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Resources to help your school celebrate  
Chinese New Year 2019

**Primary Education Pack**





## Introduction

According to the Chinese Lunar Calendar, we enter the Year of the Pig on February 5th 2019. This education pack for primary schools contains information and activities to help teachers and pupils learn more about this important Spring Festival and explore Chinese language and culture.

Your pupils can read a traditional story to find out how Pigsy became the companion of the Monkey King, and learn how Chinese children refer to animals and animal sounds by singing Old Macdonald's Farm in Chinese. You can also find out about the importance of exercise in Chinese daily life, read letters from Chinese children about their favourite sports and get creative making piggy banks and cooking a traditional Chinese family recipe.



## Spring Festival Chūn Jié (春节)

Spring Festival Chūn Jié (春节) Celebrated from the first day of the first lunar month, the Spring Festival is regarded as the most important festival of the year in Chinese culture. During the festival, people hold family reunions and honour their ancestors. The lion dance is performed in public and red envelopes of money are placed in the lion's mouth for good luck. It is traditional for grandparents to give their grandchildren red envelopes with money inside; this is called yā suì qián. These days the envelopes are just as likely to have cartoon characters on them as traditional symbols.

Are you going to celebrate Chinese New Year with the Year of the Pig pack? If so, we would like to hear from you. If you have any stories, photographs or film clips please send them to:  
[content@britishcouncil.org](mailto:content@britishcouncil.org)





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# The story of Zhū Bājiè

**Learning Objectives:** To engage pupils with a traditional Chinese story and carry out activities to deepen their comprehension, understanding and engagement with the text.

**Curriculum Links:** English and drama.

**Core and transferable skills:** Creativity and imagination, collaboration and communication, critical thinking, digital literacy.

**Preparation and resources:** You will need: a copy of the story of Zhū Bājiè and a space for drama activities.



Zhū Bājiè 豬八戒 known in English as Pigsy, was once an important Heavenly General, called Marshal Tian Peng, in charge of 80,000 soldiers. But he disgraced himself in Heaven by his greediness, and by pestering Chang E, the Goddess of the Moon. He was thrown down from Heaven, and landed in a pigsty. When he crawled out he had been transformed into a Pig Monster.

He is not a completely reformed character when he serves the Buddhist monk Xuanzang on his great journey to India, as he is still fond of eating and drinking too much, and chasing girls. He is also very lazy. On the good side, he is tolerant, soft-hearted and optimistic. His weapon is an iron rake with







nine prongs, which weighs 5,000 kilos. His reward at the end of the journey is to be given the heavenly post of Cleanser of the Altars, which means he gets to eat all the leftovers from the sacrifices.

Quite early on in their great journey, Xuanzang and Monkey arrived at a farm where they hoped they might be able to spend the night. The farmer, Mr Gao, agreed to let them stay, but only if they could help him with a terrible problem. At first, he was reluctant to accept that Monkey wasn't a

demon, and was going to turn them away because, he said, he had enough trouble with one monster that had come in to his home, and he didn't want another!

Monkey contained his anger, and explained that he wasn't a monster or a demon, but the Great Sage Equal under Heaven, with more powers to help him than the farmer could possibly imagine. Somewhat reassured, Mr Gao showed Xuanzang and Monkey into the farmhouse, and gave them some food and drink while he told his story.

"My wife and I have three beautiful daughters, Fragrant Orchid, Jade Orchid and Blue Orchid. The eldest two were promised in marriage from an early age to neighbouring families, but we wanted to find a husband for Blue Orchid who would come and live on the farm, and help look after us in our old age. About three years ago, a handsome young man turned up here, saying that he had lost his father and mother, and was looking for a new family. He said his surname was Zhu (which means pig) and that he was from the distant town of Fuling. He was willing to do

all the work on the farm in return for a new home, and Blue Orchid's hand in marriage. He was a good-looking young man, and well spoken, so I accepted him.

At first, he seemed perfect. He did all the work, ploughing, sowing and harvesting without needing any help. But gradually things began to change. In fact, he began to change! His nose got bigger and rounder, like a snout, his ears became larger and larger, and bristles began to grow out of the back of his neck, so he looked more and more like a pig! In addition, his appetite, which had always been big, became enormous, and he ate us out of house and home. He began to use magic powers to make stones fly through the air, and to raise terrible winds. Worst of all, he kidnapped Blue Orchid and locked her up in one of the farm buildings. We haven't seen her for six months and we don't even know if she is still alive."





“Don’t worry!” Monkey said. “This is just the kind of thing I specialise in. Let’s go and rescue your daughter, then you look after my Master here, and I will deal with Mr Zhu!”

So Monkey went over to the building where the girl was being held prisoner, broke down the door and handed Blue Orchid back to her father. Once the girl was safe, Monkey used his magic powers of transformation to make himself look exactly like the girl, and got in the bed to wait for the monster.

When the monster came back, Monkey pretended to be asleep, and when the creature came over to kiss him, Monkey gave him a great smack on the snout.

“Why are you so cross with me?” the monster asked. “Haven’t I worked hard on your father’s farm, and given you everything you could want?”

“It’s not that”, Monkey said. “My father came over here today, and we had a big row. He wants to be rid of you, and he’s sent for a powerful magician to come and help him.”

“What powerful magician? I’m Pigsy from the Cloud Ladder Cave, and I’m so big and tough, I’m not afraid of any magician!”

“My father says he is called the Great Sage Equal of Heaven, and he can defeat any monster, even you!”

“If that’s true then I’m off. Even I am no match for such a powerful magician as the Great Sage!” Pigsy said.

“Too late!” Monkey cried changing back into his normal shape. “I’m here already!”

He grabbed hold of Pigsy’s jacket, but Pigsy managed to wriggle out of it, and, in a flash, he was out of the door and away.



“No matter!” Monkey said to himself, “he told me where he lives!”

And with that, Monkey set off after Pigsy as he fled to the Cloud Ladder Cave.

As Monkey arrived, Pigsy was just coming out of the cave, brandishing his own magic weapon - a 9-pronged rake.

“You’d better watch out”, Pigsy cried. “This is no ordinary rake; it was given to me by the Great Sage Laozi himself, and no-one can withstand it!”

“I don’t believe you!” Monkey replied.

“Show me!”

Of course, Pigsy didn’t know that Monkey had withstood every power that Heaven could throw at him, so imagine his amazement when all that happened when he brought his rake down on Monkey’s head, was a shower of sparks. Monkey was completely unharmed.

“Alright, alright, I give up!” Pigsy cried. “But what brings such a great magician as the Great Sage Equal under heaven to Mr Gao’s miserable farm?”

“I’m on my way to India with my Master to collect scriptures and bring them back home.”





At this Pigsy threw down his rake and fell to his knees in front of Monkey.

“If that is so, why didn’t you tell me? The Bodhisattva Guanyin\* converted me to Buddhism some years ago, and sent me here to wait for your Master. I’ve been waiting so long, I got bored and thought I’d have a little fun. But now the Master is here at last, take me to him so I can pledge myself to him.”

“If that is really so”, Monkey said only half-believing him, “then you must take a solemn oath that you are telling the truth.”

Pigsy swore that he was telling the truth, and all he wished to do now was serve Xuanzang on his mission. So Monkey took a hair from his own head and magically transformed it into a rope, which he used to tie Pigsy up. Then he took him by the ear, and somersaulted through the air back to Mr Gao’s farm. When he had explained everything to Xuanzang, his master ordered him to release Pigsy. Pigsy bowed down to Xuanzang, promising to serve him faithfully. Then he turned to Monkey and bowed to him too, and promised always

to listen to him, and to call him Elder Brother and Teacher. And that is how Xuanzang acquired his second companion and bodyguard on his great journey.



\*Bodhisattva Guanyin is known as the Goddess of Mercy



# Activity sheet 1

## What happened in the story?

### Activities

Ask your pupils to read through the story together to find the answers to the following comprehension questions:

- What were the names of Mr. Gao's three daughters?
- Can you summarise the changes that Mr. Gao noticed in the stranger's appearance and behaviour?
- How did Monkey use his magic powers to trick and defeat Pigsy?
- Based on what you've read so far, do you think Pigsy will keep his promise?
- What 3 questions would you ask one of the characters in the story?
- What do you think will happen next and why?



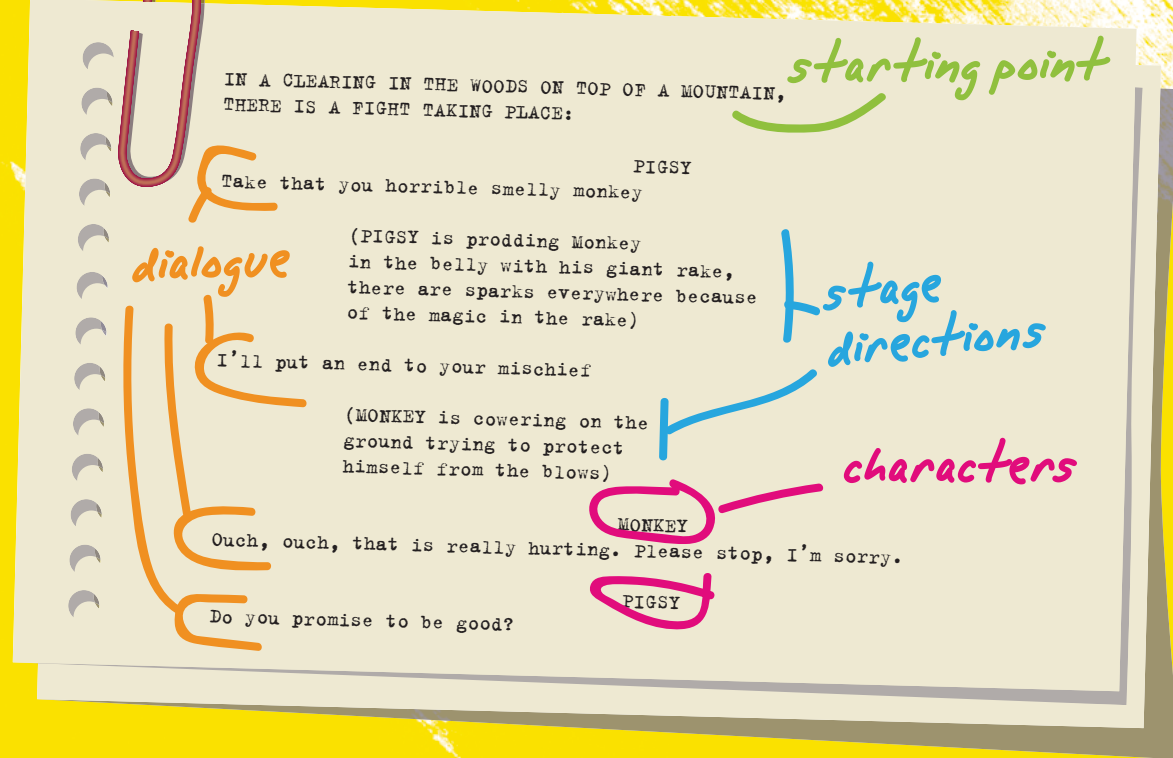


## Activity sheet 2

# What happened in the story?

Conscience Alley is a drama technique for exploring dilemmas faced by characters in a story or play. Read the first paragraph of the story with your pupils. Divide the class into two lines facing each other. Ask one person to take the role of the farmer walking between the two lines as each member of the class quietly gives their advice about whether he should allow Xuanzang and Monkey to stay at his farm or not. When he or she reaches the end of the line ask them to make their decision and state their reasons. You could also repeat this activity at the end of the story with another pupil walking between the two lines and deciding whether the two companions should trust Pigsy and take him with them on their long journey to India.

Ask your pupils to work together in groups to write a short play retelling the story of Zhū Bājiè. Remind them to use traditional play script features including a list of characters, a brief description of the setting where the action takes place, appropriate punctuation and stage directions. Emphasise the importance of using slow motion and no physical contact when staging the fight scene between Monkey and Pigsy. They could also add in some music for dramatic effect. When their scripts are complete, ask each group to rehearse and perform the final versions of their plays for the rest of the class.



*starting point*

IN A CLEARING IN THE WOODS ON TOP OF A MOUNTAIN,  
THERE IS A FIGHT TAKING PLACE:

PIGSY  
Take that you horrible smelly monkey

*dialogue*

(PIGSY is prodding Monkey  
in the belly with his giant rake,  
there are sparks everywhere because  
of the magic in the rake)

*stage directions*

I'll put an end to your mischief

(MONKEY is cowering on the  
ground trying to protect  
himself from the blows)

*characters*

MONKEY  
Ouch, ouch, that is really hurting. Please stop, I'm sorry.

PIGSY  
Do you promise to be good?

### Partner school activities:

If you are working with a partner school you could film your plays and exchange the results with each other.

Find out more about The Story of The Monkey King and Xuan Zang's real journey in The British Council Year of the Monkey booklet which can be found at: [https://schoolsonline.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/year\\_of\\_monkey\\_education\\_pack.pdf](https://schoolsonline.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/year_of_monkey_education_pack.pdf)



# Old Macdonald 王先生 - wáng lǎo xiānshēng

with a  
hēng hēng



## Animal names and sounds

Listen to the sound files and help your pupils to practise saying the vocabulary

Dog (狗, gǒu) 🎧 汪汪 (wàng wàng) 🎧

Cat (猫, māo) 🎧 喵喵 (miāo) 🎧

Bird (鸟, niǎo) 🎧 唧唧 (jī jī) 🎧

Duck (鸭子, yāzi) 🎧 呱呱 (guāguā) 🎧

Rooster (公鸡, gōngjī) 🎧 喔喔喔 (ōōō) 🎧

Chicken (母鸡, mǔjī) 🎧 咯咯 (gēgē) 🎧

Cow (牛, niú) 🎧 哞 (mōu) 🎧

Sheep/ram/goat (羊, yáng) 🎧 咩 (miē) 🎧

Pig (猪, zhū) 🎧 哼哼 (hēng hēng) 🎧

Horse (马, mǎ) 🎧 嘶 (sī) 🎧

## Activity 1

Discuss with your pupils the animal sounds they associate with different farm animals and explain that this can vary from country to country. For example young children in the UK learn that sheep baa and pigs grunt or say 'oink oink'. Whereas in China young children learn that sheep say 'miē' and pigs make the sound 'hēng hēng'.

Share with your pupils the Chinese vocabulary and sounds associated with farm animals.

They could practice this vocabulary by making and playing the pairs game on Activity Sheet 3 with a partner and then go on to learn the song Old Macdonald's Farm in Chinese using the following link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X-1gyJ-Dq4aA>

When they can sing the song with the correct vocabulary they could perform it for other classes in an assembly.

**Learning Objectives:** To learn Chinese vocabulary associated with animals, animal sounds and the song Old Macdonald's Farm in Chinese. To practice writing Chinese characters.

**Curriculum Links:** Modern languages, music, art and design.

**Core and transferable skills:** Communication and collaboration, creativity and imagination, digital literacy.

**Preparation and resources:** You will need: Internet access, copies of activity sheet 3, scissors, card and art materials.



here

a hēng hēng  
there



## Activity sheet 3

# Pairs game

### Instructions

Cut out the squares showing the animals and Chinese vocabulary and stick them onto card.

Shuffle the cards and lay them on the table face down, in rows.

Each player turns over any two cards (one at a time.)

If they successfully match a pair showing the picture of the animal and the correct vocabulary, they keep the cards, and have another turn.

When a player turns over two cards that don't match, those cards are turned face down again (in the same position) and it becomes the next player's turn.

The person with the most pairs at the end of the game wins. You could also use the cards to play a game of snap matching the pictures and the Chinese words.









## Activity sheet 4

### Draw a Chinese character

Encourage your pupils to practice writing the Chinese character for a pig using the traditional order of eleven strokes, which you can see in the illustration and the following short clip.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UP-jiNYg7tDE>

#### Zhū or pig character

When they have mastered this character, ask your pupils to use different materials and techniques to create a large artistic final version in a media of their choice. They might use paints, inks and brushes, collage materials or even gymnastics or dance to illustrate the order of the strokes.



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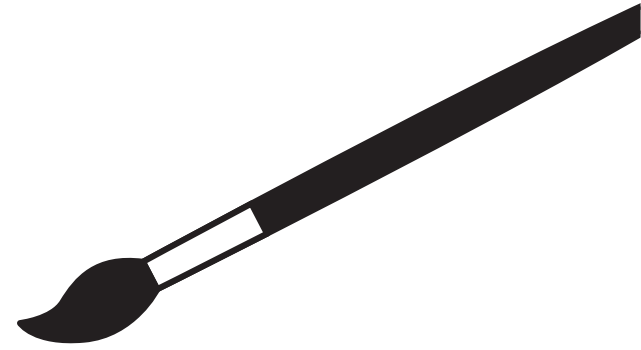
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## Characters and proverbs

家 jiā The Chinese character for 'home/family' is formed of the old characters for 'pig' under a 'roof'. In ancient times, the pig was the most valuable food source for peasant families and livestock would be kept close to the home. Pigs would live in pens in the family courtyard, or under the house itself, which might be raised on stilts.

Many traditional Chinese proverbs feature animals. Share the following proverbs with your pupils. What do they think is the meaning behind each one? Ask them to choose one, illustrate the proverb and practice writing the Chinese characters for it. Can they think of any traditional animal based proverbs from their own culture? Share these with a partner school if you have one.



井底之蛙 *jǐng dǐ zhī wā*

A frog at the bottom of a well

Meaning: a person with a narrow point of view.



鹤立鸡群 *hè lì jī qún*

A crane standing among chickens

Meaning: somebody who stands out in a group.

鸡犬升天 *jī quǎn shēng tiān*

Chickens and dogs ascend to Heaven

Meaning: to profit from someone else's success; to ride on someone else's coat tails. This is a shortened version of a proverb that says, "When a person attains enlightenment, even his chickens and dogs follow".



守株待兔 *shǒu zhū dài tù*

Lying by the tree to wait for a hare

Meaning: waiting unrealistically for something good to happen without making an effort – the story is that a farmer once saw a hare accidentally run into a tree, and knock itself out so the farmer could easily catch it and take it home to eat. From that day on, instead of working in his fields, the farmer sat by the tree waiting for another hare to run into it.

**Partner school activities:**

If you are working with a partner school you could make short films to exchange with each other showing your pupils singing Old Macdonald in Chinese and their artistic formations of the Zhū character and proverbs.

亡羊补牢 *wáng yáng bǔ láo*

To fix the pen after the sheep are lost

Meaning: the Chinese see this differently from the English “locking the stable door after the horse has bolted”. The English version means taking precautions too late, but the Chinese see this as meaning it is never too late to take precautions, in case the same thing happens again.

虎头蛇尾 *hǔ tóu shé wěi*

Head of a tiger, tail of a snake

Meaning: to start strongly, but finish weakly



## Activity sheet 5 Make a piggy bank

**Learning Objectives:** To follow instructions to make a papier-mâché piggy bank and a traditional Chinese dish.

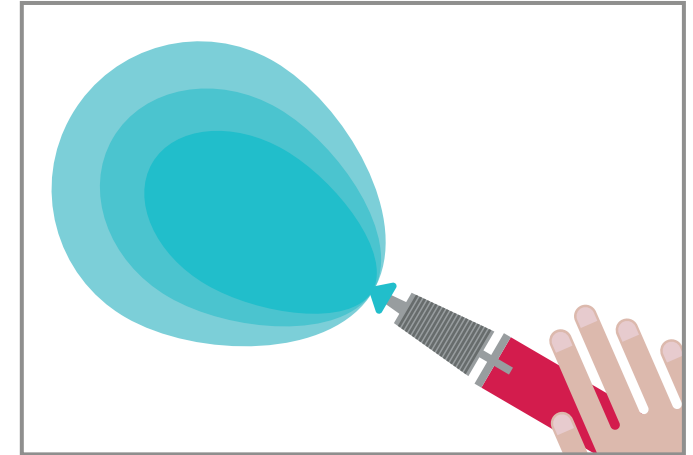
**Curriculum Links:** English, Design and technology, Maths, Personal Social and Health Education.

**Core Skills:** Communication and collaboration, creativity and imagination, problem solving.

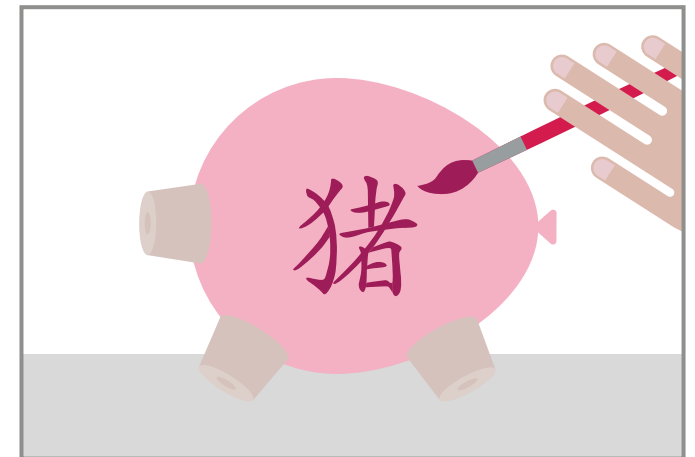
Chinese children are often given money by relatives and friends at the time of Spring Festival. Why not make some papier-mâché Chinese Year of the Pig piggy banks as part of your Year of the Pig celebrations?

You will need:

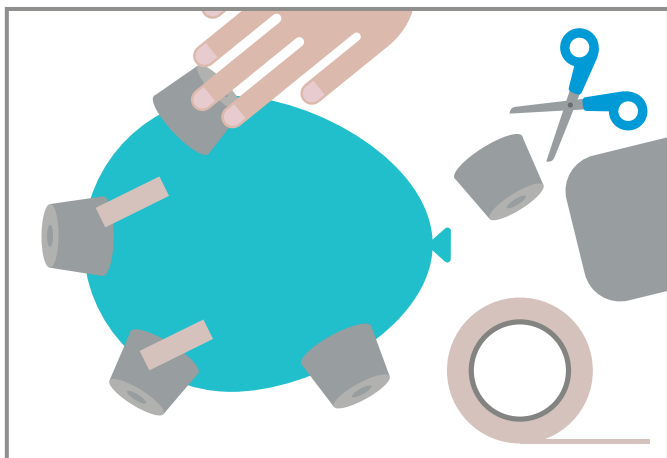
- Balloons
- Paints and brushes
- PVA Glue
- Egg cartons
- Old newspaper
- Mugs or bowls
- Masking Tape
- Scissors
- Googly eyes
- Pipe cleaners
- Scissors or craft knife



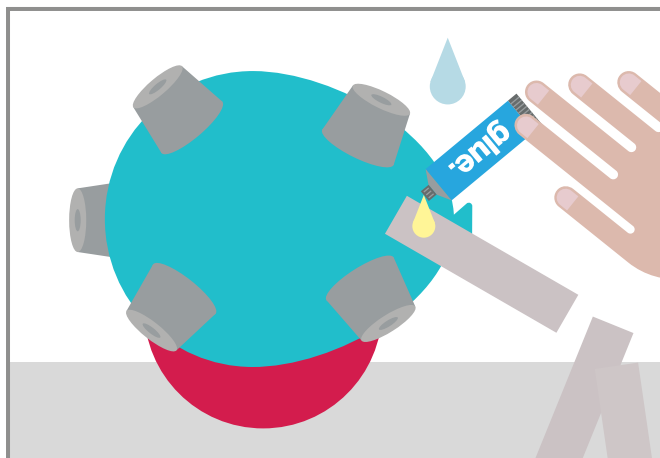
**1.** Blow up your balloon to the size that you want the body of your piggy bank to be.



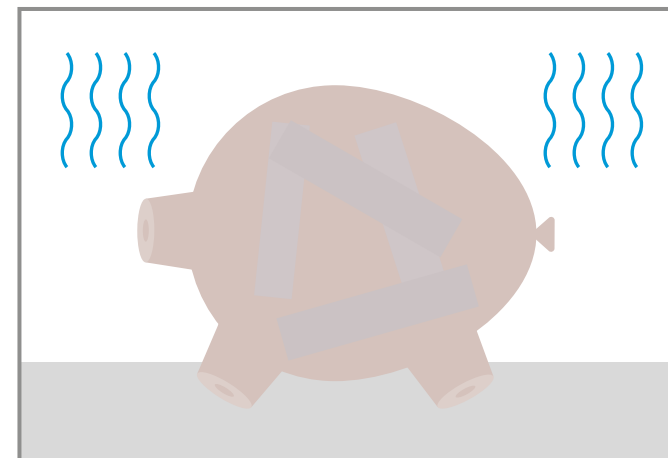
**5.** Paint and decorate your pig. You could add the Chinese character for pig that you have learnt on its side.



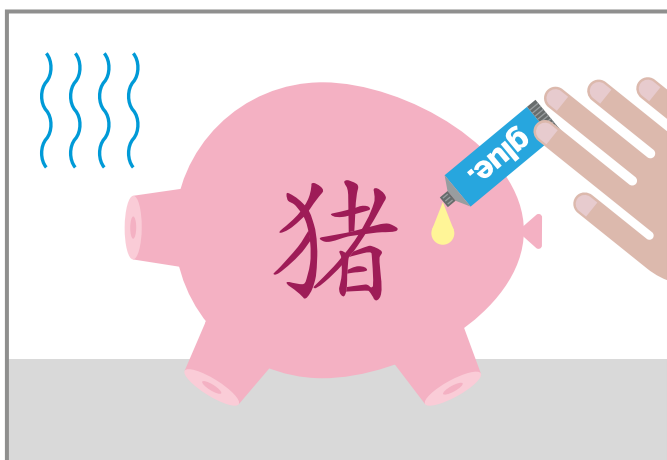
**2.** Cut out shapes from the egg carton for the pig's ears, snout and feet and stick them onto the balloon with masking tape.



**3.** Tear your newspaper or tissue paper into strips and stick them onto the balloon using a mixture of glue and water. You can rest the balloon on a mug or bowl while you're doing this.



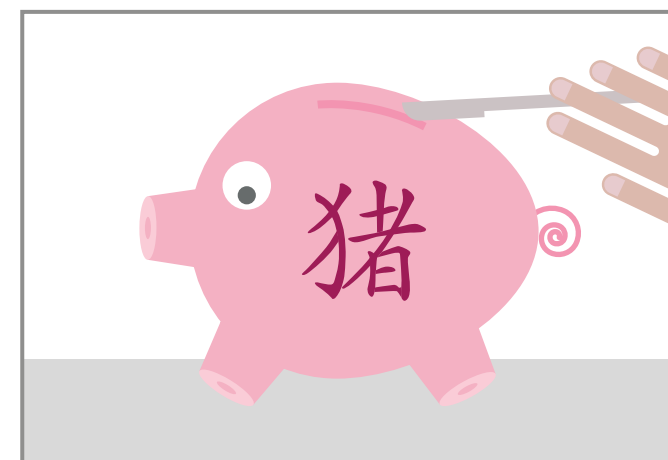
**4.** Once you've added 3-4 layers, leave the balloon in a warm place until it dries and goes hard.



**6.** Once dry, coat your piggy bank with a final thick layer of glue and wait until it dries hard and looks varnished.



**7.** Attach a curled piece of pipe cleaner to make a tail and googly eyes.



**8.** Ask an adult to help you cut a money slot in the top of your finished piggy bank using scissors or a craft knife.



## Recipe for pork/ chicken or bean curd with green peppers



Pork stir-fried with green peppers is one of the most popular home-style dishes in China. Chicken can be substituted for pork, but make sure you use chicken thighs, not breast, for better flavour and texture. Vegetarians and vegans could use tofu (see alternative method at end of recipe) and serve with rice.

Rice is China's most important crop and a staple food to accompany dishes, especially in the south of the country where the climate favours this crop. The majority of rice is grown in the Zhu Jiang delta and in Yunnan, Guizhou and Sichuan provinces. In the north and west where the climate is not so rainy farmers tend to grow wheat to make noodles and bread. Both crops have been grown in the country for thousands of years.

### Ingredients

200g pork shoulder/boned chicken thighs or 300g medium firm tofu  
3-4 green bell peppers, seeds removed and finely sliced  
¼ red bell pepper (optional for colour), as above  
2 cloves of garlic, finely chopped  
1 tbsp. light soy sauce  
¼ cup vegetable oil for cooking

### Marinade

1 tbsp light soy sauce  
4 tbsp water or chicken stock  
½ tsp salt  
¼ tsp white pepper  
½ tsp sugar  
½ tbsp. Chinese cooking wine (or use dry sherry)  
3 tsp cornflour  
2 tsp vegetable oil





## Method

- Slice the pork/chicken thinly and put in a bowl with all the marinade ingredients except the cornflour and the vegetable oil. Mix thoroughly and leave for at least 15 mins.
- When ready to start cooking, add the cornflour, mix thoroughly, and then the vegetable oil. Mix again.
- Heat your wok over a high flame until very hot. Add the vegetable oil and wait 30 seconds. Tip in the pork and marinade and cook, stirring for 20-30 secs. If your wok is not scalding hot, cook pork in two batches. The meat should be just cooked but not cooked through.
- Transfer the meat out of the wok with a slotted spoon and keep reserved in a bowl. Pour off all but 1tbsp of oil. Add garlic to remaining oil in wok, and fry until fragrant (15-20 secs).
- Add the finely sliced green and red peppers, and fry, stirring until just beginning to soften a little - they should retain some crunch. Add a small amount of salt to taste.
- Return the pork to the wok, mix thoroughly with the peppers and heat through.
- Serve hot with steamed/boiled rice

## Method with bean curd

- Drain the tofu and slice into thick strips about 8cm by 3cm
- Heat your wok over a high flame until very hot. Add the vegetable oil and wait 30 seconds. Fry the tofu slices until golden brown on both sides, then remove and keep reserved.
- Pour off all but 1tbsp of oil. Add garlic to remaining oil in wok, and fry until fragrant (15-20 secs).
- Add the finely sliced green and red peppers, and fry, stirring until just beginning to soften a little - they should retain some crunch. Add the soy sauce, cooking wine, sugar and white pepper from the marinade in the pork recipe above, and a small amount of salt to taste. Fry stirring for 30 seconds.
- Return the bean curd to the wok, mix thoroughly with the peppers and heat through.
- Serve hot with steamed/boiled rice.

## Partner school activities:

If you are working with a partner school you could exchange photographs of your piggy banks and Chinese meals.





# Exercise in China

**Learning Objectives:** To learn about some of the popular forms of exercise in China.

**Curriculum Links:** English, Physical Education, Personal Social and Health Education.

**Core Skills:** Communication and collaboration, student leadership.

**Preparation and resources:** You will need access to the internet, music, outdoor space for exercise, copies of the letters from Chinese children.

## Factual information to share with your pupils

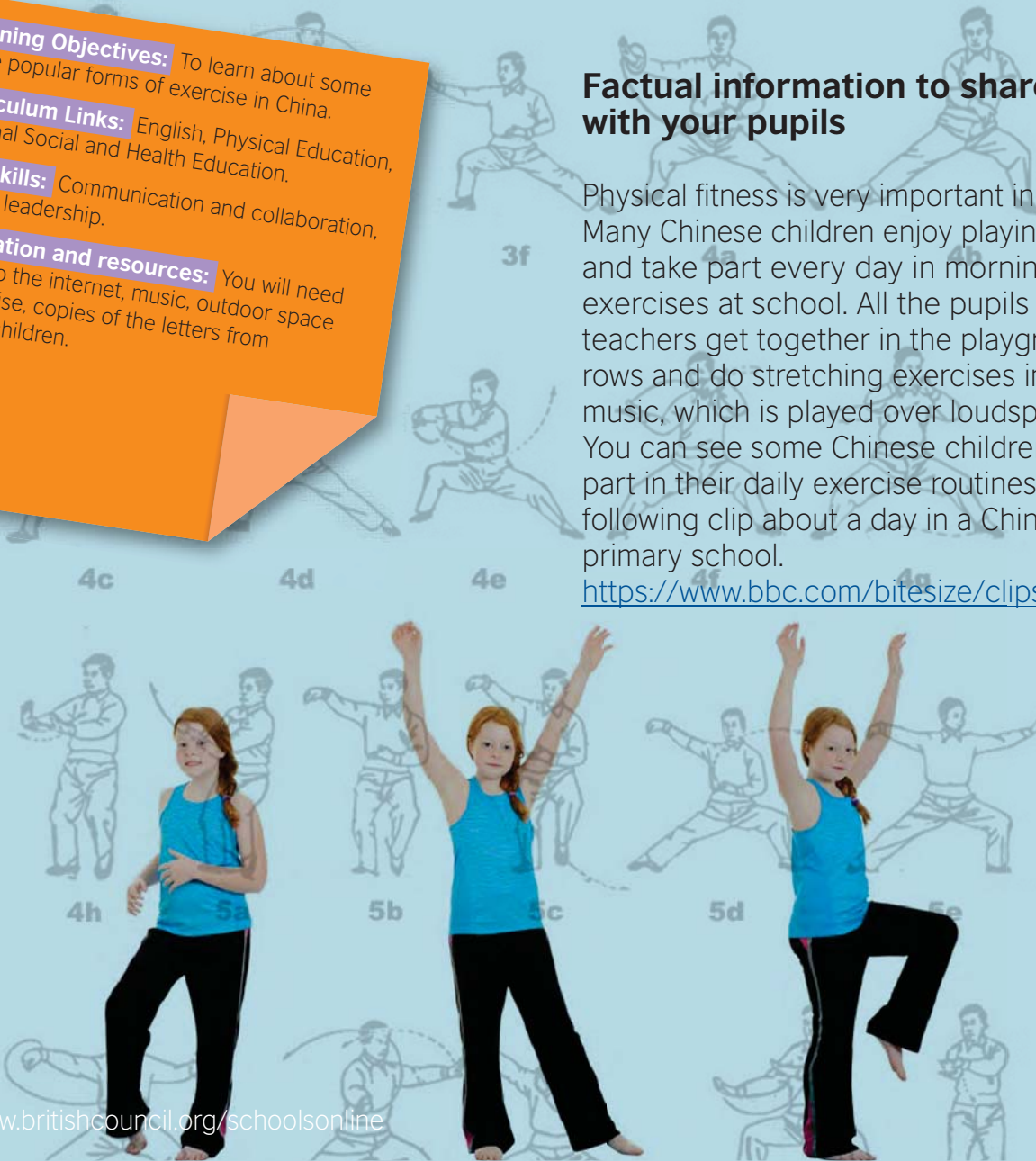
Physical fitness is very important in China. Many Chinese children enjoy playing sport and take part every day in morning exercises at school. All the pupils and teachers get together in the playground in rows and do stretching exercises in time to music, which is played over loudspeakers. You can see some Chinese children taking part in their daily exercise routines in the following clip about a day in a Chinese primary school.

<https://www.bbc.com/bitesize/clips/zdtjmp3>



If you visit China you will also see people of all ages gathered together in public outdoor spaces practising different forms of exercise. This includes Tai chi (taiji), short for T'ai chi ch'üan, or Taijiquan (太极拳) and fan dancing. Tai chi consists of slow, circular movements and controlled breathing. It is an ancient Chinese martial art practiced for both defence training and health benefits. Fan dancing is believed to have begun during the Han dynasty around 200 CE. It involves structured group routines and is used to pass down stories and traditions of Chinese culture. There is also a military version of these coordinated movements that was carried out using weapons as military exercises.

Why not take a short break from classroom learning each day for a week and try out some Chinese style class exercises to music? Different groups of pupils could be responsible for planning the music and routine each day and leading the class. Perhaps you could also arrange for a demonstration of Chinese martial arts such as Kung Fu or Tai Chi from a local martial arts club in your local area.



## Letters from Chinese children

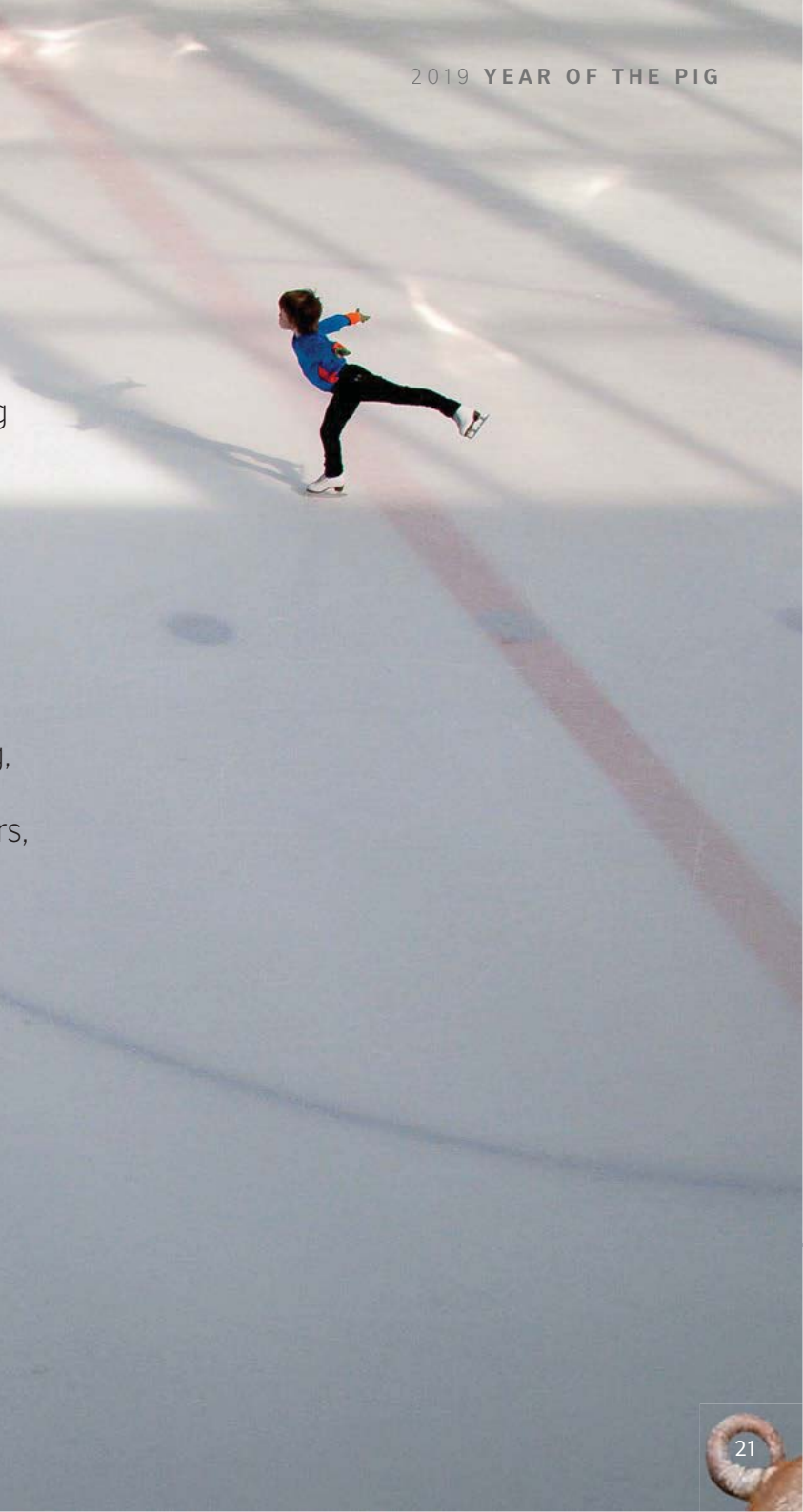
The following letters are written by children aged 10-12 from schools in different parts of China, describing their favourite sports. Copy and share the letters with your pupils and ask them to discuss the following questions in pairs:

- What happened to Jony one day when he was learning to ride his bike?
- What is the name of the river in Shanghai that he cycles along?
- Can you describe the benefits that Tommy and Peng say they gain from taking part in table tennis and ice-skating?
- In his letter Ma Kaiquan mentions the history of football in China and the UK. What else can you find out about the history of this sport and another sport that you play?
- How many skips does Lucy say that she can do in one minute? Have a go and see how many you can do in the same amount of time.
- What impressed Amber about the performance she watched by the Japanese ice skater Yuzuru Hanyu? She also says in her letter that her Mum told her 'There is no short cut to success.' What do you think this means and do you think this applies to all sports? Explain why.

Encourage your pupils to choose their favourite letter and draft a reply describing their own favourite sports, explaining what they do, where they go and why they particularly enjoy this form of exercise.

### Hold a Year of the Pig celebration day

To celebrate Chinese Spring Festival and the Year of the Pig why not invite friends and family to school to share your learning, watch your plays and singing. You could teach them how to form Chinese characters, read out your letters about your favourite sports and have a Chinese banquet by sharing the results of your cooking.







## Cycling

Dear friends:

Hello! I'm a student from Class Four Grade Five, Yangjing-juyuan Experimental School(洋泾-菊园实验学校). I'm very glad to write this letter to you.

Now I want to introduce my favourite sport to you. The sport is cycling. I have a blue and black bicycle with anti-skid tyres, which my parents bought for me as my birthday present. It looks very cool, and I like it very much. I began to learn cycling when I was five. At first, I always hurt myself. Sometimes I hit a rock, sometimes I fell down, and I even fell into the pond near my home! After practicing day by day, I could ride my bicycle well two weeks later.

Now, I always go cycling by the Huangpu River during my spare time. There is grass, trees, and beautiful flowers along the Huangpu River. There are also many magnificent buildings on both sides of the river. When I go cycling on the Bike Route along the river, I feel like a cheetah running on the grassland freely. If you have a chance to travel to Shanghai one day, please remember to enjoy riding along the Huangpu River.

Cycling is not only good for my health but also convenient. I ride my bicycle three times a week, and it keeps me away from illness. Besides, it is convenient to ride a bicycle to school. If I walk to my school, it will take me half an hour, and ten minutes will be enough if I go by bike. I have a dream that I could ride my bicycle to travel around the world in the future. Maybe I could visit you in Britain during my travelling. Do you like cycling?

Yours Jony Zhao  
October 27th 2018



Dear friends,

I'm Zhang Yiming and my English name is Tommy. I'm in Class 5 Grade 5. I study in Chongqing Liangjiang Jinyu Council School. I have many hobbies. I like sports very much, such as running, swimming and playing table tennis. Among them, I like playing table tennis most. I think it's good for my health. Playing table tennis can help me improve my hand-eye coordination and quicken my reflexes.

I think my interest in table tennis mainly comes from my father, because he likes playing table tennis very much. Every weekend, we go to the playground of school to play table tennis. My father is very good at playing table tennis. But I am not very good at it. My father usually teaches me the correct posture and some tips for playing table tennis. With my father's patience and my efforts, my technique has been greatly improved. Now, I can play against my father.

I enjoy playing table tennis with my father. Whenever I'm not happy, I feel good at the thought of playing table tennis with my father. Recently, I have got more near-sighted. My father told me playing table tennis is good at my eyesight. Therefore I prefer to play table tennis.

My dear friends, Do you like playing table tennis?

Best wishes  
Tommy







### My favourite sport

Figure skating is my favourite sport. I started learning it when I was 5 years old and I have been improving in recent years.

I first got interested in it when I saw an ice skating rink located in a big shopping mall. I suddenly enjoyed the gentle and beautiful movements. It was very hard when I started, I couldn't even stand on the ice. But after several years of practice, and uncountable times of falling down, I can do it well finally. I entered a competition and won the first place in my group. When I wore my costume and did every move, it was a great sense of achievement. After that, I entered a competition in Bangkok, and became the champion again. In my performance, I've "acted" a few different roles and all those experiences are memorable for me.

I would highly recommend this sport to everyone as it cannot only develop our flexibility of the body, but also benefits our health. It is a winter sport, but people can still enjoy it on the rink. And for someone who doesn't want to participate in figure skating, enjoying the performance of it is also a good choice, which is often on TV.

I hope you can enjoy it!

Peng Ziyun (彭子蕴),  
6th Grade, Peking University Elementary School



Dear friend,

My name is Ma Kaiquan, and I come from Peking University Elementary School. I go to school from Monday to Friday, and in my spare time I play football almost every day, for it is my favourite sport.

From our teachers I know that football originates from ancient China more than two thousand years ago, but modern football arises from Britain, and thus China and Britain are linked with each other through football. With over one hundred years of development, football has now become the most popular sport in the world.

My dad tells me that the Premier League is one of the best in the world, and I often watch the football games of the League with him. Manchester United is my favourite club, but my favourite star is Messi. Only he is now playing for Barcelona of Spain, so I hope that Messi could transfer to Manchester United someday in the future.

The football development in China has a relatively short history, and our football team is not very competitive, for China has stepped into the World Cup only once. Yet, football is still very popular, and the campus football is developing very quickly. Many schools have a football team, including our school, and even our class also has a football team.

Now I am playing for our class team, and my position in the field is a defender. I always try every means to stop them scoring a goal. We usually train during our noon break, and we all train very hard. I hope I can play for our school team very soon. When I grow up, I wish I could play for our national team, and it is my biggest dream to play at Old Trafford of Manchester United. I wish this dream could come true.

Yours sincerely,  
Ma Kaiquan (马凯荃),  
6th Grade, Peking University Elementary School





Dear friends,

I'm a student of Class 6 Grade 4, Chongqing Liangjiang Jinyu Council School, Chongqing, China. My name is Lucy. I like sports very much. My brain can have a good rest after doing sports. Rope skipping is my favourite, because it can make me very happy.

As a Chinese traditional sport, rope skipping is very interesting. Sometimes, I think I were a bird when I jumped over the rope. After class, I usually jump rope with my friends. We really have a good time while we are jumping rope. Although occasionally I feel a little tired. I keep jumping rope every day for more than ten minutes. Besides I can skip up to 195 per minute.

Recently, I also participated in the rope skipping competition in our district on behalf of our school. That day, we wore neat sportswear and went to the venue with excitement. We were fully prepared so that we had enough confidence to win the game. However, the result of this competition was not so satisfactory. When we saw this result, many of us cried. The teacher encouraged us to practice hard and do it better. Indeed, one minute on the stage and ten years of practice off the stage.

I really like rope skipping. Dear friends, I hope you can also join us and try rope skipping too.

Yours sincerely,  
Lucy(Luxi, Jiang)





## Skating

Dear friends:

How do you do? My name is Amber, a student from Class 4, Grade 5, Shanghai Yang-Jing-JuYuan Experimental School(洋泾菊园实验学校). Today I want to introduce you my favourite sport-skating. I still remember the first time when my parents brought me to watch a figure skating competition. The performance was wonderful, and I was deeply impressed by one of the athletes, Yuzuru Hanyu, an excellent Japanese skater. After his performance, people threw a lot of Pooh Bears onto the ice to show their support. From that day, I dreamt of being a top skater and so people could do the same crazy thing to me.

Another reason is because skating is so cool. You have to wear a skating suit to keep warm and the suit makes you look like a professional. My dad takes many photos of me and I like my images in these photos simply because they all look nice. And while skating on the ice, I feel like a bird flying in the sky. I can even spin, jump and dance on the ice, just like Elsa a character in 'Frozen'

But skating is difficult. I started to learn it when I was 7. At first I even couldn't stand on the ice and kept falling down. Mom told me there is no shortcut to success. Those Pooh bears belong to the one who does the most practice. Two years passed, I remember this in practicing and now my skating skills are much better than before. I am not that good to be an athlete but I can be a volunteer to collect the stuffy dolls. Maybe I can see Yuzuru Hanyu again in 2020's Winter Olympic Games. Because it will be held in China in 2 years. What's your favourite sport?

Sincerely, Amber  
October 31st 2018





## Find out more

We hope your pupils enjoyed the activities in this pack. There are lots more ways you can get involved in international work with China and other countries:

### Find a partner school

Use our British Council Schools Online partner finding tool to link up with schools in China and many other countries worldwide:  
<http://bit.ly/1TnkJaG>

### Communicate

Use our forums and online project spaces with your partner school:  
<http://bit.ly/1Q2ULLH>

### Access resources

Check out our global learning resources, including classroom activities, videos and lesson plans:  
<http://bit.ly/1TnkZGM>

### Learn Chinese

Host a Chinese Language Assistant. It's easy to organise and you can share the assistant with other local schools. This scheme is supported by HSBC and the Confucius Institute Information about the Primary Programme of Study at the Confucius Institute can be found at:  
<http://bit.ly/2cVRnkl>

To find out more about implementing Chinese teaching in your school contact UCL IOE Confucius Institute for Schools:  
[chinesenetworks@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:chinesenetworks@ucl.ac.uk)

These popular courses are an exciting opportunity for primary school children (Year 5) in England and Wales to learn Mandarin Chinese and experience some of China's rich culture. This scheme is supported by HSBC. These courses will:

- help to support partnerships with China and the teaching of Mandarin
- inspire students to learn Mandarin at secondary school.

For more information on how to apply, please email [chinaschools@britishcouncil.org](mailto:chinaschools@britishcouncil.org)

## Get recognition

Sign up to our prestigious British Council International School Award scheme to earn accreditation for your international work:  
<http://bit.ly/1XMYg8t>

## Previous Chinese New Year resources

To find the education packs containing activities for the year of the horse, sheep, monkey, rooster and dog, go to:  
<http://bit.ly/1QYMFnE>, <http://bit.ly/1sGs1xS>

## Information about China

### Chinese history

- <http://bit.ly/1I4qTaz>

### Chinese culture

- <http://bit.ly/1f1pj0A>

### Introduction to Chinese language and support for Chinese language learning

- <http://bbc.in/1OJomqv>
- <http://bit.ly/1IGugUP>
- <http://bit.ly/1MYOX2d>



And don't forget, next year is the Year of the...

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