

Character Builder 您好嗎？

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 meetings

議

Pronunciation: *yi* (Putonghua, 4th tone), *yi* (Cantonese, 5th tone)
Basic meaning: discuss

In 會議 (*hui yi* = gathering~discuss = meetings), members debate 議題 (*yi ti* = discussion~topics). Politicians 議政 (*yi zheng* = discuss/participate-in~politics). War-torn nations 議和 (*yi he* = discuss~harmony = negotiate truce/peace).

美國國會 (*Mei Guo guo hui* = "America"-transliterated-state-gathering = the United States Congress) has 參議院 (*can yi yuan* = join~discuss~court = Senate), 眾議院 (*zhong yi yuan* = many~discuss~court = House of Representatives). 議員 (*yi yuan* = discuss~members = congressmen) propose 動議 (*dong yi* = move~discuss = motions), 投票 (*tou piao* = cast~votes), reach 決議 (*jue yi* = decide~discuss = decisions).

爭議性 (*zheng yi xing* = fight~discuss~nature = arguable/controversial) social issues often get public's 非議 (*fei yi* = negative~discuss = derision/denunciation).

by Diana Yue