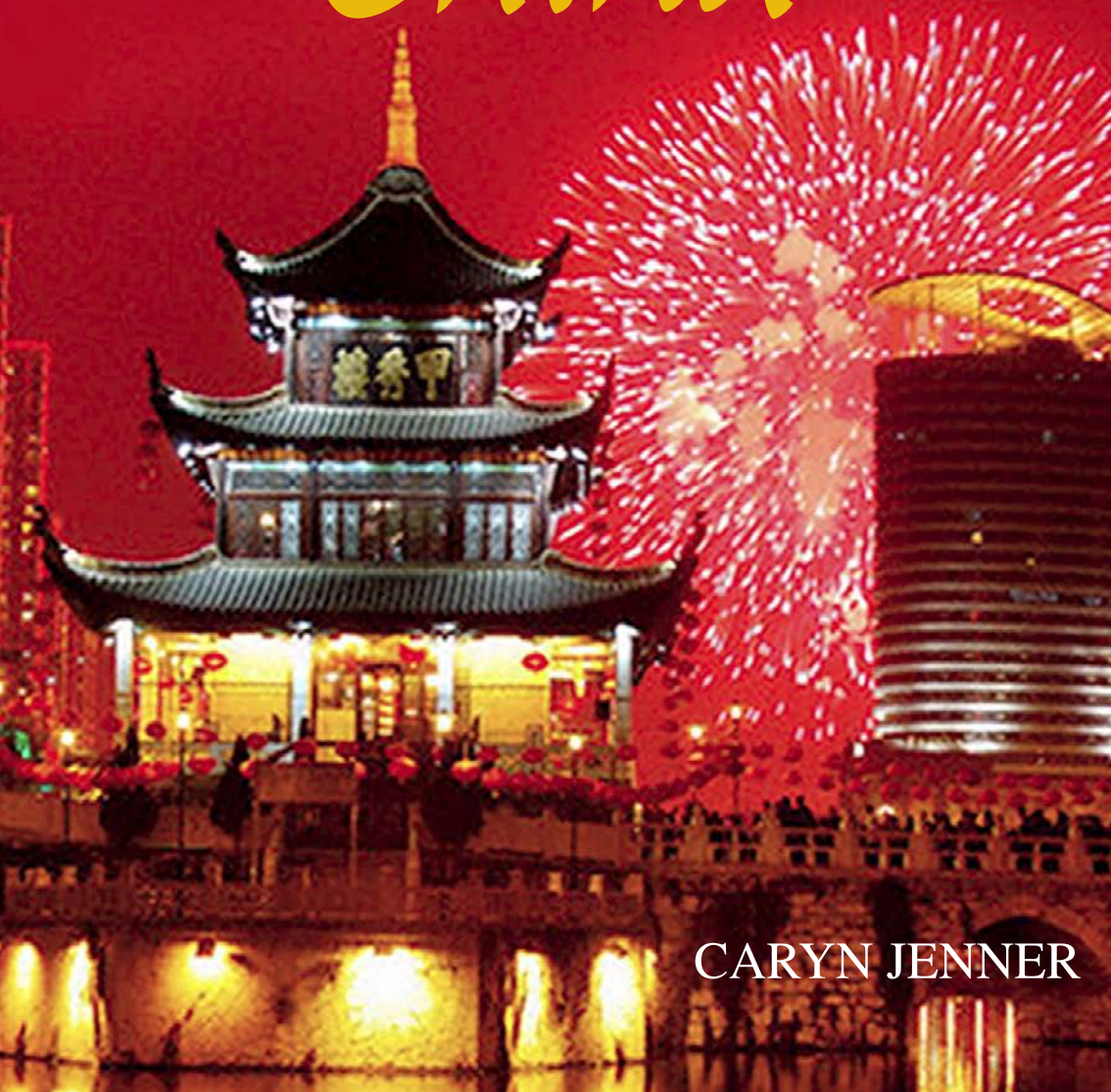




READERS



# Welcome to China



CARYN JENNER

# READERS

## Level 3

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Spacebusters: The Race to the Moon  
Beastly Tales  
Shark Attack!  
Titanic  
Invaders from Outer Space  
Movie Magic  
Plants Bite Back!  
Time Traveler  
Bermuda Triangle  
Tiger Tales  
Aladdin  
Heidi  
Zeppelin: The Age of the Airship  
Spies  
Terror on the Amazon  
Disasters at Sea  
The Story of Anne Frank  
Abraham Lincoln: Lawyer, Leader, Legend  
George Washington: Soldier, Hero,  
President  
Extreme Sports

Spiders' Secrets  
The Big Dinosaur Dig  
Space Heroes: Amazing Astronauts  
The Story of Chocolate  
School Days Around the World  
Polar Bear Alert!  
Welcome to China  
NFL: Whiz Kid Quarterbacks  
MLB: Home Run Heroes: Big Mac, Sammy,  
and Junior  
MLB: World Series Heroes  
MLB: Record Breakers  
MLB: Down to the Wire: Baseball's Great  
Pennant Races  
Star Wars: Star Pilot  
Star Wars: I want to be a Jedi  
The X-Men School  
Abraham Lincoln: Abogado, Líder, Leyenda  
*en español*  
Al Espacio: La Carrera a la Luna  
*en español*  
Fantastic Four: The World's Greatest  
Superteam

---

## Level 4

---

Days of the Knights  
Volcanoes and Other Natural Disasters  
Secrets of the Mummies  
Pirates! Raiders of the High Seas  
Horse Heroes  
Trojan Horse  
Micro Monsters  
Going for Gold!  
Extreme Machines  
Flying Ace: The Story of Amelia Earhart  
Robin Hood  
Black Beauty  
Free at Last! The Story of  
Martin Luther King, Jr.  
Joan of Arc  
Spooky Spinechillers  
Welcome to The Globe! The  
Story of Shakespeare's Theater  
Antarctic Adventure  
Space Station: Accident on Mir  
Atlantis: The Lost City?  
Dinosaur Detectives  
Danger on the Mountain: Scaling  
the World's Highest Peaks  
Crime Busters  
The Story of Muhammad Ali  
First Flight: The Story of the  
Wright Brothers  
D-Day Landings: The Story of  
the Allied Invasion  
Solo Sailing  
Thomas Edison: The Great Inventor  
Dinosaurs! Battle of the Bones  
NFL: NFL's Greatest Upsets  
NFL: Rumbling Running Backs

NFL: Super Bowl!  
MLB: Strikeout Kings  
MLB: Super Shortstops: Jeter,  
Nomar, and A-Rod  
MLB: The Story of the New York Yankees  
MLB: The World of Baseball  
MLB: October Magic: All the Best  
World Series!  
WCW: Feel the Sting  
WCW: Going for Goldberg  
JLA: Batman's Guide to Crime  
and Detection  
JLA: Superman's Guide to the Universe  
JLA: Aquaman's Guide to the Oceans  
JLA: Wonder Woman's Book of Myths  
JLA: Flash's Guide to Speed  
JLA: Green Lantern's Guide to  
Great Inventions  
The Story of the X-Men: How it all Began  
Creating the X-Men: How Comic  
Books Come to Life  
Spider-Man's Amazing Powers  
The Story of Spider-Man  
The Incredible Hulk's Book of Strength  
The Story of the Incredible Hulk  
Transformers: The Awakening  
Transformers: The Quest  
Transformers: The Unicron Battles  
Transformers: The Uprising  
Transformers: Megatron Returns  
Transformers: Terracon Attack  
Star Wars: Galactic Crisis!  
Star Wars: Beware the Dark Side  
Fantastic Four: Evil Adversaries

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DK READERS is a compelling program for beginning readers, designed in conjunction with leading literacy experts, including Dr. Linda Gambrell, Distinguished Professor of Education at Clemson University. Dr. Gambrell has served as president of the National Reading Conference, the College Reading Association, and the International Reading Association.

Beautiful illustrations and superb full-color photographs combine with engaging, easy-to-read stories to offer a fresh approach to each subject in the series. Each DK READER is guaranteed to capture a child's interest while developing his or her reading skills, general knowledge, and love of reading.

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- Level 2:** Beginning to read alone
- Level 3:** Reading alone
- Level 4:** Proficient readers

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No matter which level you select, you can be sure that you are helping your child learn to read, then read to learn!





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**DK** READERS

READING  
**3**  
ALONE

# Welcome to China

Written by Caryn Jenner



DK Publishing

# China today

Welcome to China. This ancient nation is now home to more people than any other country. One-fifth of all the people in the world live here. That's a population of 1.3 billion people—one billion more than the United States.



*Chinese flag*

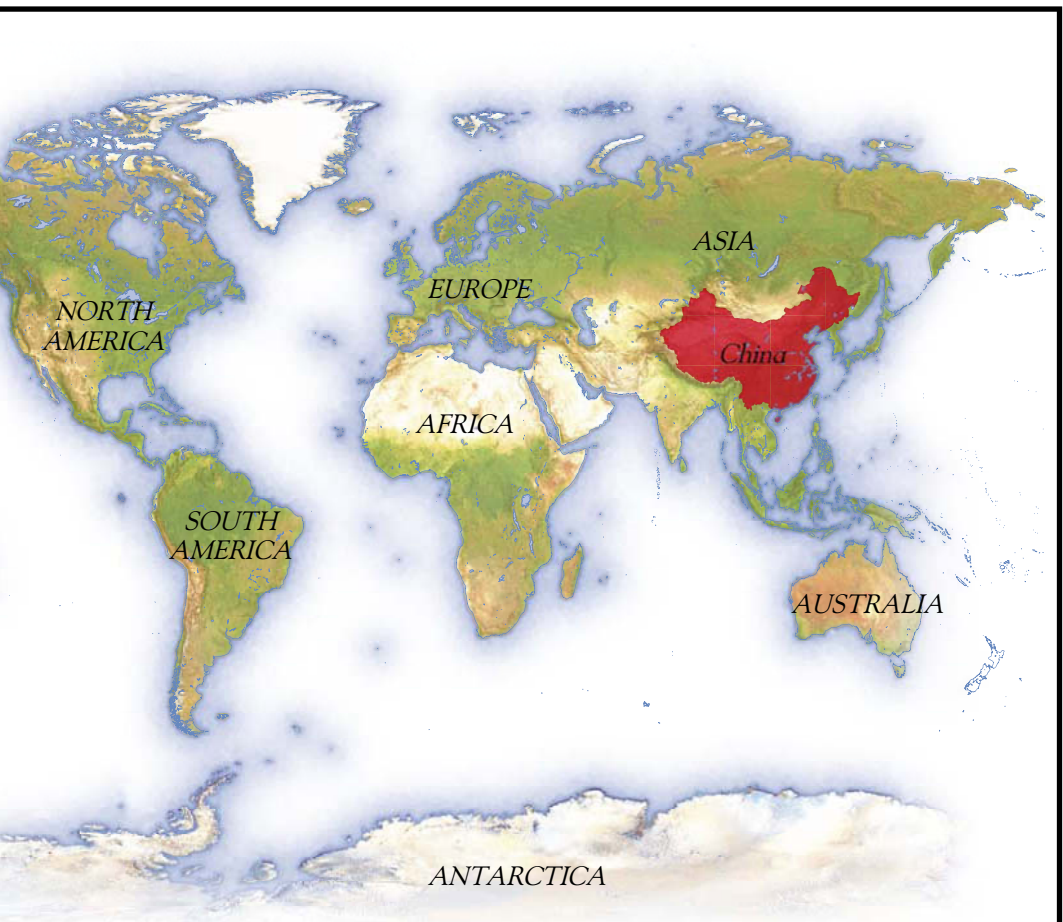


China

Zhōngguó

[jung-gwo]

中国

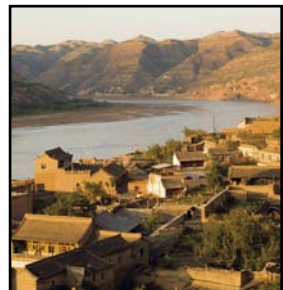


China is on the continent of Asia. It is one of the largest countries in the world, with an area of 3.7 million square miles (9.6 million square km). The Chinese name for the country, Zhōngguó [jung-gwo], means “Middle Kingdom.”

Most people in China live along the crowded east coast or near the Yangtze [yang-see] River. Both the Yangtze and the Yellow River cut across China, flowing eastward to the ocean. The rest of the country is mainly covered in deserts, mountains, and highlands. Fewer people live in these areas. The rocky Gobi Desert lies to the north. In the west, there are many mountains, including the world's tallest mountain, Mount Everest. Southern China has an unusual mountain landscape called "karst," with spectacular caves and rock formations.

### **Yellow River**

The Yellow River is 3,400 miles (5,464 km) long. It gets its name from the yellow mud and sand that is carried along by the current.







*Camels like these provide transportation across the deserts of northern China.*



*Hills made of limestone rise sharply from the fields of the karst landscape.*



More people speak Chinese than any other language. The most common form of Chinese

is called Mandarin, but people speak different forms in different parts of the country. The meaning of a word changes depending on how it is said. In Mandarin, the word *shu* [shoo] means “tree” when said with a short, sharp tone. But when it is said with a long, high tone, *shoo* means “book.”

*Student's workbook*



Hello!

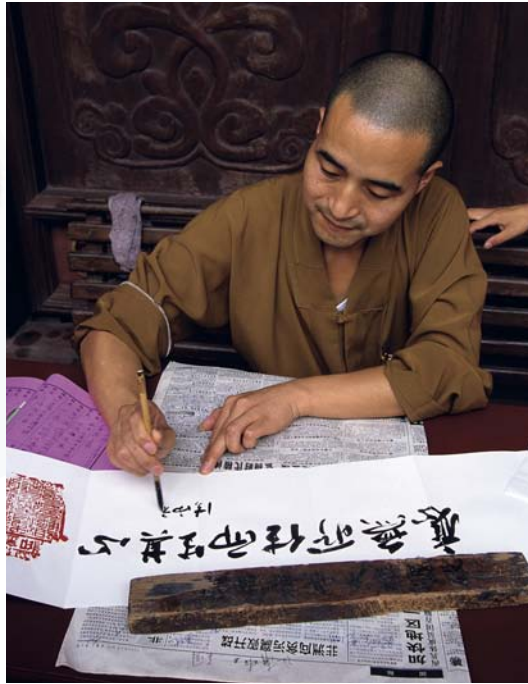
nǐ hǎo  
[nee how]

你好



Writing  
tools

Chinese  
calligrapher



Instead of an alphabet, Chinese writing uses characters. Each character stands for a word, and they can be added together to make new words. There are thousands of characters. About 2,000 are needed for simple reading and writing.

天

tiān

[tee-yan]  
day

昨天

zuótiān

[zwo-tee-yan]  
yesterday

今天

jīntiān

[jin-tee-yan]  
today

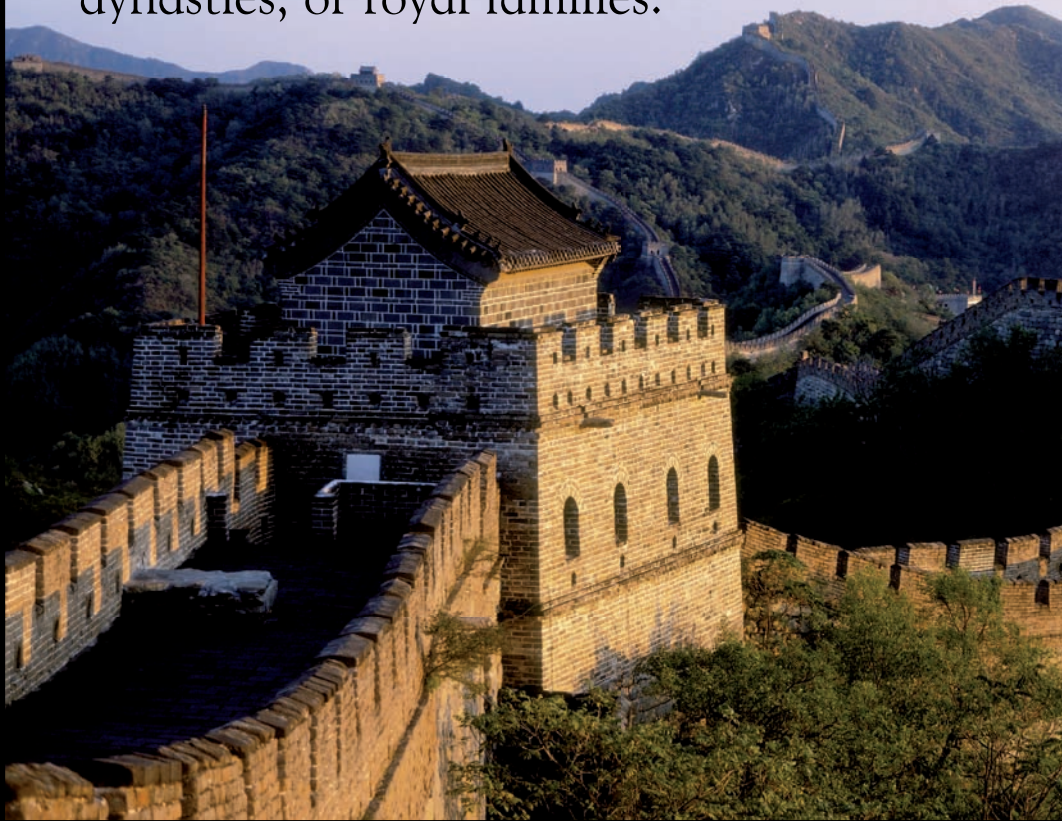
明天

míngtiān

[ming-tee-yan]  
tomorrow

# Chinese history

The culture of China is at least 4,000 years old, making it the oldest continuous civilization that we know about. Much of Chinese history can be divided into time periods based on dynasties, or royal families.



Each dynasty brought its own changes to the country.

During the Qin [chin] Dynasty, China was united by Qin Shi Huang [chin shee hwang], who is known as the first emperor of China. Construction began on the famous Great Wall, designed to protect the northern border of the kingdom, while thousands of clay warriors, called the Terracotta Army, were made to guard the emperor's tomb.



*The Terracotta Army*

During the Han Dynasty, the Silk Road became an important route for trading goods and ideas between countries of the East and West.

Paper was invented in the Han Dynasty, and the development of printing during the Song Dynasty led to the world's first printed books.

*Chinese merchants traded goods made from silk, bronze, and porcelain.*



*Porcelain camel*

*Bronze ornament*

*Silk cloth*



## *The Forbidden City*



During the Ming Dynasty, Beijing became the capital of China. A palace complex called the Forbidden City was built for the emperor's family. Ordinary people were not allowed to enter.

In 1911, the Qing [ching] Dynasty was defeated in a revolution, ending the tradition of Chinese emperors.

1368

*Ming*

1644

*Qing*

1911



In 1949, the Communist Party, led by Chairman Mao Zedong [mow zuh-dung], formed the People's Republic of China.

The Communists promised a nation in which everyone would be equal. But Mao made many laws without thinking of the good of the people. Millions starved due to a lack of food. Mao and his Red Guards punished anyone who disagreed with them. China became cut off from the rest of the world.

### Mao's Little Red Book

The Little Red Book contains Mao's famous sayings. People carried it with them to prove their loyalty to their leader.



*Timeline*

2000<sub>BCE</sub>

221<sub>BCE</sub>

207<sub>BCE</sub>

220

960

1279

*Prehistoric*

*Qin*

*Han*

*Song*



*Chairman Mao at a May Day celebration*



Mao died in 1976. Since then, China has raced forward into the modern age, and it is once more open to the rest of the world.

*China's Congress meets in the Great Hall of the People in Beijing.*



1368

1644

1911

1949

*Ming*

*Qing*

*Communist*

# Life in China

With so many people in China, there are not enough resources for everyone. The government limits the population by allowing families to have only one child, or in some cases two. Children are often called “little emperors” because they are so precious, but they also feel great pressure to make their families proud.





Children usually start school at age six. Classes are in Mandarin, but some schools also teach English as a second language. At age 14, students take an important test that is considered the key to a successful future. “Learning is a treasure that will follow its owner everywhere,” goes an old Chinese saying.

Friend

péngyou

[pung-yoh]

朋友

Traditionally, children in China lived in the same home as their parents, grandparents, and sometimes even their great-grandparents. Today, people move more often, and most homes are small, especially in the crowded cities.

Family and friends often gather for mealtimes. A Chinese meal is made up of many different dishes, which are shared by everyone. These usually include soup, dumplings, steamed and stir-fried dishes, plus plenty of rice or noodles. People use chopsticks to eat.



*Noodles*



*Dumplings*



*Dim sum*



Special foods are served on special occasions. For example, a dish of extra-long noodles on birthdays represents a wish for long life.

### **Chopsticks**

Using chopsticks takes practice. Keep the bottom chopstick still while using the top one to pick up food.





The center of every Chinese town or city is the busy market. There, people buy food, household items, clothes, and other goods. Amid the hustle and bustle, they can also get a haircut, be fitted for specially made clothes, have a foot massage, or see a fortune teller. The market smells of delicious steamed buns and echoes with the sounds of shopkeepers and customers bargaining over prices.

At the park, people relax. Some gather to practice tai chi [tie chee], an exercise of slow, relaxing movements. Others fly kites or play board games, such as Chinese chess or mah-jongg. Crowds gather around to watch.

*Chinese chess*



*Practicing tai chi in the park*





A graceful leap followed by a quick, strong kick: this is kung fu [kung foo], one of the ancient Chinese martial arts still practiced today. It is based on the idea of chi [chee], the energy flow between mind and body.

Many people in China enjoy both traditional and modern pastimes. Other popular sports include gymnastics and ping-pong, as well as basketball, baseball, and soccer.

*Ping-pong players in the park*



*Member of China's Olympic gymnastics team*





*Chinese opera*

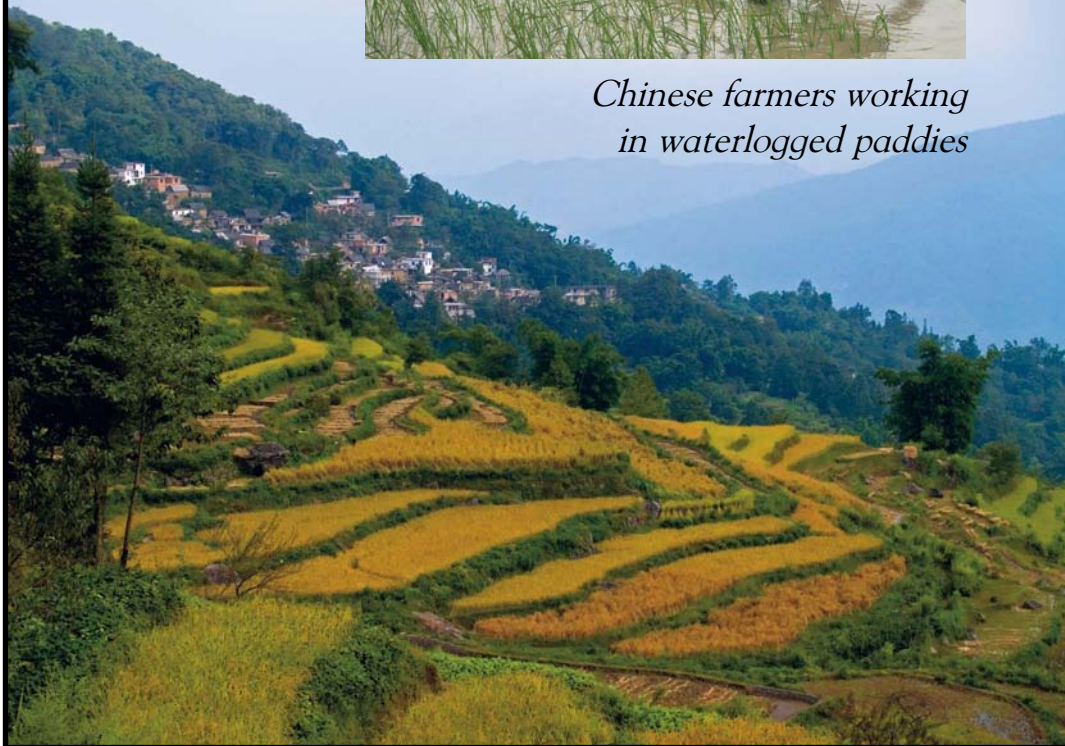
China also has a rich tradition of art and music. Many still practice calligraphy, using special brushes for writing characters, and the drama and costumes of Chinese opera have thrilled audiences for more than 1,000 years. These days, modern pop music is becoming more popular, especially among young people.

# In the countryside

Only about one-tenth of the land in China can be used for farming. Droughts and floods often make even this land difficult to farm.



*Chinese farmers working in waterlogged paddies*



More rice grows in China than anywhere else in the world, especially in the warm, wet climate of the south. Rice grows in wet fields called paddies. They may be located on flat river basins or on terraces cut into hillsides. Many farmers wade into the wet paddies to plant the rice seedlings by hand.

Other important crops include wheat, soy beans, sweet potatoes, and many kinds of fruit. In fact, apples were first grown in ancient China.



*Soy beans*



*Sweet potato*



*Wheat*

Rice    mi or mǐfàn  
[mee] or [mee-fan]

米饭



*Wooden homes in a Chinese village*

Although more than half of China's population still works on farms, many people are leaving the countryside to move to the cities. Life is often difficult in the country. People can earn more in the city and then send money home to help their families.

## Ethnic minorities

Around 50 different minority groups, including the Mongol people, live in China. Most of these minority groups live in the countryside.



Moving to the city usually means living far from home, and perhaps only visiting once a year. In some families, both parents find jobs in the city. Grandparents or other relatives care for the children back in the country.

*A grandfather takes his grandson home from school.*



# Big cities

Chinese cities are very crowded—full of people, buildings, and traffic. The biggest city, Shanghai, has almost 17 million people, including several million residents who live there temporarily for work. The population of Beijing, the capital city, is 14 million.

*Shanghai  
business center*



At least 50 cities in China have populations of one million or more.

As more people move to the cities, the cities grow upward and outward. In some cities, too many people have moved in too quickly, and there are not enough homes and jobs for everyone.

### Chongqing

More than 30 million people live in the city of Chongqing [chong-ching], and the surrounding area. This very large city is in central China.





*Rush hour  
in Beijing*

Ting-a-ling! Once, China was known as a nation of bicycles. Now, the sound heard is “beep-beep” since more people can afford their own cars. However, with millions of new cars on the roads each year, there are massive traffic jams and high levels of pollution.

### **Maglev train**


The Maglev train in Shanghai is one of the fastest trains in the world. It takes less than eight minutes to travel along the 19-mile (30 km) track.





Traditional neighborhoods called “hutongs” [hoo-tongs] are made up of a maze of narrow lanes that lead to courtyards. Homes are arranged around the sides of the courtyards. Due to the rapid growth of cities, many hutongs are being knocked down to make way for modern apartment buildings that can house more people.






People in  
China usually  
work six days a week.

Many work in factories,  
making goods that are sold  
around the world. Factory workers  
often live in rooms on the factory site.  
Some factory sites are so big, they are  
like small cities.

Many people also work at construction  
sites, helping China's cities expand.  
New hotels and restaurants are opening  
all the time, due to the increase in  
tourism, and they need workers as well.

China's booming economy has  
helped some people get rich beyond  
their wildest dreams. Unfortunately,  
many others still struggle  
to get by.



*Workers in a  
factory, making  
electronic goods*





# The Yangtze

The Chinese name for the Yangtze means “long river.” In fact, it is the third longest river in the world. The Yangtze flows 3,900 miles (6,300 km) across the center of China, from the Qinghai [ching-hi] Plateau in the west to the East China Sea near Shanghai.



The Yangtze River Basin is the area that is irrigated by the river. It is ideal land for farming. Along the riverbanks are large cities, such as Chongqing, Wuhan, and Nanjing. Many boats sail along the eastern part of the Yangtze, from Chongqing to the coast.

*Traditional fishing nets are often used to catch fish in the Yangtze.*



Yangtze    Cháng Jiāng  
[chang jyang]

长江

On the Yangtze, between Chongqing and Wuhan, is the Three Gorges Dam, the biggest dam in the world. This enormous dam prevents flooding in areas downriver and uses river water to generate electricity.

However, to build the dam, an area of spectacular natural beauty was purposely flooded, and entire towns and villages disappeared under the water. Several million people had to move away. The dam has also harmed wildlife and the environment.

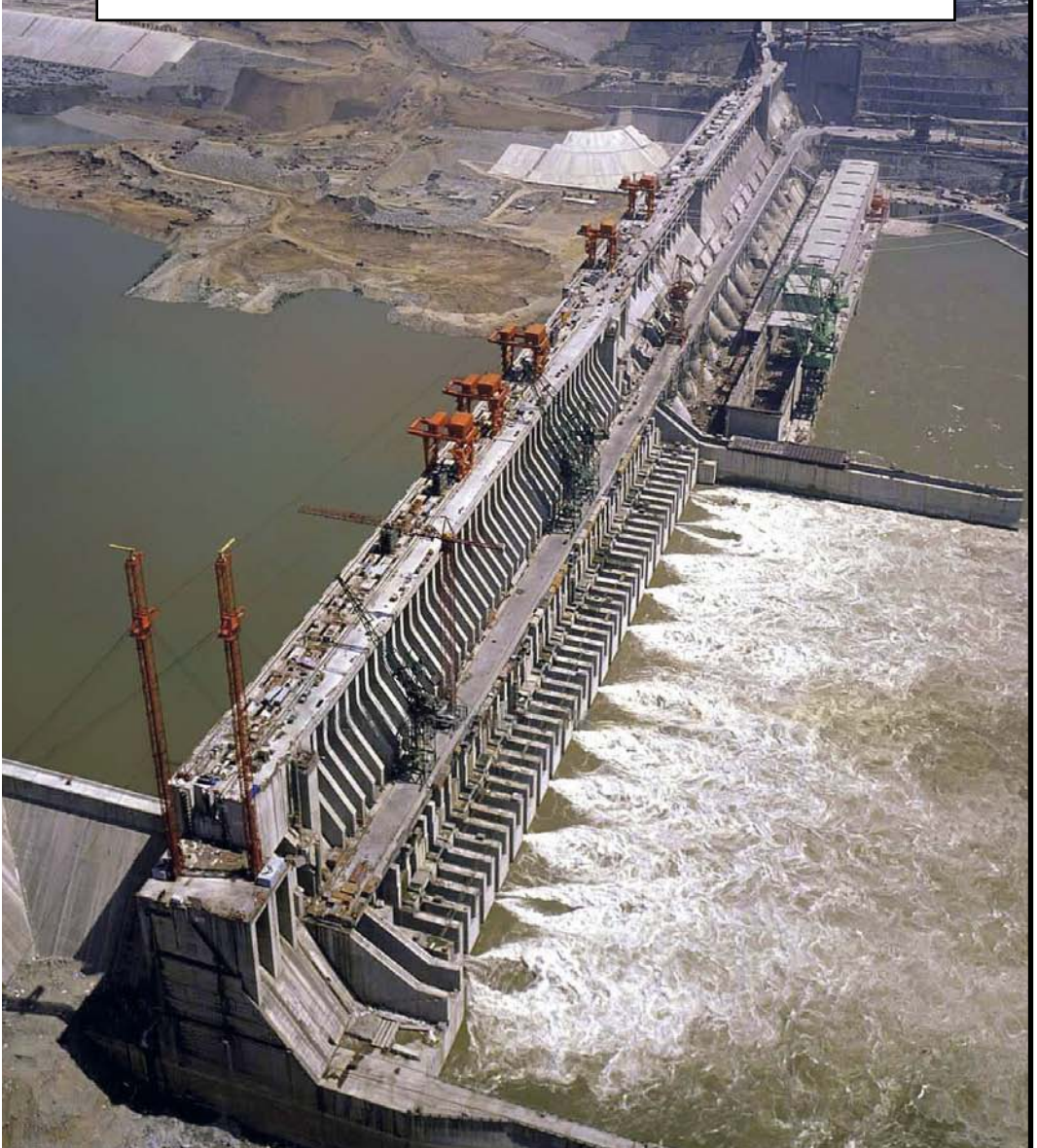


*The Lesser Gorge before the floods raised the water level*

The Three Gorges Dam has changed the Yangtze forever—both for the better and for the worse.

## Yangtze river dolphin

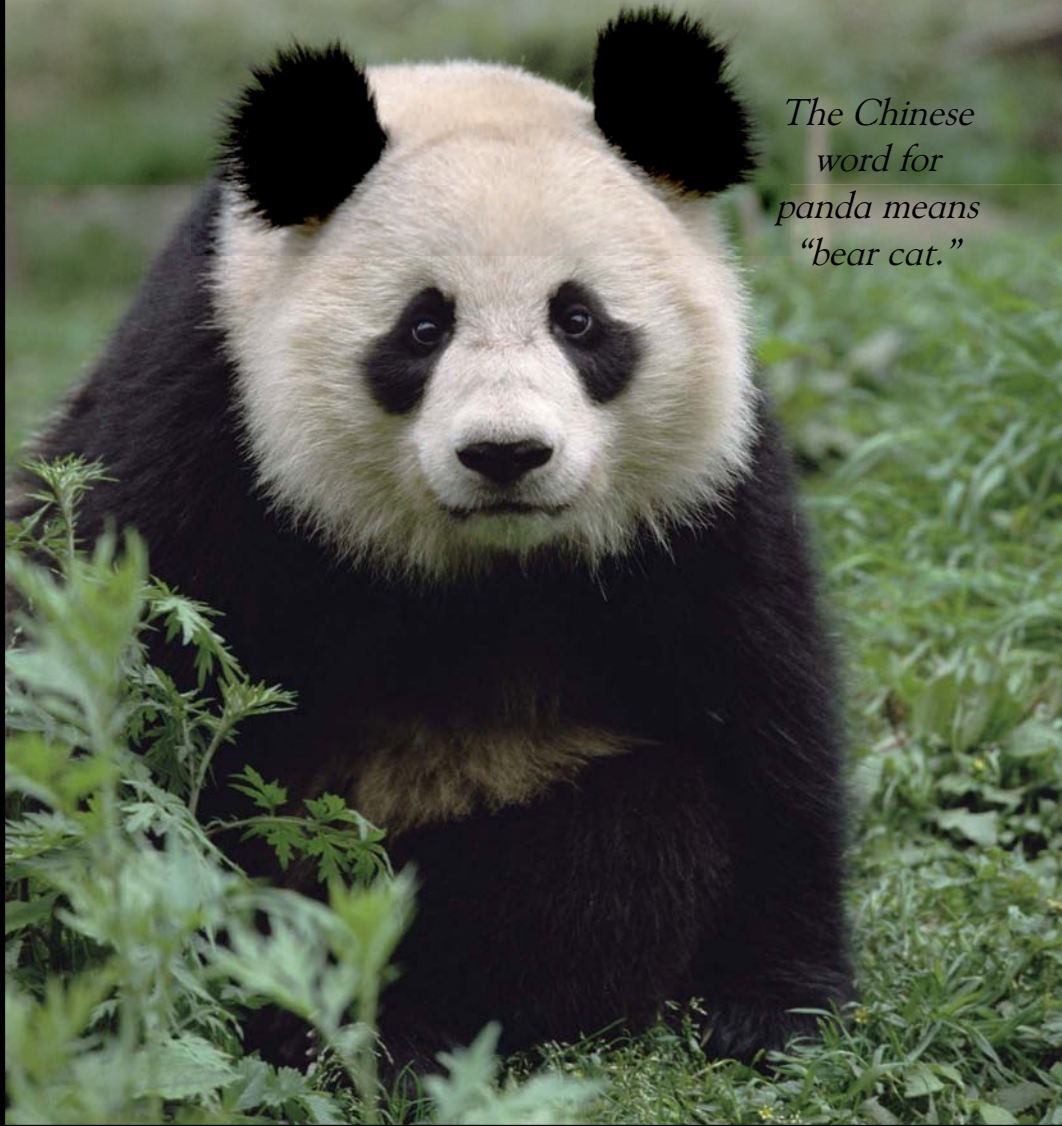
Experts believe that there may not be any river dolphins left in the Yangtze. These creatures were white and had long, narrow beaks.



# Saving the pandas

What has black-and-white fur and lives in China? Pandas, of course! Sadly, there are not many pandas left. They are an endangered species.

*The Chinese word for panda means “bear cat.”*





Pandas live in forests where they eat bamboo. Much of their habitat has been cleared for farming or building, which means there are now fewer pandas.

Animal experts in China are working to increase the panda population. They have set up reserves in Sichuan [seh-wan] Province to protect the remaining panda habitat. They also encourage pandas to have more babies. Slowly, the population is growing again.



*Bamboo*

Panda

xióngmāo

[shyong-mow]

熊猫



## Festival time

The Chinese enjoy celebrating. The Chinese calendar begins with the Spring Festival. Also known as the Chinese New Year, it is a noisy, colorful festival that lasts for 15 days.

In China and around the world, families gather for a huge New Year feast that includes special dishes such as jiaozi [jow-zuh], a kind of dumpling. People wear red clothes for luck and hang red decorations.

Children receive red packets of lucky money.



*Lucky money*



Dancers, dressed as dragons or lions, play loud drums to scare away the bad spirits and ensure that the coming year will be a lucky one.



*The lion dance performed at a New Year celebration*



On Qing Ming [ching ming], or Clear Brightness Festival, families bring gifts of food

to their ancestors' graves.

During the Dragon Boat Festival, boats decorated to look like colorful dragons take part in an exciting race.





People eat dragon-boat dumplings and cheer for their favorite team.

The Midautumn Festival, or Moon Festival, celebrates the harvest. That night, people look up at the full moon and think of loved ones who are far away. They also look for Chang'e [chang-ee], the moon goddess, who is said to live in the moon with a magical rabbit.



*Chang'e, the moon goddess*

### **Moon cakes**

Friends and relatives give each other moon cakes during the Moon Festival. In ancient China, people hid messages inside these treats.



# Modern China

Modern China is constantly changing and its people are always looking toward the future.

One example is the Chinese space program. In 2003, China sent its first astronaut, or taikonaut [tie-ko-naut], into space. Since then, the space program has grown. The main goal of the program is to learn more about the moon and Mars, and China hopes to one day have a permanent base on the moon. In 2007, the Chinese launched an unmanned orbiter to help them study the moon. The orbiter was named *Chang'e 1*, after the moon goddess.

*Yang Liwei,  
China's first  
taikonaut*



*Launch of Chang'e  
1's carrier rocket*

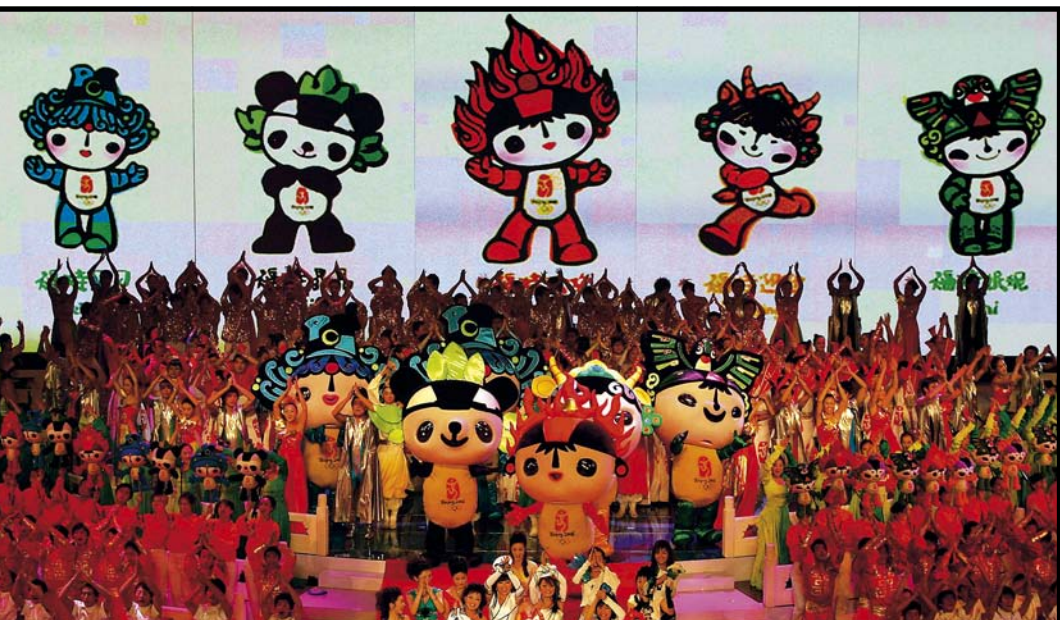


The 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing have given the Chinese people the chance to welcome the world to their once-mysterious country. To mark the occasion, they have built high-tech sports arenas, new parks, and better public transportation systems. An effort has also been made to reduce pollution in the capital and other cities through the Green Olympics program.

*China's Olympic Stadium is nicknamed the Bird's Nest.*







*Introduction of the five official 2008 Olympic mascots, whose combined names mean “Welcome to Beijing”*

The theme for the Beijing Olympics is “one world, one dream,” a sign of how far the country has come. China was once closed off from the rest of the world. Now, it is a proud nation taking its place on the global stage.

Goodbye      zàijiàn  
[zi-jyen]

再见

# Glossary

**Ancestors**

Family members of past generations.

**Ancient**

Very old, having existed for many hundreds or thousands of years.

**Bamboo**

A type of woody grass that grows in tropical places.

**Calligraphy**

The art of elegant handwriting. In China, calligraphy involves writing characters.

**Characters**

Symbols that represent words, as used in Chinese writing.

**Civilization**

The way of life of a people in a particular time and place.

**Climate**

The typical weather of a place.

**Communist Party**

The political party that governs China and appoints its leaders.

**Congress**

A group of government officials that meets to discuss and decide on policies.

**Dynasty**

A series of rulers from a single family. Periods of Chinese history are often identified by the ruling dynasty.

**Emperor**

The ruler of an empire or country. Chinese emperors had complete authority over their subjects.

**Highlands**

An area of land at a high altitude, which is often hilly or mountainous.

**Irrigate**

To supply farmland with water using canals, channels, or some other man-made system.

**Karst**

A landscape of mountains and caves formed from limestone rock.

**Mandarin**

The official language of China.

**Martial arts**

Styles of fighting, such as kung fu, karate, or judo, which are often practiced as sports.

**Minority**

A small group of people with different traits than most of the people in their country.

**Orbiter**

A spacecraft that circles around a moon or planet.

**Population**

The number of people who live in a place.

**Silk Road**

A historical trade route that led from southern Europe to China, passing through Arabia, Egypt, Persia, and India along the way.

**Tone**

The highness or lowness of a sound. Four tones are used to speak Mandarin.

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