

Course Syllabus and Instructor Qualifications

2025 Spring

Community Class Title: Conversational Chinese Level 1

Instructor Name: Wenjie Xu

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Grades: 3-8

Class Format: Zoom meeting

Class Day/Time: Various class times are available, and the instructor will contact you to arrange the schedule.

of weeks: 16 weeks for Semester 1 and 16 weeks for Semester 2

of hours: 16 Hours for Semester 1 and 16 Hours for Semester 2

Additional registration at the site required: No

Materials Needed for Class: A binder to hold class homework sheets, pencil, and notebook

Pre-requisites: Little or no knowledge.

Instructor Qualifications:

Ms. Xu has a bachelor's and a master's degree. She became a teacher at Beijing Normal University after graduating from the Beijing University of Science and Technology with her master's degree. When she came to the US, she studied first at Louisiana State University and later at Washington University in St. Louis.

She is very passionate about teaching and education. She has been teaching Chinese in various schools for over 10 years in the US. She currently teaches online at Berrien Springs Homeschool Partnership and Three Rivers Community Schools in Michigan.

Course Description:

Students will learn Pinyin, tones, characters, and Chinese typing. Following that will be essential vocabulary and sentences students *must* know when first learning Chinese! After this course, students will have a strong foundation in Chinese and will be able to have basic conversations on topics such as greetings, dates and times, ages, telephone numbers, family members, simple self-introduction, occupations, daily routines, means of transport, colors, and clothing! The student will also learn about Chinese culture through songs, videos, authentic Chinese stories, and more.

Course Level 1 Topics

- Chinese Four Tones/Pinyin/Typing
- Chinese Writing System (Radical/Stroke order/Calligraphy)
- Classroom Survival Expressions
- Greetings/Self-Introduction
- Dates and Time

- Family
- Occupations
- Daily routines
- Means of transport
- Colors,
- Clothing
- Writing Short essays
- Chinese Culture/Holidays/Customs

Main reference books:

Easy Steps to Chinese, Vol. 1 textbook, Ma, Yanmin, and Li, Xinying. Beijing Language and Culture University Press.

Easy Steps to Chinese, Vol. 1 workbook, Ma, Yanmin, and Li, Xinying. Beijing Language and Culture University Press.

Homework:

Students will have approximately 30 minutes to an hour of homework each class so that they can continue to practice new sounds, vocabulary, and sentences taught during each week's lesson. I will send out the homework sheets after each class and check them at the beginning of the next lesson.

Assessments: Students' homework and class participation will be looked at to evaluate their progress.

Class Policies:

Attendance: Students must attend at least 80% of the lessons

Make-up classes: Absences beyond the approved absences can be made up at the end of the semester.

Behavior: Students come to the class on time and advance notices should be given for absences. Students are prepared for classes (dress appropriately, bring completed homework, pencil, and notebook). Students are respectful towards others and put forth their best effort in class.

Semester 1- Class Focus and Activities

Weeks	Focus	Activities
Week 1	-Pinyin: Simple Finals -Vocabulary: Numbers and Counting	1. Go over the requirements and expectations of the class. 2. Introduce what the Chinese language is and tell a story behind the characters. 3. Explain what Pinyin is, why Pinyin was created, and the components of Pinyin, from Chinese learners' perspective. 4. Learn to pronounce the tones and three simple finals: a o e. 5. Learn to pronounce, recognize, and write numbers 1-5.
Week 2	-Pinyin: Simple Finals -Vocabulary: Numbers and Counting	1. Learn to pronounce three Simple Finals: i u ü. 2. Learn to pronounce, recognize, and write numbers 6-10. 3. Authentic Chinese story "It's hard to write the character 'wan'"

		(ten thousand)."
Week 3	-Pinyin: Initials -Vocabulary: Numbers and Counting	1. Learn to pronounce eight initials: b p m f d t n l. 2. Learn to count numbers: 1-100. 3. Learn the measure words and how to count people. 4. Authentic Chinese story: Houyi and Ten Suns
Week 4	-Pinyin: Initials -Vocabulary: Nature	1. Learn to pronounce six new initials: j q x g k h. 2. Learn how to mark tones. 3. Learn characters "sun, moon, water, fire, mountain, rock, dirt, field, tree, crop" and related vocabulary. 4. Learn how to express the 12 months and dates. 5. Culture: The Chinese five elements of Earth
Week 5	-Pinyin: Initials -Vocabulary: Comparing	1. Learn to pronounce four new initials: zh ch sh r. 2. Learn characters "top, middle, bottom," and related vocabulary. 3. Learn characters "big, small, many, few" and related vocabulary. 4. Story: Big cat, little cat
Week 6	-Pinyin: Initials -Vocabulary: Body Parts	1. Learn to pronounce three new initials: z c s. 2. Learn characters "head, heart, mouth, ear, eye, eyebrow, hand, foot" and related vocabulary. 3. Sing a Chinese song: My Eyes
Week 7	-Pinyin: Initials -Vocabulary: People	1. Learn to pronounce two new initials: y w. 2. Learn characters "man, woman, father, son, sit, stand, walk," and related vocabulary. 3. Understand and learn how to give orders such as "stand up, sit down, take a walk," etc, and play 'Simon Says' to practice these new commands. 4. Introduce the Chinese culture: A Chinese old saying "Stand like a Pinetree and sit like a clock."
Week 8	-Pinyin: Compound Final -Vocabulary: Animals and Insects	1. Learn to pronounce three Compound Finals: ai ei ui. 2. Learn the characters "horse, ox, sheep, fish, bug, bird," and related vocabulary. 3. Tell a classical children's story: a little horse crosses the river.
Week 9	-Pinyin: Compound Finals -Vocabulary: Weather	1. Learn to pronounce three new Compound Finals: ao ou iu. 2. Learn the characters "wind, rain, snow, cloud, lightning, sky," and related vocabulary. 3. Chinese Joke: The Sky.
Week 10	-Pinyin: Compound Finals -Seasons	1. Learn to pronounce three new Compound Finals: ie üe er. 2. Learn how to build associative compound characters by using two simple characters. 3. Learn characters "Spring, Fall, Summer, Winter," and related vocabulary. 4. Use the sentence structure "I like..." to express your favorite season.

		5. Culture: Chinese New Year and The story of Nian
Week 11	-Pinyin: Compound Finals -Students	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Learn to pronounce front Nasal Compound Vowels: an en in un ün. 2. Introduce what a radical is. 3. Learn how to build associative compound characters by using a radical and a simple character. 4. Learn vocabulary” primary school students, middle school students, high school students, and college students,” and related vocabulary. 5. Use the sentence structure “I am ...” to introduce oneself. 6. Authentic Chinese Story: Kuang Heng drilled a hole in the wall to borrow light
Week 12	-Pinyin: Compound Finals -Family	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Learn to pronounce back nasal Compound Vowels: ang eng ing ong. 2. Learn how to build pictophonetic compound characters using radical and pronunciation parts. 3. Learn compound Characters “Dad, Mom, sisters, brothers”, and related vocabulary. 4. Use sentence structure “There are...” to talk about how many people are in the family and learn to use 'I love + a family member” in a sentence and a conversation. 5. Authentic Story: Kong Rong and the Pears
Week 13	-Greetings -Learning how to type in Chinese	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Have a comprehensive Pinyin Review (Part 1): 6 simple finals and 23 initials. 2. Greeting people and related vocabulary. 3. Simplified Chinese vs. Traditional Chinese. 4. How the tone changes when two third-tone syllables appear together. 5. Learn to type in Chinese.
Week 14	-Introduce Oneself	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Have a comprehensive Pinyin Review (Part 2): 16 Special sounds and 18 Compound Consonants. 2. Learn how to ask the name and introduce oneself. 3. Learn Chinese Grammar: how to ask a question with “what” in Chinese. 4. The culture of Chinese names.
Week 15	-Polite Expressions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Have a comprehensive Pinyin Review(part (3): Practicing tone pairs and summarize tone change rules. 2. Say “please” when asking for help 3. Express and accept “Thanks” graciously. 3. Make and accept apologies gracefully. 4. Authentic Story: Little Tadpoles Looking for Their Mother
Week 16	Class Review and Final Presentation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Have an active recall of what we’ve learned in class. 2. Each student will make a short speech in Chinese for the class.

The above schedule may be subject to change, and advance notice will be given when such changes occur.

Semester 2 - Class Focus and Activities:

Weeks	Focus	Activities
Week 1	Dates	1. Go over the requirements and expectations of the class 2. Learn New words and apply the meanings 3. Vocabulary in Context: Reading Text 4. Reading Comprehension (Reading Selection) 5. Authentic Story: The Lazy Han Hao Bird
Week 2	Ages	1. Check Homework 2. Learn New words and apply the meanings 3. Vocabulary in Context: Reading Text 4. Group Work 5. Authentic Story: Caochong weighed the elephant
Week 3	Telephone Numbers	1. Check Homework 2. Learn New words and apply the meanings 3. Vocabulary in Context: Reading Text 4. Reading Comprehension (Reading Selection) 5. Oral Presentation
Week 4	Family Members Part 2	1. Check Homework 2. Learn New words and apply the meanings 3. Vocabulary in Context: Reading Text 4. Group Work
Week 5	Self-introduction Parts 2	1. Check Homework 2. Learn New words and apply the meanings 3. Vocabulary in Context: Reading Text 4. Reading Comprehension (Reading Selection) 5. Oral Presentation
Week 6	Occupation Part 1	1. Check Homework 2. Learn New words and apply the meanings 3. Vocabulary in Context: Reading Text 4. Group Work 5. Short Essay Writing
Week 7	Occupation Part 2	1. Check Homework 2. Learn New words and apply the meanings 3. Vocabulary in Context: Reading Text 4. Reading Comprehension (Reading Selection) 5. Oral Presentation
Week 8	Time	1. Check Homework 2. Learn New words and apply the meanings 3. Vocabulary in Context: Reading Text 4. Group Work
Week 9	Daily Routine	1. Check Homework 2. Learn New words and apply the meanings 3. Vocabulary in Context: Reading Text 4. Reading Comprehension (Reading Selection) 5. Oral Presentation

Week 10	Means of Transport Part 1	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Check Homework 2. Learn New words and apply the meanings 3. Vocabulary in Context: Reading Text 4. Group Work
Week 11	Means of Transport Part 2	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Check Homework 2. Learn New words and apply the meanings 3. Vocabulary in Context: Reading Text 4. Reading Comprehension (Reading Selection) 5. Oral Presentation
Week 12	Colors Part 1	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Check Homework 2. Learn New words and apply the meanings 3. Vocabulary in Context: Reading Text 4. Group Work 5. Short essay writing
Week 13	Colors Part 2	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Check Homework 2. Learn New words and apply the meanings 3. Vocabulary in Context: Reading Text 4. Reading Comprehension (Reading Selection) 5. Oral Presentation
Week 14	Clothing Part 1	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Check Homework 2. Learn New words and apply the meanings 3. Vocabulary in Context: Reading Text 4. Group Work 5. Short Essay Writing
Week 15	Clothing Part2	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Check Homework 2. Learn New words and apply the meanings 3. Vocabulary in Context: Reading Text 4. Reading Comprehension (Reading Selection) 5. Oral Presentation
Week 16	Class Review and Final Presentation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Have an active recall of what we've learned in class. 2. Each student will make a short speech in Chinese for the class.
Summer Challenge	Parts of the Body	To prevent summer knowledge loss and keep their brains active in Chinese, Students will be self-taught the topic of "Parts of the Body" during the summertime. Materials will be sent to students.

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