UNIT ONE: HELLO!

Skill: To handle basic courtesy expressions in social interactions.

Zǎo. Good morning.
Nǐ háo.* Hello.
Nǐ háo ma? How do you do?
Hǎo. Fine. (I'm fine.)
Hěn hǎo. Fine. (I'm very well.)
Nǐ ne? How about you?
Bú cuò.* I'm not bad.
Wǒ yè tīng hǎo. I'm pretty well too.
Wǒ hái kěyǐ. I'm okay.

Nǐ hǎo.

Qing... Please... go ahead... help yourself.
Xièxiè. Thanks.
Duō xiè. Thanks a lot.
Fēicháng gānxiè. I'm extremely grateful.
Bú xiè. You're welcome. (You don't have to thank me.)
Bié kèqí. Don't be (so) polite. You're welcome.

Duíbùqǐ. I'm sorry.
Zhēn duíbùqǐ. I'm really sorry.
Méi guānxi. It's alright, it doesn't matter.
Méiyǒu guānxi. It's alright, it doesn't matter.

Zàijiàn. Good bye.
Yìhuìr jiàn.* See you in a while.
Huìjiàn. See you in a bit. (PRC)
Míngtiān jiàn. See you tomorrow.
* A note on pronunciation vs. orthography

Generally, this textbook follows standard pinyin orthography (see Preface, p. 7). In some cases, however, the orthography can be misleading to the learner, due in most cases to one of the following reasons.

1) Some Chinese words change tone to accord with their environment. Bù and yī, for instance, are said in the fourth tone when the subsequent word is first, second or third tone, but are said in the second tone when the subsequent word is fourth tone. Thus:

bù gāo, bù máng, bù hǎo — bù lèi;
yī zhāng, yī máo, yī duō — yī lì.

Standard orthography marks words such as bù and yī with the tonal value of the word said in isolation — bù is consistently bù and yī is consistently yī — but for the convenience of the learner, this textbook will deviate from standard orthography by marking the actual spoken values of the tones on bù and yī, which will therefore vary depending upon environment. Thus, standard orthography's bù lèi and yī lì will be bù lèi and yī lì here.

2) A third tone that precedes another third tone becomes a second tone. (See appendix "The pinyin romanization system" p. 216.) Thus nǐ + hǎo is pronounced nǐ hǎo.

Standard orthography retains the original third tone on both words (nǐ hǎo, hěn hǎo, kěyī). Since it is useful for the learner to know the basic tonal value of new vocabulary items, this textbook will conform to standard orthography by marking two adjacent third tones as third tones (nǐ hǎo rather than nǐ hào), and expect that students will in time learn to shift the first third tone into a second tone (nǐ + hǎo = nǐ hǎo, kě + yī = kěyī).

3) A small number of words (such as hui) have a basic tonal value, but are commonly said with a different value in a limited number of set expressions (yihui jian). In such cases, this textbook will mark the actual spoken value of the phrase, but will asterisk the first occurrence of the expression and provide standard orthography in a note. Please note, therefore, that what is generally pronounced yihui jian is properly written yihui jian.
Dialogue Practice

The following sets of dialogues presume normal behavior, no unusual circumstances, and no misunderstandings in the contexts indicated. "A" begins the dialogue, "B" responds, "A" responds to "B," etc. Where there is a choice of responses available, please circle the one which is more appropriate.

I. (Two friends meet.)

A: Nǐ hǎo!

B: 1. Nǐ hǎo!
   2. Bú cuò.

II. (Two friends meet.)

A: Hǎo ma?

   2. Wǒ hái kěyǐ. Nǐ ne?


III. (A receives something from B.)

A: Xièxiè.


A: 1. Duìbuqí.
   2. Zǎijiàn.

IV. (Two friends approach a buffet line together.)

A: Qǐng...

B: 1. Nǐn qǐng...
   2. Huíjiàn.

A: 1. Yīhuír jiàn.
   2. Xièxiè nǐ.

B: 1. Bié kěqǐ.
   2. Wǒ yě hěn hǎo.

V. (Two friends meet. A accidently jostles B.)

A: Duìbuqí.

B: 1. Xièxiè. Nǐ hǎo ma?
   2. Méi guānxi. Nǐ hǎo ma?

A: 1. Wǒ hái kěyǐ. Nǐ ne?
   2. Duōxiè. Nǐ ne?

B: 1. Méi guānxi.
   2. Wǒ yě tīng hǎo.
A brief encounter

A is walking down a path on campus and runs into B. B drops some things he is holding.

A: Ou, zhên duluguì. Oh, I'm very sorry.

B: Méiyǒu guānxi. It's alright.

A & B both stoop down to pick up the things. A hands them to B.

A: Na... Here...

B: Xièxiè, xièxiè ni. Thanks, thank you.

A: Bié kěqi. You're welcome.

They nod at each other and continue on their separate ways.

Culture notes

Early childhood training in Chinese families used to include the following admonition:

"Li rú sòng; zuò rú zhòng." "Stand like a pine tree and sit like a bell."

For proper posture, in other words, stand straight with arms and legs close to the body, and sit up straight with elbows in, and heels and knees close together. Both the pine tree and the bell have upright, symmetrical outlines. In emulation of these idealized outlines, one Chinese rule of etiquette urged that hands and feet be kept to oneself, and that, in public, one not take up unnecessary space by placing the arms on the hips when standing, or by sitting in a sprawl. Although modern parents no longer speak of the pine tree and the bell, the lesson still remains—contemporary children are still encouraged to be reserved and controlled, especially in public.

It helps to conceptualize two bubbles around the individual when he or she is in a public space. The first, personal bubble fits closely against the body, and serves as a restraint to keep the hands and feet close. The second, interpersonal bubble extends approximately two feet from the body, and is in place whenever one is not dealing with close friends or family. The interpersonal bubble prevents two people from approaching each other too closely.

On rare occasion, however, a Western visitor is surrounded by curious (especially rural) onlookers who may even reach out to touch a hairy arm or a strand of light-colored hair, although in general children especially will avoid close contact with alarming-looking strangers. In such instances, the perpetrators are likely folk unaware of etiquette, who therefore do not care what it dictates.

Although the handshake is gaining popularity in Chinese communities through Western influence, it is still more common to greet, to part, or to acknowledge an exchange of information with a simple nod.
UNIT TWO: WHO ARE YOU?

SEGMENT A

Skill: To state own name; handle common personal names

I
you
he, she, it

we (plural)
you (plural)
they (plural)

to be (am, are, is)
to be surnamed, a surname
to be called (by given name)
a given name:

Zhāng, Cheung (a surname)
Wáng, Wong (a surname)
Lǐ, Lee (a surname)
Chén, Chan (a surname)
Mā, Ma (a surname)

Wǒ shì Wáng Dàwèi. I am David Wang.
Wǒ xìng Wáng, jiào Dàwèi. My last name is Wang, my given name David.
Shéi? Who?
Tā shì shéi? Who is he/she?
Nǐ xìng shénme? What is your family name?
Nǐ jiào shénme míngzi? What is your first name?
Qingwén, nín guìxìng? May I ask your name? (polite)
Nǐ bù shì Wáng Dàwèi ma? Aren’t you David Wang?

Qing zài shuō yī cí. Please say it again.

Dui. That’s right.
Bú dui. That’s not right.
Dui bu dui? Is that right?
Dialogue Practice

The following sets of dialogues presume normal behavior, no unusual circumstances, and no misunderstandings in the contexts indicated. "A" begins the dialogue, "B" responds, "A" responds to "B," etc. Where there is a choice of responses available, please circle the one which is more appropriate.

I. (Two adults meet in a class.)

A: Qingwèn guixìng?
B: 1. Wǒ jiào Dàwèi. Nín ne?
   2. Wǒ xìng Wáng. Nín ne?

   2. Wǒ hěn hǎo, xièxiè.

II. (One student to another, pointing to a third who has just entered.)

A: Tà shì shéi?
B: 1. Tà xìng Wáng.
   2. Tà hěn hǎo.

A: 1. Tà jiào shénme míngzi?
   2. Tà xìng shénme?
B: 1. Tà xìng Lǐ.
   2. Tà jiào Dàtóng.

III. (A, an adult, meets B, a child.)

A: Nǐ jiào shénme míngzi?
B: 1. Wǒ xìng Chén.
   2. Wǒ jiào Xiǎoméi.

A: 1. Nǐ xìng shénme?
   2. Nǐ shì shéi?
B: 1. Wǒ shì Chén Xiǎoméi.
   2. Wǒ xìng Wáng.

IV. (A, a new student, points to writing on the blackboard stating: "TA: Chen Xiaomei.")

A: Chén Xiǎoméi shì shéi?
B: 1. Tà xìng Chén.
   2. Shì wǒ.

A: 1. Nǐ hǎo.
   2. Qingwèn guixìng?
B: 1. Nǐ hǎo. Nǐ jiào shénme?
   2. Tà shì Chén Xiǎoméi.

   2. Chén Xiǎoméi, nǐ hǎo.

V. (Two college classmates are talking about a mutual acquaintance.)

A: Tà xìng Lǐ mà?
B: 1. Tà jiào Yùtóng.
   2. Bù, tā xìng Bái.

A: 1. Tà jiào shénme míngzi?
   2. Shéi xìng Bái?
B: 1. Tà hěn hǎo.
   2. Tà jiào Yùtóng.
Recognition

David Wang and Li Zhongying are chatting outside of a classroom from which they have just emerged. The student with whom Li Zhongying recently collided approaches; David recognizes him.

David: (to Zhāng) Zhè shì Li Zhōngyīng. This is Li Zhongying.

(The student, whose last name is Zhang, recognizes Li Zhongying. He smiles and nods at her.)

Li: Qīngwèn guìxìng? May I ask your last name?
Wǒ jiào Dēshèng. My first name is Desheng.
David: (to Li) Xiáo Zhāng gèn wǒ Zhang and I are old friends. shì lǎo pèngyou.
Li: (smiling) O, shì ma. Oh, I see. (Lit: is that so?)

Culture notes

Much in China is accomplished through an intermediary. David Wang and Li Zhongying came to know each other because they were in the same class, and David introduced Li Zhongying to Zhang Desheng. It is somewhat unlikely that two people who were not linked somehow, as classmates, coworkers, or through a common friend, would simply introduce themselves to each other. Boldness and directness are often considered rude, uncultured behavior, and therefore to be avoided outside the circle of family and close friends. Change however, is coming quickly to Taiwan and the PRC. Young people may be more direct and self-assertive, especially in dealing with foreigners.

There are between 400 and 500 common Chinese last names. Most consist of a single character, although a handful of “double surnames” such as Ouyang or Zhuge contain two characters each. The family name goes first in a person’s full name, followed by the given name.

The majority of Chinese given names were traditionally made up of two characters, although some contained only one. The generation of Chinese in the PRC that roughly coincides with the “baby boom” generation in the U.S. (born between 1940 and 1960) however, largely received single-character first names. Since many cases of mistaken identities ensued as a result, the double-character given name seems to be returning to favor. Chinese families do not select given names for children from a list; they make them up, using sound and meaning as a guide.

Whereas Americans generally prefer the informality of using first names with each other, even very close Chinese friends will often call each other by their last names. Another common practice is to include both family and given names, even in informal contexts. Full names do not usually exceed three syllables anyway, and are therefore not difficult to say. Calling a friend by a given name alone is acceptable, but this is not nearly as common a practice as in America.
Structure notes

The following is a basic sentence pattern in Chinese.

1. Subject + Equative Verb + Noun

Nǐ shì shéi?  
Wǒ xīng Wáng.  
Wǒ de míngzi jiào Dàwèi.

you + to be + who  
I + to be surname + Wang  
my + first name + to be called + Dawei

Who are you?  
My last name is Wang.  
My first name is Dawei.

Nǐ, wǒ, and wǒ de míngzi are the subjects of the example sentences.

The verbs shì, xīng, and jiào are examples of equative verbs—verbs that in one sense or another equate the subject with the noun that follows.

Equative verbs are always followed by a noun or noun-phrase, or a question word (such as shéi) denoting a noun or noun-phrase.

Structure exercise

Fill in each blank in the passage below with a word that fits the context. It is a monologue by a very repetitive young man named Zhang Datong. He has heard of a person named Li Taibai; he introduces himself, and then asks about who Li Taibai is.

UNIT TWO: WHO ARE YOU?

SEGMENT B

Skill: To use & understand titles in addressing others

(in addressing adults—formal)
Zhè wèi shì..... This is.....
___Xiānshēng  Mr. __
___Tāitāi  Mrs. __
___Xiāoqie*  Miss __
___Nǚshī  Ms. __
___Tóngzhī  Comrade

(in addressing children)
Xiàomèimei (girl: “Little sister”)
Xiāódìdi (boy: “Little brother”)
Xiāopéngyou (child: “Little friend”)

(in addressing adults—informal)
Lǎo___ “Old___”
Xiāo___ “Young___”

Zhāng Xiānshēng, nǐ hǎo ma?  How do you do, Mr. Zhang?
Lǎo Lǐ, hǎo ma?  How are you, Old Lǐ?
Wáng Tāitāi, Wáng Xiāoqie, nǐmen hǎo ma?  Mrs. Wang, Miss Wang, how are you?
Xiāopéngyoumen dōu hǎo ma?  How are you all, children?
Xuéshèngmen yè dōu hǎo ma?  And how are you all, students?

*Although jī in xiāoqie is neutral tone, its basic value is jì; therefore since two third tones appear in succession (even though one of them is neutral), “Miss” is actually said as xiāojie.
Dialogue Practice

The following sets of dialogues presume normal behavior, no unusual circumstances, and no misunderstandings in the contexts indicated. "A" begins the dialogue, "B" responds, "A" responds to "B," etc. Where there is a choice of responses available, please circle the one which is more appropriate.

I. (A introduces an acquaintance to B.)
   A: Zhēi wèi shì Zhāng Xiānshēng.
   B: 1. Qīngwèn guìxìng?
      2. Nǐ hǎo.

II. (Zhang and Li meet on a street.)
   A: Lǎo Lǐ, nǐ hǎo.
   B: 1. Nǐmen hǎo ma?
      2. Xiǎo Zhāng, hǎo ma?
       2. Hài kèyì, xièxiè.

III. (Two friends are discussing a young woman.)
   A: Tā shì Wáng Tàitài ma?
   B: 1. Bù, tā shì Wáng Xiāojie.
      2. Bù, tā shì Wáng Xiānshēng.
   A: 1. Tā xīng shénme?
      2. Tā jiào shénme míngzì?
   B: 1. Tā xīng Zhāng.
      2. Tā jiào Jūnhuá.

IV. (A, a college student, meets B, a little girl.)
   A: Xiǎomèimei, nǐ hǎo.
   B: 1. Xiǎodì, nǐ hǎo.
      2. Hěn hǎo, xièxiè.
   A: 1. Nǐ jiào shénme míngzì?
      2. Nǐ guìxìng?
   B: 1. Wǒ shì Wáng Měiyìng.
      2. Wǒ jiào Měiyìng.

V. (A high school teacher runs into his students on a Sunday.)
   A: Nǐmen dōu hǎo ma?
   B: 1. Dōu hǎo, xièxiè.
      2. Méi guānxi, xièxiè.
   A: 1. Xiǎopéngyoumen zàijiān.
The Following Day

Li Zhongying is studying under a tree when David Wang, Zhang Desheng, and an American student named Ai Dehua see her and stop to say hello.

David: Xiao Li.

Li: David, ni hao.

David: Zhe shi Zhang Desheng gen Ai Dehua.

Li: Zhang Xiao sheng, Ai Xiao sheng, nimen hao.

Ai: Li Xiao jie hao ma?

Zhang: Li Xiao jie.

(Li Zhongying nods at them.)

Culture notes

In Taiwan and overseas Chinese communities, the titles Xiao sheng, Tai tai, Xiao jie and Ni shi are more or less the equivalents of Mr., Mrs., Miss and Ms. They fell out of favor with the "New Society" of the PRC, which substituted the uniform and egalitarian Tong zhi, meaning "Comrade," for everyone. An exception was often made, however, in dealing with foreigners, who were not "Comrades" but generally Xiao sheng and Fu ren (Madame).

With the advent of liberalization and internationalization in the PRC, Xiao sheng, Tai tai, Xiao jie and Ni shi are reappearing, more commonly in large metropolises (such as Canton in the south) that have a great deal of commercial contact with foreign countries, and almost always with foreigners. Tong zhi on the other hand, while used, is growing less popular.

Lao and Xiao are popular, informal terms used between friends, Lao generally with older people and Xiao with younger people. Males are more likely than females to be called Lao.
Structure notes

1. Social titles in Chinese follow the last name—thus 王先生, 李同志. The only exceptions are 老 and 小, which precede the last name. Technically, 老 and 小 are not social titles, but rather informal, familiar forms of address for one's friends.

2. The following is a basic sentence pattern in Chinese:

2. Subject + (很) + Adjective

 Hao, xiè xiè. to be well + thank you I'm fine, thank you.
 Tā men hěn hao. they + very + to be well They are very well.

It is important to note that adjectives (that describe a state or condition) do not need to be modified by the equivalent of the English verb “to be.” Hao means “to be well.” Translating “I am well” into Chinese as “Wǒ shì hǎo” would be wrong.

Hěn expresses degree (“very”), but when it precedes an adjective, it carries almost no meaning. Wǒ hěn hǎo, for instance, means nothing more than “I’m fine.” Its use is considered optional, as indicated by the parentheses around it. However, when the subject is used, hěn is also usually used.

3. Words such as 多 (both, all) and 又 (also) modify verbs or adjectives, NOT nouns. A common mistake is *多 人 很 好 for “Everyone is fine”—do try to avoid it. (Say 多 人 很 好 instead.)

1a. Subject + 又/多 + Equative verb + Noun

Wǒ xìng Táo. Tā 又 xìng Táo. I + to be summed + Tao. he/she + also + to be summed + Tao My last name is Tao. His/her last name is also Tao.

Wǒmen 多 xìng Táo. I + both + to be summed + Tao We both have the last name Tao.

Nǐ 又 xìng Táo ma? you + also + to be summed + Tao + ma Is your last name Tao too?

Mālì, Yūchān 多 xìng Táo ma? Mary + John + also + both + to be summed + Tao + ma Do Mary and John both have the last name Tao, too?
2a. Subject + yě/dōu + (hěn) + Adjective

Mǎlì hěn hǎo.  Yuēhàn yě  
Mary + very + to be well.  John +  
also + very + to be well  
Mary is  
fine.  So is John.

Mǎlì, Yuēhàn dōu hěn hǎo.  
Mary + John + both + very +  
to be well  
Mary and John are both  
fine.

Please note that if yě and dōu are used together, then yě precedes dōu.

4. In Chinese, the subject of the sentence is often not expressed. If the subject is left out of a declarative sentence (a statement), the subject is generally understood to be "I." If the subject is left off of an interrogative sentence (a question), then the subject is generally understood to be "you."

(Zhang and Wang see each other on the street.)

Zhāng:  Ê! Hǎo ma?  
Hey + to be well + ma  
Hi! How are you?

Wáng:  Hǎo.  
to be well.  
I'm fine.

If the conversation shifts to a third person, then that person will need to be identified as the subject of the sentence. Once identified, further conversation can continue with the subject of the sentence left off again, to be understood as the person identified.

Zhāng:  Xiāo Lǐ né?  Yě  
hǎo ma?  
Xiao Li + né? also + to be  
well + ma  
How about Li?  Is he doing  
all right too?

Wáng:  Yě hěn hǎo.  
also + very + to be well  
He's fine too.
5. **Ma** is a question particle. It attaches to the end of a statement to turn that statement into a question.

Tā xìng Děng, jiào Dàipíng.  
*he + to be surnamed + Deng + to be called + Daiping*

Tā xìng Děng, jiào Dàipíng ma?  
*He + to be surnamed + Deng + to be called + Daiping + ma*

His last name is Deng, his given name Daiping.

Is his last name Deng, his given name Daiping?

6. **Ne** is another question particle. It attaches to a noun or noun phrase to mean “And what about (the noun/noun phrase)?” The precise meaning of a question formed with ne depends on context.

Wǒ xìng Bái. Nǐ ne?  
*I + to be surnamed + Bai. you + ne*

My last name is Bai. What’s yours?

Tā hěn hǎo. Xiāo Wáng ne?  
*she + very + to be well. Xiao Wang + ne*

She’s (very) well. How about Wang?

**Structure exercise**

*Fill in each blank in the dialogue below, between two people who know each other only by sight, who catch a glimpse of a third person.*

A: Tā _________, shéi? Shì Lǎo Lí _________?

B: Shì. Shì Lǎo Lí. Tā de míngzì _________ Bái.

A: Nǐ _________? Nǐ de míngzì jiào _________?

B: Wǒ _________ Yùqíng. Wǒ _________ Lán Yùqíng.  
__________ ne? Nǐ guī _________?

SEGMENT C

Skill: To provide & obtain personal descriptions.

Tā hěn ___ S/he is (very) ___.

gāo (to be) tall  āi (to be) short
pāng (to be) fat  shòu (to be) thin
hēi (to be) dark  bái (to be) fair
zhùàng (to be) strong  ruò (to be) weak
háokàn (to be) goodlooking  nánkàn (to be) unattractive
piàoliǎng (to be) pretty, handsome  chóu (to be) ugly
měi (to be) beautiful  yīngjùn (to be) handsome

Shénme yisi?  What does it (this) mean?
Wǒ bù dǒng.  I don’t understand.
Nǐ dǒng bù dǒng?  Do you understand?

Tā gāo bù gāo?
Is s/he tall (or not)?

Tā yīngjùn ma?
Is he handsome?

Nǐ juéde wǒ háokàn ma?
Do you think (feel) I am goodlooking?

Nǐ juéde wǒ tài pāng le ma?
Do you think (feel) I’m too fat?
Dialogue Practice

The following sets of dialogues presume normal behavior, no unusual circumstances, and no misunderstandings in the contexts indicated. A" begins the dialogue, "B" responds, "A" responds to "B," etc. Where there is a choice of responses available, please circle the one which is more appropriate.

I. (A is asking B about someone B has met.)
   A: Tā gāo ma?
       B: 1. Bù, hén zhuàng.
          2. Bù, hén āi.

II. (Zhang and Wang are chatting.)
    A: Xiǎo Lǐ hěn yǐngjùn.
        B: 1. Shì, tā xíng Lǐ.
           2. Shì, tā hěn hǎokàn.
         2. Hěn chóu, hěn nánkān.
    B: 1. Yě shì tā.
        2. Yě hěn bái.

III. (Zhang and Li are chatting.)
     A: Nǐ juéde shéi hǎokàn?
        B: 1. Xiǎo Wáng hǎokàn.
          2. Tā hěn zhuàng.
     A: 1. Duìbuqǐ, Xiǎo Wáng.
         2. Xiǎo Wáng hěn piàoliang.
     B: 1. Feicháng gǎnxìé.
        2. Gāogāo, shōushōu.

IV. (Two classmates are chatting.)
    A: "Ugly" shì shénme yisi?
       B: 1. Nánkàn, chóu.
          2. Nǐ dōng bù dōng?
    A: 1. Wǒ dōng le.
        2. Wǒ bù cuò.

V. (A is an admirer of B. B is bashful.)
   A: Nǐ hěn shòu.
       B: 1. Bù, wǒ hěn pàng.
          2. Bù, wǒ hěn ruò.
        2. Nǐ hào ma?
   B: 1. Bù, wǒ hěn bái.
      2. Bù, wǒ hěn nánkàn.
Among friends

Li Zhongying is talking with two close female friends at the cafeteria. After a while she mentions that she has met someone new.

Li: Tā jiào Zhāng Dēshēng. Shì zhèr de xuéshēng.

Friend 1: (smiling)

Hǎokàn ma?

Li: (laughing)

Tā tīng gāo, shǒushǒu de. Hěn bái, hěn bái.

Friend 2: Gěn nǐ yǐyàng!

Li: Bù. Wǒ bù gāo.

(They all laugh.)

Culture notes

Standards of physical beauty in China, as elsewhere, derive from images of the privileged or successful in society. For men in traditional China, one avenue to success and status lay in becoming an accomplished scholar and succeeding in successive levels of civil service examinations. The final successful graduates were eligible for official positions in China’s administrative bureaucracy. The women of the scholar-gentry class lived secluded lives at home, tending to embroidery and the general management of a large household. Thus the scholar-elite’s fairness of skin is admired in both men and women, likely because it contrasts with the sun-darkened complexion of commoners who labor in the fields or on the streets. Slimness or fragility is attractive, particularly in women. The scholar-model of male beauty also stresses slimness and refinement, but a second model, that of the warrior, emphasizes strength, virility (and bushy eyebrows).

Traditional ideals of an elegant, refined, scholarly appearance still influence modern Chinese conceptions. However, the desire for good health and physical, athletic ability have also affected modern standards: “good looking” today often means men and women who are tall, slim, fair, with regular features, who are also reasonably active, although a degree of fragility is still tolerated (even admired) in women. For men, “masculine” resolve and vigor combined with scholarly refinement and decorum define the ideal.
Structure notes

1. This lesson provides further examples of basic sentence pattern #2, restated below.

2. Subject + [bù] + (hěn) + [bù] + Adjective

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chinese</th>
<th>Pinyin</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wǒ hěn gāo.</td>
<td>I + very + to be tall</td>
<td>I am tall.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nǐ hěn āi.</td>
<td>you + very + to be short</td>
<td>You are short.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wǒ hěn shòu.</td>
<td>I + very + to be thin</td>
<td>I am thin.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nǐ hěn pāng.</td>
<td>you + very + to be fat</td>
<td>You are fat.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wǒ hěn zhuàng.</td>
<td>I + very + to be strong</td>
<td>I am strong.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nǐ hěn ruò.</td>
<td>you + very + to be weak</td>
<td>You are weak.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nǐ hěn hǎo.</td>
<td>you + very + to be good</td>
<td>You are good.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wǒ bù hǎo.</td>
<td>I + not + to be good</td>
<td>I am not good.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. One forms negative statements in Chinese by placing the particle bù before the verb, adjective or adverb (NEVER DIRECTLY BEFORE THE NOUN).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chinese</th>
<th>Pinyin</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tā bù xǐng Bái.</td>
<td>he + not + to be surnamed + Bai</td>
<td>His last name is not Bai.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tā bù shì Bái Xiānshēng.</td>
<td>he + not + to be + White + Mr.</td>
<td>He isn’t Mr. White.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tā bù zhuàng.</td>
<td>he + not + to be strong</td>
<td>He isn’t strong.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tā bù hěn pāng.</td>
<td>he + not + very + to be fat</td>
<td>He isn’t very fat.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tā hěn bù hǎokàn.</td>
<td>he + very + not + to be good-looking</td>
<td>He is very unattractive.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note the difference between bù + hěn + Adjective and hěn + bù + Adjective. In the first case, hěn is being negated; in the second, the adjective is first negated, and then intensified in its negative form by hěn. Thus while bù hěn hǎo means “not very good,” hěn bù hǎo means “very bad.”

3. In addition to using the question particle ma, questions in Chinese can also be formed by using the phrase Verb + bù + Verb or Adjective + bù + Adjective. Thus:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chinese</th>
<th>Pinyin</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tā xǐng Bái.</td>
<td>he + xǐng + Bai</td>
<td>Is she (or isn’t she) (sur)named Bai?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tā xǐng bù xǐng Bái?</td>
<td>she + to be surnamed + not + to be surnamed + Bai</td>
<td>Is she (or isn’t she) (sur)named Bai?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tā shì Bái Xiāobō.</td>
<td>he + xǐng + Bai</td>
<td>Is she (or isn’t she) Bai XiaoBo?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tā shì bù shì Bái Xiāobō?</td>
<td>she + to be + not + to be + Bai XiaoBo</td>
<td>Is she (or isn’t she) Bai XiaoBo?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tā hěn gāo.</td>
<td>she + to be gāo + not + to be gāo</td>
<td>Is she (or isn’t she) tall?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tā gāo bù gāo?</td>
<td>she + to be tall + not + to be tall</td>
<td>Is she (or isn’t she) tall?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Structure exercises

1. The following is a brief monologue by a young woman looking at a photograph of a rather good-looking young man named Bai Xiaobo. (Li Mali is her best friend.) Read what she has to say about Bai Xiaobo. Then imagine that this young woman is handed a second photograph of a young man she does NOT admire. Negate each of her previous utterances by drawing a carat (\(^\) ) where the negative particle \( wù \) could go. Note that in some of the sentences, \( wù \) can be inserted in more than one position.

Zhè wèi shì Xiāobō.
Tā xìng Bái.
Tā hěn gāo.
Tā hěn zhuàng.
Wǒ juéde tā hěn hāokàn.
Lǐ Mǎlì yě juéde tā hěn hāokàn.
Wǒmen dōu juéde tā hěn yìngjūn.

2. After you’ve negated the remarks above, they will describe a young man who is not named Bai Xiaopo, who is not tall, not strong, and not considered particularly attractive by the two young women named above. You have reason to want a third opinion. Write FIVE QUESTIONS to ask of an unbiased person. Find out the following pieces of information.

Name?
Height?
Weight?
Complexion?
Goodlooking?

3. Write a brief description of someone you know by filling in the blanks below.

Wǒ yǒu yī ge hǎo péngyou (I have a good friend). Tā xìng ______________. Tā de míngzi jiào ______________. Tā hěn ______________, hěn ______________, hěn ______________. Wǒ juéde tā hěn ______________. Biérén (other people) yě dōu juéde tā hěn ______________.
Nǐ cǎi wǒ jǐ suì le?

Nǐ cǎi wǒmen dōu
da suīshū le?
UNIT TWO: WHO ARE YOU?

SEGMENT D

Skill: To provide & obtain information on age, year/grade, address, tel. #.

Fill in the blanks in the English column on the right with your personal information. Then follow the instructions in the Chinese column on the left.

Wǒ suì le. I am ______ years old.
(fill in your own age in Pinyin)

Wǒ nián ______ níanjī. I am in the ______ grade/year.
(fill in your grade level/year in Pinyin)

Wǒ de dìzhī shì/ Wǒ zhù zài My address is/ I live in (at)
________ shì,
(fill in the name of your city, using Pinyin)
________ city

________ jīē,
(fill in your street name, using English)
________ street, (road, etc.)

________ hǎo,
(fill in your street # in Pinyin)
number ________

________ shī,
(fill in your apartment # in Pinyin)
apartment ________

Wǒ de diànhuà hàomā shì My telephone number is ________.
(fill in your tel. # in Pinyin)

Ni jǐ suì le? How old are you? (asked of children)
Ni duó dà le? How old are you? (asked of young adults)
Nín duó dà suìshū le? How old are you? (asked of older adults)
Ni nián jǐ niánjī? What grade/year are you?
Ni jiā zài nǎr? Where is your house?
Ni zhù zài nǎr? Where do you live?
Ni de diànhuà dàosháo hào? What is your tel. number?

Wǒ bù zhídào. I don’t know.
Wǒ wàng le. I forgot.
*The word duō by itself means "much" or "a lot." It combines with the word shǎo meaning "few" or "a little" to mean "how much." However, when duō is used as a question word, it is generally said in the second tone: duó. Thus what is normally pronounced as duóshǎo, duó dà le, duó dà suìshū le, and duóshǎo hào would in proper pinyin orthography be written duōshāo, duō dà le, etc.

Ni cǎi wǒ niàn jī niánji?
**Dialogue Practice**

The following sets of dialogues presume normal behavior, no unusual circumstances, and no misunderstandings in the contexts indicated. “A” begins the dialogue, “B” responds, “A” responds to “B,” etc. Where there is a choice of responses available, please circle the one which is more appropriate.

I. *(An adult and a child meet in a schoolyard.)*

   **A:** Xiàodìdì, nǐ jǐ suì le?
   **B:** 1. Sānshíjiǔ suì le.
          2. Liù suì le.

   **A:** 1. Nǐ niàn jǐ niánjì?
          2. Nǐ dòng bù dòng?
   **B:** 1. Tā dòng le.
          2. Yī niánjì.

II. *(Two classmates are about to part for the day.)*

   **A:** Nǐ de diànhuà duóshǎo hǎo?
   **B:** 1. Èr jiē, èrshíwǔ hǎo.
          2. Qī qī èr wù sān qī.

   **A:** 1. Hǎo, xièxiè.
          2. Zhèn duībuqǐ.

III. *(Two classmates are discussing a mutual friend.)*

   **A:** Tā jiā zài nǎr?
   **B:** 1. Wǒ bù zhīdào.
          2. Wǒ dōng le. Xièxiè nǐ.

   **A:** 1. Nǐ zhīdào tā de diànhuà hǎomǎ ma?
          2. Bú xiè.
   **B:** 1. Zāijiàn.
          2. Zhīdào. Wū sān yī qī èr wú.

IV. *(A and B are getting acquainted.)*

   **A:** Nǐ zhù zài nǎr?
   **B:** 1. Wǒ bā suì le.
          2. Wǒ zhù Chāng’ān Jiē.

   **A:** 1. Jí hǎo?
          2. Jí niánjì?
   **B:** 1. Sān niánjì.
          2. Shībèi Hútōng, shíwǔ hǎo.

V. *(A is quizzing B about someone that B knows.)*

   **A:** Nǐ zhīdào tā de dízhī ma?
   **B:** 1. Zhīdào, kěshí wǒ wàng le.
          2. Wǒ juéde tā de dízhī bù hǎo.

   **A:** 1. Tā de dízhī shì shénme?
          2. Tā de diànhuà hǎomǎ ne?
   **B:** 1. Bú duì, bú duì.
          2. Yě wàng le.
More information

Zhang Desheng is visiting David Wang in his room. After a while, Zhang asks about Li Zhongying.

Zhang: Lì Zhōngyīng duō dà le, ni' zhīdào ma?  
        How old is Lì Zhōngyīng; do you know?

David: Tā shìjū suí le.  
        She's nineteen.

Zhang:  O.  
        Oh.

David: Nǐ ne? Nǐ duō dà le?  
        How about you? How old are you?

Zhang: Wǒ yě shì shìjū suí.  
        I'm nineteen too.

David: Wǒ cāi shǐbā suí.  
        I'm only eighteen.

Zhang: Tā nián jǐ niánjì?  
        What year is he/she in?

David: Shéi?  
        Who?

Zhang: Lì Zhōngyīng.  
        Lì Zhōngyīng.

David: Dà'ěr.  
        She's a sophomore (in college).


Culture notes

Although Western influence may be changing traditional behavior in some Hong Kong and Taiwan circles, asking how old a person is (or how much money his or her family makes) is not usually considered too personal, even when asking directly. In fact, NOT asking a so-called “personal question” might show a lack of caring in the Chinese social context. Traditional society generally encourages people to be their “brothers’ keepers,” to concern themselves with the lives of family members, friends, and neighbors; to lend a hand when things go wrong; to put in words of advice about individual actions; to share in the celebration of successes and good fortune. Individuals who do not concern themselves with the affairs of others around them may be considered self-centered or callous.

Thus it is quite normal for Zhang Desheng to ask about the age of a new acquaintance. It is more convenient for him to ask about Li Zhongying through David, as the intermediary, than to do it of Li directly. Traditionally, young men and women were kept strictly segregated. Such segregation has broken down in modern society, but young people are often still shy about contact between the sexes.

In traditional China people of advanced age commanded more power within the household and greater respect in society. Thus the questions asked to elicit age grew succeedingly more respectful and decorous, as one deals with “higher levels” of age.

Telephone numbers in Hong Kong and Taiwan are seven digits long, but vary between five and seven digits in the PRC.
Table 1: Grades or class levels in the Chinese educational system are enumerated as follows.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preschool*</th>
<th>Tuō'ěrsuō</th>
<th>Tuō'ěrsuō</th>
<th>Tuō'ěrsuō</th>
<th>Tuō'ěrsuō</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kindergarten*</td>
<td>Yōnzhiyuán/yōu'ěryuán</td>
<td>Yōnzhiyuán/yōu'ěryuán</td>
<td>Yōnzhiyuán/yōu'ěryuán</td>
<td>Yōnzhiyuán/yōu'ěryuán</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 1</td>
<td>Xiāoxué</td>
<td>Chūxiào</td>
<td>Xiāoxué yī niánjí</td>
<td>Xiāoxué èr niánjí</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Xiāoxué sān niánjí</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 4</td>
<td></td>
<td>Gāoxiào</td>
<td>Xiāoxué sì niánjí</td>
<td>Xiāoxué wǔ niánjí</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Xiāoxué liù niánjí</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 7</td>
<td>Zhōngxué</td>
<td>Chūzhōng</td>
<td>Chūzhōng yī niánjí</td>
<td>Chūzhōng èr niánjí</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Chūzhōng sān niánjí</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 10</td>
<td>Gāozhōng</td>
<td></td>
<td>Gāozhōng yī niánjí</td>
<td>Gāozhōng èr niánjí</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 11</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Gāozhōng sān niánjí</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st year college</td>
<td>Dàxué</td>
<td></td>
<td>Dàxué yī niánjí</td>
<td>Dàxué èr niánjí</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd year college</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Dàxué sān niánjí</td>
<td>Dàxué sì niánjí</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd year college</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th year college</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate school</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Yánjiāyuán (Taiwan)</td>
<td>Yánjiūshēngyuán (PRC)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Preschool children in the PRC are generally 2 years old. By age 3, children enter kindergarten, where they remain for three years. Grade 1 children are usually 6 years old.
Structure notes

1. **De** can be similar to the apostrophe-S in English, to mark a possessive. Thus, **Xiao Ping de shēngrì** means “Xiao Ping’s birthday,” and **wǒ de shēngrì** is “my birthday.”

2. **Le** is a complex and hardworking particle in Chinese that serves a variety of functions. The following are two of these functions:

   2b. Subject + Verb/Adjective + le
   
   a) To mark a change in status or condition.

   Tā hěn gāo. [She’s tall. ---------------------------------> Tā gāo le. She’s become tall.]
   Tā hěn hǎo. [She’s fine. ---------------------------------> Tā hǎo le. She’s gotten well.]
   Tā hěn pàng. [She’s fat. ---------------------------------> Tā pàng le. She’s gotten fat.]
   Tā bā suì. [She’s eight. ---------------------------------> Tā bā suì le. She’s turned eight.]

   b) **Le** is used with some verbs having to do with thought and thinking, to mean that a thought process is complete. A change of state is implied.

   Wǒ dǒng le. [I understand. I understood. I have come to understand. I came to understand.]
   Wǒ zhīdào le. [I know (now). I already know. I understand.]
   Wǒ wàng le. [I forgot. I have forgotten.]

Structure exercise

1. The particles **le** and **de** are missing in the brief monologue below, which is spoken by an admirer of a young woman named Mary Jones. Please write them in in the appropriate positions.

   Mǎlì hěn hǎo. Tā jīn nián (this year) èrshí suì. Tā yǐqián (in the past) yǒu yǐdiǎnr (was a little) pàng, xiànzài (now) shòu. Wǒ juédé tā hěn piāoliang.

   Kēxī (too bad) wǒ wàng tā diànhuà hǎomǎ hé dizhī.
UNIT TWO: WHO ARE YOU?

SEGMENT E
Skill: To provide & obtain information on height, weight, & birthday.

Fill in the blanks in the English columns on the right with your personal information, using Arabic numerals. Then follow the instructions in the Chinese columns on the left. Refer to Tables 2 and 3 to convert between the English, metric, and Chinese systems.

Wǒ ___________chǐ___________cùn  gāo. I am __________" tall.
(Fill in your height using Pinyin & the English system.)

Wǒ ____________mǐ ___________. I am _______ metres tall.
(Fill in your height, using Pinyin & the metric system.)

Wǒ ____________bàng. I (weigh) _______ lbs.
(Fill in your weight, using Pinyin & the English system.)

Wǒ ____________gōng jīn. I (weigh) _______ kilograms.
(Fill in your weight, using Pinyin & the metric system.)

Wǒ ____________jīn. I (weigh) _______ jīn.
(Fill in your weight, using Pinyin & the Chinese system.)

| shēngāo | height |
| shēngri | birthday |
| tīzhòng | weight |

Wǒ shēngri shì _______nián, My birthday is _______ (year)
(Fill in the year of your birth, using Pinyin)

___________yuè, (month)
(Fill in the month of your birth, using Pinyin)

___________hào. (day)
(Fill in the day of your birth, using Pinyin)

Nǐ yǒu duō gāo? How tall are you?
Nǐ yǒu duō zhòng? How much do you weigh?
Nǐ de shēngri shì jǐ yuè jǐ hào? When is your birthday?
Nǐ de shēngri shì shénme shìhou? When is your birthday?
Nǐ shì nèi nián shēng de? In which year were you born?
Dialogue Practice

The following sets of dialogues presume normal behavior, no unusual circumstances, and no misunderstandings in the contexts indicated. "A" begins the dialogue, "B" responds, "A" responds to "B," etc. Where there is a choice of responses available, please circle the one which is more appropriate.

I. (Two Chinese-Americans who have never met face-to-face are getting acquainted by telephone.)

A: Nǐ yǒu duó gāo?
B: 1. Yībāi sānshí bāng.
   2. Lì chī èr cùn.

A: 1. Nǐ hěn āi.
   2. Nǐ yǒu duó zhòng?
B: 1. Yībāi sìshí bāng.
   2. Sìshí bāng.

   2. Nǐ hěn pāng.

II. (A and B are classmates getting to know each other.)

A: Nǐ jī yúè jì hǎo guò shēngrì?
B: 1. Yī jiǔ liù liù nián.
   2. Bāyuè shíwǔ hào.

A: 1. Nǐ shì nèi nián shēng de?
   2. Nǐ shēngrì shì jī yúè jí hào?
B: 1. Jiùyuè shībā hào.
   2. Yī jiǔ liù líng nián.

III. (A and B are talking about a mutual acquaintance.)

A: Nǐ zhīdào tā de shēnggāo tīzhòng ma?
B: 1. Tā yī mǐ liù bā, yībāi jìn.
   2. Shì tā de shēnggāo tīzhòng.

A: 1. Tā shìbā suī le.
   2. Tā bù gāo, bù pāng.
B: 1. Duí.
   2. Duibuqi.

IV. (A is telling B about someone B has never met.)

A: Tā bāshī ěr gōngjīn.
B: 1. Tāi pāng le.
   2. Tāi shòu le.

A: 1. Bù pāng; tā yǐ mǐ jiǔ liū.
   2. Bù shòu; tā hěn gāo.
B: 1. Ò?
   2. Tā tāi hēi le.

V. (A is quizzing B about B's friend, but B is unable to provide any information.)

A: Nǐ zhīdào tā de shēngrì shì jī yuè ji hǎo ma?
B: 1. Bù zhīdào.
   2. Duibuqi.

A: 1. Tā shì nèi nián shēng de?
   2. Nǐ bù zhīdào shènme?
B: 1. Wǒ yè bù dòng.
   2. Duibuqi, yè bù zhīdào.
Further information

David Wang and Li Zhongying leave class together. David looks at Li curiously.

David: Zhōngyìng, nǐ yóu duō gāo? Zhōngying, how tall are you?
Li: Wǒ yǐ mǐ liù. Nǐ ne? I am 1.6 metres (5' 3").
David: Wǒ wǔ chǐ bā cùn. I am 5 feet 8...
nà jiǔ shí yī mǐ qīsān, duì bu duì? that's 1.73 metres, right?
Li: Nnm, bù zhídào. Nǐ dàgāi yōu yī mǐ qī. Mmm, I don't know. You are probably 1.7 metres.

David: Nǐ yǒu duō zhòng? How heavy are you?
Li: (laughing)
Wǒ bù gào su nǐ! I'm not telling you!

David: Nà yǒu shénme guānxi. What does (telling me) matter...
Wǒ yǐbài sīshí bàng...liùshí bān gōngjīn. I'm 140 lbs...63 kg.

Li: Nǐ shèngrì shì jǐ yuè jǐ hào? When is your birthday?

David: (smiling)
Wǒ yě bù gào su nǐ le. Then I'm not telling you either.

Li: (laughing and pushing him)
Qu nǐ de!* Get away!

(*Caution: This expression can be inflammatory if used with someone other than a friend.)

Culture notes

Chinese people are generally not hesitant about sharing personal information such as height, weight, and birthday, especially with members of the same sex. Shyness may come into play in dealing with members of the opposite sex. In Li Zhongying's case, the ambiguity of the situation is compounded by the confusion of her having to deal with a foreigner, even a pseudo-foreigner (David is Chinese-American).

Young people of the same sex in China and Taiwan (and many non-Western societies) are often very intimate and affectionate with each other. Young women often walk holding hands or linking arms, or sit cheek-to-cheek with their arms around each other. One young man will often put his arm around the shoulder of another while sitting or walking. Young men sometimes rest leaning against each other, with head to shoulder or back to back. This behavior generally does not indicate sexual interest.

Young people of opposite sexes, on the other hand, tend to keep some distance between themselves, unless an overt boyfriend-girlfriend relationship has been established. Even then, public displays of emotion are generally restricted to hand-holding. Kissing and hugging in public does occur in contemporary China, but is viewed with varying degrees of distaste by passersby.

Weight in China is generally given in terms of jīn (a catty), which is conveniently twice the value of a kilogram (i.e. 50 kg = 100 jīn).
### Table 2
Conversion Chart for Height

- \( 1" = 2.54 \text{ cm} \)
- \( 1 \text{ cm} = .394" \)
- \( 1' = .305 \text{ m} \)
- \( 1 \text{ m} = 3.28' \)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Height (in)</th>
<th>Meters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6' 5&quot;</td>
<td>1.96 m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6' 4&quot;</td>
<td>1.93 m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6' 3&quot;</td>
<td>1.91 m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6' 2&quot;</td>
<td>1.88 m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6' 1&quot;</td>
<td>1.85 m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6' 0&quot;</td>
<td>1.83 m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5' 11&quot;</td>
<td>1.80 m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5' 10&quot;</td>
<td>1.78 m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5' 9&quot;</td>
<td>1.75 m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5' 8&quot;</td>
<td>1.73 m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5' 7&quot;</td>
<td>1.70 m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5' 6&quot;</td>
<td>1.68 m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5' 5&quot;</td>
<td>1.65 m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5' 4&quot;</td>
<td>1.63 m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5' 3&quot;</td>
<td>1.60 m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5' 2&quot;</td>
<td>1.58 m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5' 1&quot;</td>
<td>1.55 m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5' 0&quot;</td>
<td>1.53 m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4' 11&quot;</td>
<td>1.50 m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4' 10&quot;</td>
<td>1.48 m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4' 9&quot;</td>
<td>1.45 m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4' 8&quot;</td>
<td>1.43 m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4' 7&quot;</td>
<td>1.40 m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4' 6&quot;</td>
<td>1.38 m</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 3
Conversion Chart for Weight

- \( 1 \text{ lb} = .454 \text{ kg} = .907 \text{ jin (catties)} \)
- \( 1 \text{ kg} = 2.205 \text{ lbs} = 2 \text{ jin} \)
- \( 1 \text{ jin} = .5 \text{ kg} = 1.103 \text{ lbs} \)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Weight (lbs)</th>
<th>Kilograms</th>
<th>Jin</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>250 lbs</td>
<td>113.50 kg</td>
<td>226.75 jin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>240 lbs</td>
<td>108.96 kg</td>
<td>217.68 jin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>230 lbs</td>
<td>104.42 kg</td>
<td>208.61 jin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>220 lbs</td>
<td>99.88 kg</td>
<td>199.54 jin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>210 lbs</td>
<td>95.34 kg</td>
<td>190.47 jin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>200 lbs</td>
<td>90.80 kg</td>
<td>181.40 jin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>190 lbs</td>
<td>86.26 kg</td>
<td>172.33 jin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>180 lbs</td>
<td>81.72 kg</td>
<td>163.26 jin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>170 lbs</td>
<td>77.18 kg</td>
<td>154.19 jin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>160 lbs</td>
<td>72.64 kg</td>
<td>145.12 jin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>150 lbs</td>
<td>68.10 kg</td>
<td>136.05 jin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>140 lbs</td>
<td>63.56 kg</td>
<td>126.98 jin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>130 lbs</td>
<td>59.02 kg</td>
<td>117.91 jin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>120 lbs</td>
<td>54.48 kg</td>
<td>108.84 jin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>110 lbs</td>
<td>49.94 kg</td>
<td>99.77 jin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100 lbs</td>
<td>45.50 kg</td>
<td>90.70 jin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90 lbs</td>
<td>40.86 kg</td>
<td>81.63 jin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80 lbs</td>
<td>36.32 kg</td>
<td>72.56 jin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70 lbs</td>
<td>31.78 kg</td>
<td>63.49 jin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60 lbs</td>
<td>27.24 kg</td>
<td>54.41 jin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 lbs</td>
<td>22.70 kg</td>
<td>45.33 jin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40 lbs</td>
<td>18.16 kg</td>
<td>36.24 jin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 lbs</td>
<td>13.62 kg</td>
<td>27.16 jin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 lbs</td>
<td>9.08 kg</td>
<td>18.08 jin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 lbs</td>
<td>4.54 kg</td>
<td>5.04 jin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 lbs</td>
<td>2.27 kg</td>
<td>2.54 jin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 lbs</td>
<td>1.82 kg</td>
<td>2.02 jin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 lbs</td>
<td>1.36 kg</td>
<td>1.56 jin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 lbs</td>
<td>.91 kg</td>
<td>1.06 jin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 lb</td>
<td>.45 kg</td>
<td>.53 jin</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Zhèr yǒu sān ge rén.
Liǎng ge shì gùkè,
yī ge shì shòuhuòyuán.
Zhèr yǒu nóngmín, yǒu gōngrén.
Nóngmín zài gōngzuò.
Nǐ cái gōngrén zài zuò shénme?

Answer:

[Image of people working]
UNIT TWO: WHO ARE YOU?

SEGMENT F
Skill: To provide and obtain information on professions.

Wǒ shì _____________ I am a _____________.
(Fill in your occupation using Pinyin; see below.)

Wǒ xiǎng zuò ge___________. I would like to be a _____________.
(Fill in what you would like to be.)

Wǒ yěxǔ zuò ge___________. Perhaps I’ll be a___________.

- xuésheng student
- lǎoshi teacher
- hūshī nurse
- yǐshēng doctor
- míshū secretary
- lǜshī lawyer
- jīngchá police officer
- shòuhùyuán salesclerk
- fúwùyuán attendant, clerk, waitperson
- gōngrén worker, laborer
- nóngmín farmer, peasant

zuò to do
gàn to do, to engage in

Wǒ bù dōng. I don’t understand.
Qing zài shuō yí cì. Please repeat ...
Qing shuō màn yìdiān. Please speak more slowly.

Ni zuò shénme gōngzuò? What (work) do you do?
Ni de gōngzuò shì shénme? What is your occupation?
Ni jiānglái xiāng zuò shénme? What would you like to do in the future?
Ni xiāng gàn shénme? What would you like to do?
Dialogue Practice

The following sets of dialogues presume normal behavior, no unusual circumstances, and no misunderstandings in the contexts indicated. "A" begins the dialogue, "B" responds, "A" responds to "B," etc. Where there is a choice of responses available, please circle the one which is more appropriate.

I. (Two women, previously unacquainted, have struck up a conversation on a train.)

A: Ni zuò shénme gōngzuò?
B: 1. Wǒ shì gōngrén. Nǐ ne?
   2. Wǒ shì xiǎojìe. Nǐ ne?

   2. Wǒ shì hūshī.

B: 1. Zuò hūshī hěn hǎo. 
   2. Gōngrén dōu tài pàng.

   2. Zhèn duìbùqǐ.

II. (Two classmates are chatting.)

A: Ni jiānglái xiàng zuò shénme?
B: 1. Xiāopéngyǒu. 

A: 1. Lǎoshī dōu hěn máng. 
   2. Xiāopéngyǒumén dōu hǎo ma?

B: 1. Hái kěyǐ, xièxié. 
   2. Shì.

III. (A is asking B about the family background of a mutual acquaintance.)

A: Xiǎo Wáng de bāba shì zuò shénme de?
B: 1. Tā bāba sǐshì suí le. 
   2. Tā shì nǎngmín.

A: 1. Tāmen jiā zài nàr? 
   2. Lǎo Zhāng duō dà suishu le?

B: 1. Zài Táiwān. 
   2. Tā nián wǔ niánjǐ.

IV. (A is daydreaming while B is studying.)

A: Lúshī, jīngchá, yǐshēng, dōu hǎo ma?
B: 1. Wǒ bù dōng. Shénme yísì? 
   2. Tā fēicháng gāo.

A: 1. Zuò lúshī, jīngchá, yǐshēng, dōu hǎo ma? 
   2. Wǒ yě tīng pàng.

B: 1. Zuò jīngchá hái kěyǐ. Lúshī, yǐshēng bù tài hǎo. 
   2. Shéi? Shéi shì shǒu huò yuán?

V. (A and B have been riding the bus together for some weeks; A decides to get to know B.)

A: Ni de gōngzuò shì shénme?
B: 1. Wǒ jiā zhù Shīwǔ Jié. 
   2. Wǒ shì fúwùyuán.

A: 1. Shéi xiǎng zuò diányuán? 
   2. Zuò fúwùyuán hǎo ma?

B: 1. Bú tài hǎo. 
   2. Wǒ shì shǒu huò yuán.
Aspirations

David and Li are walking together to the cafeteria for lunch.

Li: David, nǐ fùmǔ shì zuò shénme de?  
David: Wǒ bàba shì zhòngxué lǎoshī,  
wǒ māma shì hūshi. Nǐ fùmǔ ne?

Li: Tāmen dōu shì yīshēng. Nǐ jiānglái  
xǐǎng gàn shénme?

David: Bù zhīdào. Yěxù dāng gōngrén ba.  

Li: (laughing)  
Hǎojí le.

David: Nǐ ne? Nǐ xiǎng zuò shénme?

Li: Wǒ yě xiǎng zuò yīshēng.

---

Culture notes

A professional title is often used as a form of address in social intercourse. Thus, Wang the teacher would be called “Wáng Lǎoshī,” Wang the doctor “Wáng Yīshēng,” Wang the lawyer “Wáng Lǜshī,” etc.

Professionals in Chinese societies enjoy the same prestige as in the West, with the exception of lawyers. Since the American adversarial legal system does not exist in the PRC or Taiwan, the Chinese have far less need for lawyers than Americans. As a result, lawyers are not really recognized as a professional group. Scientists and engineers, on the other hand, are well respected as a group, and enjoy perhaps more visibility than in the U.S.

In traditional China, traders and merchants were regarded as money-mongers without a great deal of education. Business-people today still suffer some lingering disdain, but this is rapidly changing as international trade and finance begin to require greater amounts of skill, training, and general education, and earn sizable incomes.

Another occupation that is undergoing change is entertaining. In imperial China, entertainers were near the bottom of the social scale. They were seen as immoral pariahs on the fringes of society, who lived off the largesse of citizens. In contemporary society on the other hand, successful entertainers have become media stars. Their fabulous wealth and lifestyles have made them the role models of many young people.

Teachers in both China and the west are accorded a certain amount of respect by society, but since this is not matched with high salaries, they are not seen to have any real clout. Thus teaching is not a prestigious occupation, although university professors everywhere enjoy some esteem for their erudition.
Structure notes

1. Wǒ shì xuèshēng, tā shì lǎoshi etc. are examples of sentence pattern #1: Subject + Equative Verb + Noun, where the nouns are names of professions.

2. Another basic sentence pattern is as follows.

\[3a. \text{Subject} + [bù] + \text{Modal verb} + \text{Verb} + \text{Object}\]

Wǒ xiǎng zuò jīngchá. I think/plan/intend to + to become + police officer.
I would like to become a police officer.

Ni xiǎng gàn shénme? You + think/plan/intend to + to do + what?
What are you thinking of doing?

Xiǎng is an example of a class of words called modal verbs, which precede verbs and adjectives and say something about the subject’s willingness, ability, need etc. to perform an action or enter into a state (xiǎng xǐxiè tā = to intend to thank him/her; xiǎng shōn yíbīn = to want to become thinner). Xiǎng indicates that the subject intends, plans, or is considering carrying out an action. Modal verbs meaning “to want/wish to,” “to hope to,” “to be willing to” etc. will appear later.

3. Shénme is a question-word meaning “what.” Other question-words or phrases include shéi (who), shénme shíhou (when), nár (where), wèi shénme (why), and zhènme (how).

Structure exercise

Please fill in the blanks in the narrative below, based on the English equivalent, about a middle-aged malcontent named Zhang.

Lǎo Zhāng, tā shì ge __________. Jīnnián __________________. Tā

shēnggāo __________________, tūzhòng yǒu __________________. Tā hěn

________, yě hěn ______. Tā jīnnián niàn dàxué ______________. Tā

bù xiǎng zuò __________ le; tā jiānglái __________ hūshì.

Old Zhang, he’s a policeman. He’s forty-two (years old) this year. He’s 6 feet tall, 170 lbs. in weight. He’s dark, and he’s strong. He’s (studying) in the third year of college this year. He doesn’t want to be a policeman anymore; he’s planning to become a nurse in the future.
UNIT TWO: WHO ARE YOU?

SEGMENT G
Skill: To provide and obtain information on nationality.

Wǒ shì ________ rén. I am a native of ________.
(Fill in your nationality using Pinyin)

(Wǒ huì shuō _________. I can speak _________.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Language</th>
<th>(Transliteration)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Méiguó</td>
<td>America, the U.S.</td>
<td>(Yīngwén, Yīngyǔ)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jiānádà</td>
<td>Canada</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Àodáliyà</td>
<td>Australia</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Language</th>
<th>(Transliteration)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yǎzhōu</td>
<td>Asia</td>
<td>Zhōngguó</td>
<td>(Zhōngwén, Zhōngguóhuà)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ribèn</td>
<td>(Rìwén, Ribènhuà, Rìyǔ)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Hánguó, Cháoxián</td>
<td>(Hánwén, Hánguóhuà, Hányǔ)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Yíndù</td>
<td>(Yíndwén, Yíndhuà, Yíndyǔ)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Southeast Asia</td>
<td>Dōngnányà</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Zhōngdōng</td>
<td>The Middle East</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Language</th>
<th>(Transliteration)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Œuzhōu</td>
<td>Europe</td>
<td>Yingguó</td>
<td>(Yīngwén, Yīngyǔ)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Fáguó</td>
<td>(Fǎwén, Fáguóhuà, Fǎyǔ)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Dégúó</td>
<td>(Déwén, Dégúóhuà, Déyǔ)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Xībǎnyá</td>
<td>(Xībǎnyáwén, Xībǎnyáhuà, Xībǎnyáyǔ)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Éguó</td>
<td>(Éwén, Éguóhuà, Éyǔ)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

guójì nationality

Nǐ shì nèi guó rén? Of which country are you a native?
Nǐ cóng nár lái de? Where do you come from?
Nǐ jiā zài nár? Where is your home?
Nǐ huǐ shuō nèi guó huà? What language(s) can you speak?
Dialogue Practice

The following sets of dialogues presume normal behavior, no unusual circumstances, and no misunderstandings in the contexts indicated. "A" begins the dialogue, "B" responds, "A" responds to "B," etc. Where there is a choice of responses available, please circle the one which is more appropriate.

I. *A and B are classmates in an international school who have just met.*

A: Nǐ shì cóng nǎr lái de?
  B: 1. Wǒ hěn xǐhuān Riběn.  
      2. Wǒ shì cóng Yàzhōu lái de.

A: 1. Riběn rén dōu hěn gāo mà? 
     2. Yàzhōu nǐ guò?
  B: 1. Nán Cháoxiàn. 
     2. Yǎndū rén hěn hǎokàn.

    2. Wǒ shì Cháoxiàn rén.

II. *(A, a Chinese, is curious about B, who is obviously a foreigner. They are in a park.)*

A: Nǐ jiā zài Òōzhōu mà?
  B: 1. Duì, zài Dēguó. 
     2. Bù duì, wǒ shì Xībānyà rén.

A: 1. Jiānándà zài Òōzhōu mà? 
    2. Nǐ shì zuò shènme de?
  B: 1. Wǒ shì xuéshēng. 
     2. Jiānándà hěn dà.

III. *(A and B are classmates at an international school.)*

A: Nǐ shì nèi guó rén?
  B: 1. Wǒ bù huì shuō Fáwén. 
      2. Wǒ cóng Éguó lái.

    2. Wǒ bù huì shuō Rìwén.
  B: 1. Tài hǎo le! 
     2. Zhēn duì duì qǐ.

IV. *(A and B are two Asians meeting in the U.S.)*

A: Nǐ huì shuō shènme huà?
  B: 1. Zhōngwén, Yīngwén, Rìwén. 
      2. Nǐ yě huì shuō Dèyǔ mà?

A: 1. Duìduì qǐ, bù huì shuō. 
    2. Nǐ shì Zhōngguó rén mà?
  B: 1. Méiyǒu guānxì. 
     2. Bù, wǒ shì Riběn rén.

V. *(A is a Chinese from the countryside who doesn’t know much about foreigners.)*

A: Méiguó rén shuō shènme huà?
  B: 1. Shuō Yīngwén. 
      2. Méiguó rén bù shuō huà.

A: 1. Shéi huì shuō Yīngwén? 
    2. Yīngwén? Bù shì Méiguó rén shuō Yīngwén mà?
On foreign languages

Zhang, Li, and three other students are practicing speaking English with David. A teacher of Russian stops to observe the group. A conversation ensues.

Li: Lāoshi, wǒmen zài liànshí shuō Yīngyǔ. Teacher, we are practicing speaking English.

Teacher: (looking at David) Ei, nǐ Yīngwén shuō de zhēn hǎo. Hey, you speak English really well.

(Everyone laughs.)

Zhāng: Lāoshi, tā shì Měiguórén a. He is an American, teacher.

Teacher: Aa? Huh?

David: Wǒ cóng Měiguó lái de. Wǒ shì Měiguóguójí de Zhōngguórén. I come from America.

I am a Chinese of American nationality.

Li: Tā shì Měijiā Huárén. He is Chinese-American.

Zhāng: Tā hui shuō Yīngyǔ, yě hui shuō Zhōngguóhuà. Tā zhēn xíng. He can speak English, and he can also speak Chinese. He’s really something.

David: Lāoshi shì nár de rén? Where do you come from, teacher?

Teacher: Wǒ shì běndìrén, kěshì wǒ hùi shuō Éwén. Hǎo ba. Nǐmen liànshí ba. I am from here, but I can speak Russian. Well then, you go ahead and practice.

Zǎijìàn. Goodbye.

All: Lāoshi zǎijìàn. Goodbye, teacher.

Culture notes

In most nations of the world (but not the U.S., yet), the study of foreign languages is treated as a basic required subject in school, and begins early in the elementary grades. English is very popular in Taiwan and the People’s Republic of China. American, Canadian, British, and Australian students, tourists, and business-people in China are often approached by local people looking for an opportunity to practice speaking English.

As noted previously, a professional title is often used as a form of address, either alone (Lāoshi) or preceded by the surname (Li Lāoshi). In the dialogue above, the students consistently address the teacher by his title, “Lāoshi.” Often, the title even replaces the term “you” in direct address, as in David’s question “Lāoshi shì nár de rén?” (rather than “Nǐ shì nár de rén?”). This is a sign of politeness, of deference towards a social superior. The use of the title signifies recognition of the relatively higher social status of the holder of the title, whereas “bǐ” is used widely among social equals or by a superior in reference to an inferior. As an extension of this principle, children sometimes substitute “mom” or “dad” for “you” in direct address, as in “I don’t like onions; does Mom like onions?” instead of “Do you like onions, Mom?”
Structure notes

1. Wǒ shì Měiguó rén is a further example of Pattern #1: Subject + Equative Verb + Noun. The noun here is “an American,” which consists of Měiguó (America) modifying rén (person).

2. Wǒ huì shuō Zhōngguó huà illustrates Pattern #3a: Subject + Modal verb + Verb + Object. The modal verb huì means "to know how to (do something)," indicating a learned skill. The verb shuō means "to speak" or "to say."

Structure exercise

Please write answers to the following questions about yourself.

Nǐ shì shénme guójì?

Nǐ jiā zài nǎr?

Nǐ huì shuō Yàzhōu de shénme huà?

Nǐ huì shuō Óuzhōu de shénme huà?

Nǐ jiānglái xiāng zuò shénme?

Nǐ shēngrì shì jǐ yuè jǐ hào?

Nǐ yǒu duō gāo, duō zhòng?

Nǐ juéde nǐ hǎokàn ma?
UNIT TWO: WHO ARE YOU?

SEGMENT H

Skill: To provide and obtain information on family members.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relative</th>
<th>Chinese</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>xiăohái</td>
<td>child</td>
<td>child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nŭ’ér</td>
<td>daughter</td>
<td>daughter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>érzi</td>
<td>son</td>
<td>son</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mùqin</td>
<td>mother</td>
<td>mother</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>māma</td>
<td>mama</td>
<td>mother</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jiējie</td>
<td>older sister</td>
<td>older sister</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mèimei</td>
<td>younger sister</td>
<td>younger sister</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fūqin</td>
<td>father</td>
<td>father</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bāba</td>
<td>papa</td>
<td>papa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gēge</td>
<td>older brother</td>
<td>older brother</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>didi</td>
<td>younger brother</td>
<td>younger brother</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Shéi shí shéi?

bóbú  paternal uncle (father’s older brother)
shūshū  paternal uncle (father’s younger brother)
yéye  paternal grandfather
wàigōng  maternal grandfather
bómú  paternal aunt (wife of father’s older brother)
áyí  maternal aunt (mother’s sister)
nàinái  paternal grandmother
wàipó  maternal grandmother

Ni yóu ___ ma?
Zhè shì nǐ de ___ ma?
Nimen shì jiēmēi ma?
Nimen shì xiōngdì ma?
Ni yóu xiōngdì jiēmēi ma?
Nimen méiyóu xiăohái ma?

Do you have a ___?
Is this your ___?
Are you sisters?
Are you brothers?
Do you have brothers & sisters?
Don’t you have any children?
Dialogue Practice

The following sets of dialogues presume normal behavior, no unusual circumstances, and no misunderstandings in the contexts indicated. "A" begins the dialogue, "B" responds, "A" responds to "B," etc. Where there is a choice of responses available, please circle the one which is more appropriate.

I. (A and B are new acquaintances.)

A: Nǐ yǒu xiōngdì jiēmèi ma?
B: 1. Tāmen bù tài pāng.
   2. Yǒu.

A: 1. Shéi yǒu gége jiējie?
   2. Dōu shì shénme rèn?
B: 1. Shì yí ge jiējie, yí ge dìdi.
   2. Duìbuqǐ, wǒ méiyǒu.

II. (A runs into B on a street. B is leading a little girl.)

A: Zhè shì nǐ de nǚér ma?
B: 1. Bù, wǒ wǒ méimeī.
    2. Shì, shì wǒ nàinai.

A: 1. Tā duó dà suíshū le?
    2. Tā jǐ suí le?
B: 1. Liù suí bàn.
    2. Jūshǐwǔ suí.

III. (A, a boy, runs into a couple, B, friends of his parents.)

A: Wàng shūshū, Wàng āyí,
    nǐmen háo.
B: 1. Tāmen hái kěyǐ, xièxiè.
    2. Êi, Jūnuó. Nǐ hāo. Māma
    bàba dōu hǎo ma?

A: 1. Nǐ yǒu shūshū, āyí ma?
    2. Hǎo, xièxiè.
B: 1. Jīnhuá, zàijiān.
    2. Duìbuqǐ, měiyǒu.

IV. (An American learning Chinese is chatting with two Chinese women who look alike.)

A: Nǐmen shì jiēmèi ma?
B: 1. Bù, tā shì wǒ de āyí.
    2. Yǒu, wǒ yǒu liǎng ge jiējie.

A: 1. O? Shì nǐ màma de
    méimeī ma?
    2. Tāmen dōu duó duó dà le?
B: 1. Yì ge èrshì suí, yí ge shìbā suí.
    2. Shì.

V. (A is inquiring about his colleague B's family.)

A: Lǎo Zhāng, nǐ yǒu xiǎohái
    ma?
B: 1. Wǒ yǒu yí ge dìdi.
    2. Yǒu, yǒu yí ge.

A: 1. Tā cóng nǎr lái de?
    2. Shì nǚ ér ma?
B: 1. Bù, shì shì érzi.
    2. Tā jiù suí le.
Family

David and Zhang are on their way to a local noodle shop on a weekend. On the street, they run into Li Zhongying, who is walking with an older woman and a child.

Lǐ:  Hi, David, Xiǎo Zhāng.  
(to Zhang)  Zhě shì wǒ māmɑ. Zhě shì wǒ mēimèi.
David:  Lǐ bómù hǎo.  
Zhāng:  Lǐ bómù hǎo.  

(The mother smiles and nods at each of them.)

Zhāng:  Xiǎo mēimeī jǐ suì le?  
Sister:  Wǒ shì suì le.  
David:  Tā hǎo piàoliɑng.  
Mother:  Bù zènme piàoliɑng.  
Nǐ jiù shì Zhāng Dēshèng ba?  
Zhāng:  Wǒ jiù shì.  
David:  Zhōngyìng, bōfū hē nǐ dìdì ne?  
Lǐ:  Tāmen dōu zài jiālǐ.  
Zhāng:  O, nǐ hǎi yǒu yī ge dìdì.  
Lǐ:  Duì, tā shīwǔ suì le.  

How old are you, little sister?  
I am ten.  
She's very pretty.  
She's not particularly pretty.  
I take it you are Zhang Desheng?  
I am.  
Zhongying, so where are Uncle (your father) and your brother?  
They are both at home.  
Oh, you have a younger brother too.  
Right, he's fifteen.

Culture notes

Social acquaintances in Chinese communities like to treat each other as if they were members of an extended family. Children in general are addressed as "little sister" or "little brother," and the parents of one’s friends as "uncle" or "aunt." Bómù/hòmù (uncle, aunt) are commonly used by adults for people of their parent's generation (who are likely to be advanced in age), while shīshī/γyi (uncle, aunt) are used by children in reference to their parent’s friends (who are likely to be no more than middle-aged).

Social superiors (by status or age) are acknowledged upon meeting. Zhang and David acknowledge Li’s mother by using her “title”—bómù—in the greeting. Thus they say Bómù hǎo or Bómù nǐn hǎo rather than simply Nǐ hǎo. The response to such a greeting is often wordless—simply a nod (or a series of nods), a grunt, a smile, or some combination of the three, as in Mrs. Li’s response to David and Zhang in this conversation.

Compliments paid are often denied by the recipient, to express modesty. Traditionally, a Chinese does not say “Thank you” in response to a personal compliment of any kind. Rather, some sort of demurral is in order. Furthermore, compliments are offered only to a social equal, or by a social superior to a social inferior. A Chinese student would be very unlikely to compliment a teacher on his or her appearance, for instance. In the conversation above, it is natural for Zhang to compliment the little girl (but not her mother), and for her mother to deny the compliment. Current fashion, however, under the influence of the West, permits “acceptance” of personal compliments when given.
Structure notes

1. The following are fundamental sentence structures in Chinese.

3. Subject + [bù] + Verb + Object

Tā shuō Yīngwén. *She speaks English.*

Tā bù shuō Zhōngwén. *She doesn’t speak Chinese.*

4. Subject + Verb + Number + Measure + Noun

Wǒ yǒu yī ge jiějie. *I have an older sister.*

Wǒ yǒu liǎng ge diđi. *I have two little brothers.*

2. One meaning of the verb yǒu is “to have.” (Other meanings will be introduced later.) It is unlike other Chinese verbs in that it is negated by the adverb méi—the opposite of yǒu is méiyǒu—whereas other verbs are generally negated by the adverb bù.

3. Measure words are characteristic of Chinese. They exist in English, too, but not as pervasively: one speaks of a piece of candy, a lump of coal, a sheet of paper. In this lesson, the Chinese measure word ge applies to people: English does not have the equivalent measure word for individual people that Chinese utilizes—sān ge rén in Chinese is simply “three people” in English. Measure words will be discussed in greater detail in Unit 5c.

4. De has been used before to indicate possession: wǒ de shēngrì means “my birthday.” When the possessive refers to a close personal relationship, however, such as in “my mother,” “my father,” etc., the de is generally omitted. Wǒ māma is more common than wǒ de māma.

Structure exercise

*Write the following description in Chinese.*

Xiǎo Chén’s first name is Bīngxīn. She has four younger brothers and one younger sister. Her younger sister is a doctor. Two younger brothers are lawyers, one is a salesclerk, and one is a senior in high school. Xiǎo Chén has a daughter who has turned five. She has no son. Her sister has a son but no daughter.