

現在正是春光明媚，草木生長，百花盛開，氣候宜人的時候。你們想必都是在愉快而快速進步中。這信中想來和你們談談學習中文的事。你們十三人中除了冬冬和阿立在台灣生長對中文毫無問題外，其他十一人都是以英語為母語，華語生疏，對中國文字(以下稱中文)所知極少。我引導你們學中文主要是對你們這十一人而言，有下述五點意見： 1. 母語之外能多學其他語文遠比不學好。我自己的經驗，以中文為母語，因為學了英文才使我的思維和中文寫作品質也能提高。 2. 中文文句簡練，辭藻豐富，意境優美，有很多優點能引人入勝。學會中文後易於了解中國文化。對西方文化吸收和運作也有幫助。 3. 中文原有一難寫的缺點。現因電腦寫中文的進步，這缺點對我而言已不存在。你們當然也可做到。 4. 據說現在很多外國人認識中文的優點和用處，想方設法學習華語和中文。每年到北京學習的約五萬人。在他處學習的一定還很多。 5. 你們十一個ABC 中假如想學中文，環境條件遠比他人為好。問題是必須具有"樂意"，"決心"和"好方法"。我給你們的"每月一信"的部份目的是幫助你們對學中文"樂意"，"決心"和有"好方法"。但不知在一年多來你們在這方面受益的情形如何？

我滿四歲僅一星期後父親便去世。之前他因工作常奔走外方，在家時間少，偶然教我認方塊中文字。據我姐姐告訴的，我在四歲前所認識的字有五百多個。父親死後因為整天在鄉下玩耍，幾乎全部忘記。不過後來學習恢復較快，我小學時因兵災而常失學。居然也能趕上正常學齡升中學和大學。可能得力於幼小識字。我講這些是說明我幼小短時間內能認五百中文字，你們祇要學習，認到一兩千中文字應是不困難的。我曾要求過你們父母，在收到我每月的信後，將其中的中文唸給你們聽，你們因有中英對照，必然有興趣學習，一定有大進步。

下面我將三則中文短句翻譯給你們。括號中的英文拼音是根據現在世界採用的漢字標準拼音。還有簡單的英文解釋，都需要你們父母先給你們指導。

一. 中國傳統幼年讀物 <三字經> 開始的兩句。

原文： "人(ren, man)之(zhi, attribute)初(chu, early stage), 性(xing, nature, character)本(ben, basic)善(shan, good). 性(xing, nature, character,)相(xiang, relation)近(jin, near), 習(xi, habituate)相(xiang )遠(yuan, far)"

解釋： 人在初出生的早期，本性都是純樸善良的。以後漸漸長大，因接觸的環境和受到的教育的不同而可能有很大的差異。

英譯： Humane being are all born of good nature but when grow up diversify into quite different nature, good or bad, because of the influence of the environment and the teaching received.

二. 摘錄唐代詩人孟郊所寫一首兒女向父母表示孝思詩句中的兩句。

原文： "誰(shui, who)言(yan, say)寸(cun, inch)草(cao, grass)心(xing, heart), 報(bao, reward)得(de, to)三(sang, three)春(chun, spring )暉(hui, light)"

解釋： 將父母對兒女的關懷比作春天的太陽。將兒女的受惠和孝思比作陽光下滋長的小草。說出："小草"的內心思想如何才能報答"春暉"的恩惠。

英譯： How can the small grasses (children) reward the kindness they received from the sunlight (parent) in the springtime!

三. 一句中國常用的成語

原文： 人(ren, man, people)無(wu, without)遠(yuan, far)慮(lu, consideration), 必(bi, must)有(you, have)近(jin, near)憂(you, sorrow)

解釋： 人要對未來可能發生的情況預先籌劃對策和預防，可免為突發問題所困擾。

英譯： The man without proper vision and preparation to cope with the possible future outcome is apt to suffer from sudden hardship and problem.

以上我所作解釋如果覺得不夠完善，請各自要求你們自己的父母來作更詳細的詮釋。還有你們雖能從下面的英文譯文中了解這信的大意，為了學中文和有更多的了解，你們必須主動請父母帶著你們將其中中文唸出來。在學校的父母不在身邊，儘可能找懂中方的同學幫助。你們這樣做將使確實受益，使我們感到安慰。

公公奶奶

++++  
Dear grandchildren:

Now we are in the springtime. Seeing the grasses and trees burgeoning and flowers blooming, we assume you at such a good time of the year are all fine and greatly progressing. The main purpose of this letter is to talk about how to promote your learning Chinese words in reading and writing from the base of ability to converse in broken Chinese. This is of especially intention for the eleven of you born in the North America, while Dondong and Ali are exceptionally unnecessary. The ideas in our mind regarding you the 11 ABC learning Chinese are as follows: 1. Since learning a useful secondary language is a beneficial thing anyway, it is more necessary for you the ethnically Chinese to master the Chinese language. 2. Chinese is deemed as one of best languages in the world not only because it is spoken by most people, but also because its being concise, comprehensive and beautiful in style, shape and pronunciation. 3. The original shortcoming of the Chinese characters on their complicated structure making the learners very difficult to memorize and hand -- writing now a day has been removed by the invention of computer and appropriate programs regarding Chinese word processor and communicator. You know I now can use this method to type Chinese essays and letters easily and playfully. 4. Now there are many people in the world sensing the importance of Chinese language in the future world smartly choose the Chinese as one of their second language to pursue. It is said about fifty-thousand foreigners now going to the Mainland China to learn Chinese every year. 5. You are having much better background and environment to learn writing Chinese in addition to the speaking Chinese you already mastered to a certain degree. I think there are three basic requirement in learning anything efficiently namely "Willingness," "determination," "proper method." One of the purposes to write you the monthly letter is give you motivation and help in this concern.

Personally my father had ever taught me recognizing Chinese words when I was about three years old but the learning was interrupted at my four years age because of his sudden death. My sister later told me years that ever well knew about five hundred words that time but the memory didn't last long. Late time schooling had easily restored such lost memory of what learned before four years old. My telling you all these is to inform you that learning Chinese words is not a difficult thing could be start even very young.

Well, now let me give you some exemplary sentences extracted from some Chinese classic book, poetry and old saying in three parts. The first is from the famous book of "Three words classic verse" (san zi jing) that was used in the old time to enlightening children in learning Chinese characters along with some basic morals and history events. The second is from an old famous poetry. The third is from a commonly referred proverb. All of the above are self-explanatory and you can learn more extensively from your parents

or friends having some knowledge on the Chinese language and literature.

So much has been written this time, contact you again next month. Best regards and wishes to you all. Written by grandpa reviewed and concurred by grandma