

young times

Solve the Chinese puzzle

Wouldn't you love to learn Mandarin? From today Young Times readers can get a month of free lessons without having to leave the house, writes **Chloe Lambert**

The exotic brush strokes and strange-sounding tones of the Chinese language may seem daunting, but don't be put off. It's great fun, and now's the time to get ahead!

China used to be called the sleeping giant, but now it's the fastest-growing economy in the world. It is leading the way in business and technology, and British companies are desperate to find people who can communicate in Mandarin — the most widely used Chinese language.

Chinese can be a tough language for Westerners to learn. Unlike English, there is no alphabet. Instead there are thousands of different characters, which are put together to make words.

The Chinese also use something called a tonal system, which means a word's meaning depends on how you say it. The word *ma*, for example, can mean mother, horse, or hemp, depending on which tone you use. If you like singing, you'll love Chinese!

The Government is keen for British children to master the basics, and more schools are offering lessons in the language.

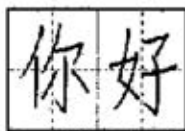
Now a new website that's specially designed for children allows you to learn at home.

The website, www.kidschineseclub.com, features video lessons with Daisy, an 18-year-old English girl who is already fluent in Mandarin Chinese. She takes you through speaking, writing, reading and listening to Chinese, in easy steps.



hello

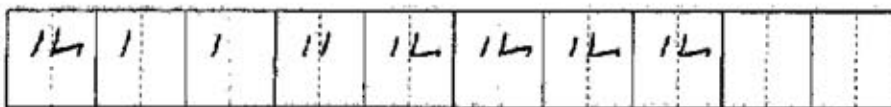
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Try it yourself
Here's Daisy's guide to writing "hello" in Chinese. Follow the steps to create the two characters, which translate literally as "you good"

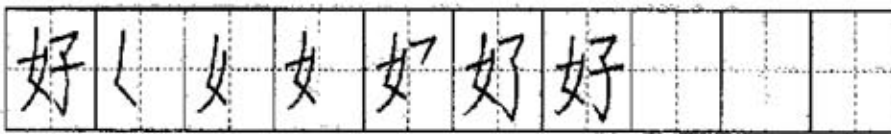
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PUZZLES

It's a fact

Test your knowledge. Get the answers on Monday!

1. What does an aviator do?

(a) Collect birds (b) Fly an aircraft

2. What is the fastest land animal?

(a) The cheetah (b) The leopard (c) The panther

Yesterday's answer

All months have 28 days

Scramble

What children's TV programme can be made from these letters?

CHIC OLIVE SUNK

Yesterday's puzzle answer

Factory

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Would you like Blurb and the author Ian Beck to visit your school? Tell us why in 50 words and e-mail youngtimes@thetimes.co.uk by Monday, March 16

Here's a smart piece of literary wisdom for you...

Outside of a dog, a book is a man's best friend

Inside of a dog, it's too dark to read

BY TOM SEARS tomsears@hotmail.com