

Lower School Chinese Classes

小學的中文課
xiǎo xué de zhōng wén kè



From the Desk of the 中文老師
(Chinese Teacher)

Wow! It can't already be 十一月 (eleventh month, otherwise known as November). Cooler weather, and an awesome Veterans Day Concert means only one thing—Thanksgiving is coming soon! I am sad to realize that it also means that I only have another month with the students I am currently teaching, as they will transition to Spanish next semester. However, I look forward to seeing a new group of students next semester!



Did You Know...

Next week, I will be teaching how to say "Thanksgiving" in Chinese. While Thanksgiving is an American holiday, sometimes students are surprised to hear that Thanksgiving is not celebrated in China! Even though it is not a traditional Chinese holiday, we can translate the word "Thanksgiving" into Chinese as 感恩節, where 感恩 means "to be thankful," and 節 means "holiday. In Chinese, "Thanksgiving" becomes "Thankfulness Holiday." One interesting point about Chinese is that much of the language uses descriptions rather than unique names or words.

What's in a Name? 名字

The 2nd through 5th grade students have received their Chinese names! Chinese names don't translate directly from the English names (unlike Spanish or French, where "Pablo" is "Paul" or "Guillaume" is "William"). There are many different ways that Chinese names are selected. Most Chinese names

are made up of three parts or words. The beginning of a Chinese name is the 姓, or surname, which is what we sometimes call the "last name" or "family name" in English. The second part of the students' Chinese name is their "given name." Given names can be made up of one or two words. What I did for most of my students' names was to assign an actual Chinese surname that shares a similar sound, first letter, or meaning with their surname in English. Then for their given name I selected two words that when put together, sound a little bit like their given name in English, or what we call a "first name." Traditionally, given names can be made up of just about any words but are usually selected to have good meanings. Ask your child to show you their Chinese name!



The pre-Kindergarten, Kindergarten, and 1st grade students have learned numbers from 1-10 and the colors, and how to say their name and age in a complete sentence. I use the series "My First Chinese Words" from *Better Chinese* to teach vocabulary, phrases, and sentences. Their online resources include stories, games, songs. In class the students have a chance to use the interactive whiteboard. These resources are also available to individuals by subscription. If you would like your child to reinforce what they've learned and continue to progress in Chinese, check out the Better Chinese website:

<http://www.betterchinese.com/My-First-Chinese-Words.html>

You can sign up for a 30 day free trial using the same online materials we use in class.

If you have any questions or comments, feel free to contact me at christina.liu@lakemaryprep.com.