

人物介绍 Introduction to the Main Characters in the Text

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第一课
Lesson 1

This lesson begins by introducing some sounds unique to the Chinese language, including tones. The Chinese writing system dates back more than three thousand years, and it is especially intriguing to see how Chinese characters developed since their basically pictographic origins in ancient China. By the end of the lesson, you will be able to express some everyday greetings in Chinese.

Nǐ hǎo
你 好

一 课文 Text



【打招呼】

Saying hello

Lù Yǔpíng: Lìbō, nǐ hǎo.^①
陆雨平: 力波, 你好。

Lìbō: Nǐ hǎo, Lù Yǔpíng.
力波: 你好, 陆雨平。



生词 New Words

- | | | | |
|-------------|----|-----|------------------------------|
| ① nǐ | Pr | 你 | you |
| ② hǎo | A | 好 | good, well, fine, OK |
| ③ Lù Yǔpíng | PN | 陆雨平 | (name of a Chinese reporter) |
| ④ Lìbō | PN | 力波 | (name of a Canadian student) |

二 注释 Notes

① Nǐ hǎo.

"Hello", "How do you do?"

This is the most common form of greeting in Chinese. It can be used at any time of the day when meeting people for the first time or for people you know. The response to this greeting form is also "Nǐ hǎo (你好)".

② Nǐ hǎo ma?

"How are you?"

This is also a form of greeting, often used after you have not seen someone for some time, and the response is usually "Wǒ hěn hǎo (我很好)" or other similar polite, conventional verbal exchanges.

③ Nǐ ne?

"And (how are) you?"

④ Yě hěn hǎo.

"(I am) fine (literally, very good), too."

This is an elliptical sentence, with the subject "wǒ (我)" omitted. In spoken Chinese, when the context is explicit and there is no ambiguity, the subject is often omitted. One may also say "Nǐ hǎo ma? (你好吗?)" to answer the question "Hěn hǎo (很好)".

三 语音练习 Pronunciation Drills



声母	Initials:	b	p	m	n	l	h
韵母	Finals:	a	o	e	i	u	ü
		ao	en	ie	in	ing	uo

四 会话练习 Conversation Practice

● 核心句 KEY SENTENCES

- | | |
|---------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Nǐ hǎo. | 3. Wǒ hěn hǎo, nǐ ne? |
| 2. Nǐ hǎo ma? | 4. Yě hěn hǎo. |

▶ (一) 【打招呼 Saying hello】 ◀

1. 完成下列会话 Complete the following dialogue

Lín Nà: Lìbō, nǐ hǎo!

Lìbō: _____.

2. 看图会话 Make dialogues based on the pictures



1 A: _____.

B: _____.



2 A: _____.

B: _____.

▶ (二) 【问候 Greetings】 ◀

1. 完成下列会话 Complete the following dialogue

Mǎ Lì: Nǐ hǎo ma?

Lù Yì: _____, _____?

Mǎ Lì: Wǒ yě hěn hǎo.

2. 情景会话 Situational dialogue

You run into a Chinese friend whom you haven't seen for a long time. What will you say to him / her?

五 语音 Phonetics

1 声母和韵母 Initials and finals

A syllable in the common speech of modern Chinese usually consists of an initial, which is a consonant that begins the syllable, and a final, which constitutes the rest of the syllable. For example, in the syllable “píng”, “p” is the initial and “ing” is the final. A syllable can stand without an initial, such as “yě”, but all syllables must have a final. In the common speech of modern Chinese, there are altogether 21 initials and 38 finals.

2 发音要领 Key points of pronunciation

Initials:

m, n, l, h are pronounced similarly to their counterparts in the English language.

b like “p” in “speak” (unaspirated, voiceless)

p like “p” in “park” (aspirated, voiceless)

Note: Particular attention should be paid to the pronunciation of the aspirated and unaspirated consonants: b-p.

Finals:

e like “er” in “her”

ie like “ye” in “yes”

-ng (final) a nasalised sound like the “ng” in “bang” without pronouncing the “g”

Note: The pronunciation of the “e” in a compound final is different from that of the simple final “e”.

3 声调 Tones

Chinese is a tonal language in which the tones convey differences in meaning.



八 (bā)
eight



拔 (bá)
pull



靶 (bǎ)
target



爸 (bà)
father

In common speech there are four basic tones, represented respectively by the following tone marks:

- “ - ” for the first tone,
- “ / ” for the second tone,
- “ ∨ ” for the third tone,
- and “ \ ” for the fourth tone.

When a syllable contains only a single vowel, the tone mark is placed directly above the vowel letter as in “lù” and “hěn”. The dot over the vowel “i” should be dropped if the tone mark is placed above it, as in “nǐ”, “nín” and “píng”. When the final of the syllable is composed of two or more vowels, the tone mark should be placed above the vowel pronounced with the mouth widest open (e.g. hǎo).

The openness of the mouth for the vowels, from the widest to the smallest is as follows:

a o e i u ü

4 三声变调 Third-tone sandhi

A third tone, when immediately followed by another third tone, should be pronounced in the second tone, but with the tone mark “∨” remaining unchanged. For example:

- nǐ hǎo → ní hǎo
- hěn hǎo → hén hǎo

5 拼写规则 Spelling rules

At the beginning of a syllable, “i” is written as “y” (e.g. iě → yě). “i” is written as “yi” when it forms a syllable all by itself (e.g. ī → yī).

At the beginning of a syllable, “u” is written as “w” (e.g. uǒ → wǒ). “u” is written as “wu” when it forms a syllable all by itself (e.g. ū → wū).

When “u” is at the beginning of a syllable or forms a syllable by itself, a “y” is added to it and the two dots over it are omitted (e.g. ū → yū).

六 语法 Grammar

汉语的语序 Word order in Chinese

The main characteristic of Chinese grammar is that it lacks of morphological changes in person, tense, gender, number, and case in the strict sense. The word order, however, is very important to convey different grammatical meanings. The subject of a sentence is usually placed before the predicate. For example:

Subject	Predicate
Nǐ 你	hǎo. 好。
Wǒ 我	hěn hǎo. 很好。
Lìbō 力波	yě hěn hǎo. 也很好。

七 综合练习 Comprehensive Practice

CD 1



1 听录音，圈出正确的语音。

Circle the right sound according to what you hear on the CD.

- | | | | | | | | |
|-----|----|----|----|-------|----|-----|------|
| ① p | b | l | h | ⑥ i | ie | in | ing |
| ② m | n | h | l | ⑦ bo | po | huo | luo |
| ③ b | n | p | m | ⑧ la | le | li | lù |
| ④ a | ao | o | uo | ⑨ pa | pu | pao | po |
| ⑤ e | en | ie | in | ⑩ nie | ni | nin | ning |

2 听录音，圈出正确的声调。

Circle the right tone according to what you hear on the CD.

- | | | | | | | | |
|------|----|-----|----|-------|-----|-----|-----|
| ① ā | á | ǎ | à | ⑥ bāo | báo | bǎo | bào |
| ② ī | í | ǐ | ì | ⑦ pīn | pín | pǐn | pìn |
| ③ ēn | én | ěnn | èn | ⑧ nī | ní | nǐ | nì |
| ④ uō | uó | uǒ | uò | ⑨ mō | mó | mǒ | mò |
| ⑤ hū | hú | hǔ | hù | ⑩ lū | lú | lǔ | lù |

3 听录音，为下列音节标出正确的声调。

Mark the right tones on the following syllables according to what you hear on the CD.

- | | | | | |
|----------|-----------|-------------|---------|------------|
| ① ma | ② li | ③ huo | ④ nin | ⑤ ye |
| ⑥ Lin Na | ⑦ hen hao | ⑧ Lu Yiping | ⑨ ni ne | ⑩ pa laohu |

文化知识 Cultural Notes

The Chinese Language (*Hanyu*) and “Common Speech” (*Putonghua*)

The Chinese language (*Hanyu*), the major language of the Chinese people with a history of more than 5000 years, is one of the oldest languages in the world. In spite of its old age, Chinese is now one of the most widely used living languages. The language is spoken in many dialects within China, as well as in many overseas Chinese communities, especially in Singapore and Malaysia. And there are more than a billion native speakers of Chinese worldwide. It is one of the working languages of the United Nations.

Chinese belongs to the Sino-Tibetan language family. Among the 56 ethnic groups in China, the *Han*, *Hui*, *Manchu*, and other ethnic groups, constituting 94% of the population of China, speak Chinese.

Chinese includes variants from seven main dialect groups. The northern or Mandarin dialect covers three fourths of China's territory and includes two thirds of its population. Standard Chinese is also known by its official designation, *Putonghua*, literally “common speech”. *Putonghua* is based on the northern dialect, using the dialect of Beijing as the basis for its pronunciation and modern vernacular literature for its grammatical structure.