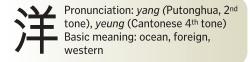
## Character Builder 您好參? 终

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 foreign countries



洋 = ocean, 洋人 (yang ren = ocean-person) = foreigners from overseas. 東洋人 (dong yang ren = east-ocean-people) = Japanese, 西洋人 (xi yang ren = west-ocean-people) = westerners. 洋鬼子 (yang gui zi = foreign-devil) is a derogatory term. 洋化 (yang hua = foreign-transformed) describes westernized ways/thinking. 十里洋場 (shi li yang chang = ten-miles-foreign-arena) means city thriving with western establishments/entertainment.

洋's opposite is  $\pm$  (tu = earth/native/indigenous). In 洋土之爭 ( $yang\ tu\ zhi\ zheng$  = foreign-indigenous-'s ~debate, 19th — 20th century), Chinese intellectuals debated whether China should westernize or keep her age-old traditions.

崇洋 (chong yang = worship-foreigners) means prowestern in everything. 出洋相 (chu yang xiang = reveal-(to)-foreigners-look) means behaving foolishly (as judged by foreigners).

by Diana Yue