learn-chinese-online-chicken-and-the-egg/>

★ Task 1 complete

3. Translation

Maybe you understood quite a few lines of the poem, maybe you didn't understand much at all. That doesn't matter. You're now going to do a translation of the poem into English.

The poem has been broken into chunks in the grid below to help you translate it. You'll notice that the second column is called 'Literal translation'. A literal translation is where you translate each word from Chinese without changing the order of the words and without trying to make it sound like good English. For example, 忙不忙? literally translated is 'Busy not busy?'

When you have done a literal translation of a sentence, you then need to make it sound more English. Do this in the last column, 'My version'. Here 忙不忙 could be translated as, 'Are you busy?' Sometimes it might be hard to re-write the literal translation, just write what you think it probably means for 'My version'.

The first and third lines have been done for you. Do the second and other lines.

Chinese	Literal translation	My version (sounds more English)
一二三, 鸡生蛋,	<i>One two three, chicken birth egg</i>	<i>One, two, three, the chicken lays an egg.</i>
三二一, 蛋生鸡,		

Resources



Newman Prize For English Jueju
紐曼英語絕句文學獎

<https://www.ou.edu/cis/research/institute-for-us-china-issues/us-china-cultural-issues/newman-prize-for-english-jueju/about-english-jueju>

DOWNLOADS & ONLINE RESOURCES

How to Write an "Old Style" Jueju Level 1 (PDF)	How to Write a "New Style" Jueju Level 2 (PDF)	Rhyming Dictionary
Downloadable Manipulatives: Puzzle/Scramble Boards (printable pdfs)		
Blank Poetry Boards:	Blank Poetry Boards with Yin Yang vowel patterns:	Puzzle Boards:
Five syllable basic blank board (PDF)	Five syllable yin yang blank board version 1 (PDF)	5 Word Yin-Yang Puzzle Board (PDF)
Seven syllable basic blank board (PDF)	Five syllable yin yang blank board version 2 (PDF)	7 Word Yin-Yang Puzzle Boards (PDF)
	Seven syllable yin yang blank board version 1 (PDF)	Parallel Seven Syllable Jueju Scramble Board (PDF)
	Seven syllable yin yang blank board version 2 (PDF)	
Word banks:	Instructional videos:	
Long adjectives marked with yang symbol (pdf)	Full Lecture: Writing Classical Chinese Poetry in English with Jonathan Stalling	
Long vowel nouns marked with yang symbol (pdf)	One: Chinese Poetry, Translation, and Classical Chinese Poetry in other Languages	
Long vowel verbs marked with yin symbol (pdf)	Two: Introducing Li Yi: What makes a Classical Chinese Poem Poetic?	
Short vowel adjectives marked with yin symbol (pdf)	Three: Introducing Parallelism of Meaning	
Short vowel nouns with yin symbols (pdf)	Four: Introducing Parallelism of Sound	
Short vowel verbs with yin symbols (pdf)	Five: The Newman Prize for Chinese Literature and English Jueju	
Adjectives (pdf)	Six: Past Winners and other Examples of English Jueju	
Nouns for Pastoral Farm Poems (pdf)		
Ocean Nouns (pdf)		
Verbs (pdf)		
Additional Videos:	Past Newman Ceremonies:	
Interview with Ruth and Harold Newman	2013	乌姆
TED Talk on introducing English Jueju and SinoEnglish	2015	進火
Poetics of Invention: Bridging Modern Languages with Ancient Languages	2017	城外
Previous teaching video		

Resources

Dr. Kan Qian – Modern Chinese Literature Book Club (e-Forum)

Prof. Frances Weightman – Book/Story review competition, Bai MeiGui story book translation competition (e-Forum)

中国现代诗歌大全 – <http://www.shigeku.com/xlib/xd/sgdq/index.htm>

Chinese Books for Young Readers (Children's Chinese literature recommendations, blog, book shop, etc) – <https://chinesebooksforyoungreaders.wordpress.com/>

China Children's Press & Publication Group – [CCPPG Catalogue 2020](#)

纸托邦 Paper Republic (translated stories database) – <https://paper-republic.org/>



Thank you!