**LESSON 1** 

**Greetings** 

第一课 问好

Dì yī kè

Wèn hǎo





### **LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

In this lesson, you will learn to use Chinese to

- Exchange basic greetings;
- Request a person's last name and full name and provide your own;
- Determine whether someone is a teacher or a student;
- Ascertain someone's nationality.



#### **RELATE AND GET READY**

In your own culture/community—

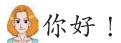
- 1. How do people greet each other when meeting for the first time?
- 2. Do people say their given name or family name first?
- 3. How do acquaintances or close friends address each other?

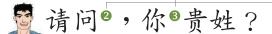
### **Dialogue I: Exchanging Greetings**

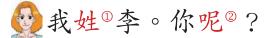






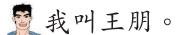






曩 我姓王。李小姐, 你叫3什么名字?

₩ 我叫李友。王先生, 你叫什么名字?



#### **LANGUAGE NOTES**

- ●你好!(Nǐ hǎo!) is a common form of greeting. It can be used to address strangers upon first introduction or between old acquaintances. To respond, simply repeat the same greeting.
- ② 请问 (gǐng wèn) is a polite formula to be used to get someone's attention before asking a question or making an inquiry, similar to "excuse me, may I please ask..." in English.
- ③ You can replace 你 (nǐ) with its honorific form, 您 (nín), if you wish to be more polite and respectful. See Lesson 6, Dialogue I, Language Note 1.
- ④ 小姐 (xiǎojiě) is a word with two third tone syllables. The tone sandhi rule applies, thus making the first third tone (xiǎo) a second tone. The second syllable 姐 (jiě) can also be pronounced in the neutral tone.





Qĭng wèn<sup>2</sup>, nĭ<sup>3</sup> guì xìng?

Wŏ xìng<sup>①</sup> Lĭ. Nĭ ne<sup>②</sup>?

💆 Wŏ xìng Wáng. Lĭ xiǎojiě<sup>®</sup>, nĭ <mark>jiào<sup>®</sup>shénme míngzi?</mark>

Wǒ jiào Lǐ Yǒu. Wáng xiānsheng, nǐ jiào shénme míngzi?

🤦 Wŏ jiào Wáng Péng.



## **VOCABULARY**

| 1.  | 你  | nĭ      | pr  | you   |
|-----|----|---------|-----|---|
| 2.  | 好  | hǎo     | adj | fine; good; nice; O.K.; it's settled            |
| 3.  | 请  | qĭng    | v   | please (polite form of request); to treat or to |
|     |    |         |     | invite (somebody)                               |
| 4.  | 问  | wèn     | v   | to ask (a question)                             |
| 5.  | 贵  | guì     | adj | honorable; expensive                            |
| 6.  | 姓  | xìng    | v/n | (one's) surname is; to be surnamed; surname     |
|     |    |         |     | [See Grammar 1.]                                |
| 7.  | 我  | wŏ      | pr  | I; me   |
| 8.  | 呢  | ne      | qp  | (question particle) [See Grammar 2.]            |
| 9.  | 小姐 | xiǎojiě | n   | Miss; young lady                                |
| 10. | 叫  | jiào    | v   | to be called; to call [See Grammar 3.]          |
| 11. | 什么 | shénme  | qpr | what  |
| (   |    |         |     |   |



### **VOCABULARY**

12. 名字 míngzi name 13. 先生 xiānsheng Mr.; husband; teacher

#### **Proper Nouns**

14. 李友 Lĭ Yŏu (a personal name) Ιĭ (a surname); plum 15. 王朋

王 wáng (a surname); king

Wáng Péng

#### **Grammar**

## 1. The Verb 姓 (xìng)

姓 (xìng) is both a noun and a transitive verb. When it is used as a verb, it must be followed by an object.

(a personal name)

# ① A: 你姓什么?

Nǐ xìng shénme?

(What is your surname? Lit: You are surnamed what?)

## B: 我姓李。

Wǒ xìng Lǐ.

(My surname is Li.)

姓 (xìng) is usually negated with 不 (bù). [See Grammar 6.]

# 2 A: 你姓李吗?

Nǐ xìng Lǐ ma?
(Is your family name Li?)

### B: 我不姓李。

Wŏ bú xìng Lǐ.

(My surname is not Li.)

It is incorrect to say: \*我不姓。 \*Wŏ bú xìng.

However, when  $\not\equiv$  (xing) is used with  $\not\equiv$  (gui) to form a respectful or polite expression to ask for someone's surname, the proper way to inquire and to respond is as follows:

# 3 A: 你贵姓?

Nǐ guì xìng?

(What is your surname?) (Lit: Your honorable surname is...?)

Remember to drop the honorific 贵 when you reply:

## B: 我姓王。

Wǒ xìng Wáng.

(My surname is Wang.)

It is incorrect to say: \*我贵姓王。 \*Wǒ guì xìng Wáng.

One may also hear people respond to 你贵姓 (Nǐ guì xìng) by saying 免贵姓王 (Miǎn guì xìng Wáng), 免贵姓李 (Miǎn guì xìng Lǐ). Lit: Dispense with the honorable. [My] surname is Wang/Li.

## 2. Questions Ending with 呢 (ne)

呢 (ne) often follows a noun or pronoun to form a question when the content of the question is already clear from the context.

# ① A: 请问, 你贵姓?

Qĭng wèn, nĭ guì xìng?

(What's your family name, please?)

## B: 我姓李, 你呢?

Wǒ xìng Lǐ, nǐ ne?

(My family name is Li. How about you?)

# 2 A: 你叫什么名字?

Nĭ jiào shénme míngzi?

(What's your name?)

## B: 我叫王朋, 你呢?

Wǒ jiào Wáng Péng, nǐ ne?

(My name is Wang Peng. How about you?)

When 呢 (ne) is used in this way, there must be some context. In each of the two examples above, the context is provided by the preceding sentence, 我姓李 (Wǒ xìng Lǐ) in (1), and 我叫王朋 (Wǒ jiào Wáng Péng) in (2).

## 3. The Verb (jiào)

The verb 呵 (jiào) has several meanings. It means "to be called" in this lesson. Like 娃 (xìng), it must be followed by an object, which can be either a full name or a given name, but seldom a given name that consists only of one syllable.

## ① A: 你叫什么名字?

Nĭ jiào shénme míngzi?

(What is your name?)

### B: 我叫王朋。

Wǒ jiào Wáng Péng.

(My name is Wang Peng.)

 $\mu$  (jiào) is usually negated with  $\pi$  (bù). [See Grammar 6.]

# 2 A: 你叫李生吗?

Nĭ jiào Lǐ Shēng ma?

(Is your name Li Sheng?)

# B: 我不叫李生。

Wǒ bú jiào Lǐ Shēng.

(My name is not Li Sheng.)

From the examples above, we can see that the basic word order in a Chinese sentence runs like this:

#### **Subject + Verb + Object**

The word order remains the same in statements and questions. Remember that you don't place the question word at the beginning of a question as you do in English, unless that question word is the subject. (See more on word order in Grammar 3 in Lesson 2 and Grammar 1 in Lesson 4.)

### **Language Practice**

### A. Mix and mingle

Walk around the classroom and get to know your classmates:

| A: 你好!      |          | A: Nǐ hǎo!                       |
|-------------|----------|----------------------------------|
| B:          | 0        | B:                               |
| A: 请问, 你贵姓' | ?        | <b>A:</b> Qǐng wèn, nǐ guì xìng? |
| B: 我姓       | •        | <b>B:</b> Wŏ xìng                |
| 你呢?         |          | Nĭ ne?                           |
| A: 我姓       | <u>,</u> | <b>A:</b> Wŏ xìng,               |
| 我叫          | •        | wŏ jiào,                         |
| 你叫什么名字      | ?        | nĭ jiào shénme míngzi?           |
| B: 我叫       | 0        | <b>B:</b> Wŏ jiào                |

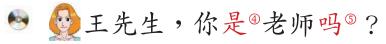
### B. Meeting for the first time/Getting acquainted

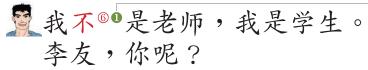
Complete the following exchange between two people who have never met before. Do a role play based on the exchange.

| A: | 你好!    |   |   | A: | Nĭ hǎo!                |
|----|--------|---|---|----|------------------------|
| B: |        | 0 |   | B: | ·                      |
| A: | 我姓     |   | , | A: | Wŏ xìng,               |
|    | 请问,你贵姓 | ? |   |    | qĭng wèn, nĭ guì xìng? |
| B: |        | 0 |   | B: | ·                      |
| A: |        | , |   | A: |                        |
|    | 你叫什么名字 | ? |   |    | nĭ jiào shénme míngzi? |
| B: | 我叫     |   | 0 | B: | Wŏ jiào                |

### **Dialogue II: Asking about Someone's Nationality**







- 我也<sup>®</sup>是学生。你是中国人吗?
- 爰是,我是北京人。你是 美国人吗?
- ₩ 是,我是纽约人。

#### **LANGUAGE NOTE**

1 The original tone of 不 is a 4th tone "bù". However, when followed by another 4th tone syllable, 不 changes to 2nd tone, as in 不是 (bú shì).



Wáng xiānsheng, nǐ shì 4 lǎoshī ma 5?



Wǒ bú 60 shì lǎoshī, wǒ shì xuésheng. Lǐ Yǒu, nǐ ne?



Wŏ yĕ<sup>⑦</sup> shì xuésheng. Nǐ shì Zhōngguó rén ma?



Shì, wǒ shì Běijīng rén. Nǐ shì Měiguó rén ma?



Shì, wŏ shì Niŭyuē rén.





# VOCABULARY

| 1. 定 shì v to be [See G | Grammar 4.] |
|-------------------------|-------------|
|-------------------------|-------------|

2. 老师 lǎoshī n teacher

3. pma qp (question particle) [See Grammar 5.]

**4.** bù adv not; no [See Grammar 6.]

5. 字生 xuésheng n student

6. yě adv too; also [See Grammar 7.]

7. rén n people; person

#### **Proper Nouns**

8. 中国 Zhōngguó China 大江

9. 北 Běijīng Beijing

10. 美国 Měiguó America

11. 纽约 Niǔyuē New York

#### **Grammar**

# 4. The Verb 是 (shì)

In Chinese, 是 (shì) is a verb which can be used to link two units that are in some way equivalent. These two units can be nouns, pronouns, or noun phrases, e.g.,

① A: 你是老师吗?

Nǐ shì lǎoshī ma? (Are you a teacher?)

B: 我是老师。

Wŏ shì lǎoshī.
(I am a teacher.)

2 李友是学生。

Lǐ Yǒu shì xuésheng. (Li You is a student.)

是 (shì) is usually negated with 不 (bù). [See also Grammar 6 below.]

3 王朋不是美国人。

Wáng Péng bú shì Měiguó rén. (Wang Peng is not American.)

## 5. Questions Ending with (ma)

When " (ma) is added to the end of a declarative statement, that statement is turned into a question. To answer the question in the affirmative, drop the " (ma) from the end of the question; to answer the question in the negative, drop the (ma), and insert a negative adverb—usually \*\tilde{\tau}\$ (bù)—before the verb. [See also Grammar 6 below.]

D Question: 你是老师吗?

Nǐ shì lǎoshī ma?

(Are you a teacher?)

Affirmative answer: 我是老师。

Wŏ shì lăoshī.

(I am a teacher.)

Negative answer: 我不是老师。

Wŏ bú shì lăoshī.

(I am not a teacher.)

**2** Question: 你姓王吗?

Nǐ xìng Wáng ma?

(Is your family name Wang?)

Affirmative: 我姓王。

Wŏ xìng Wáng.

(My family name is Wang.)

Negative: 我不姓王。

Wŏ bú xìng Wáng.

(My family name is not Wang.)

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This is a typical business card. Circle the person's family name. Where is this person located?

# 6. The Negative Adverb $\mathcal{T}_{\text{(bù)}}$

In Chinese there are two main negative adverbs. One of the two,  $\mathcal{T}$  (bù), occurs in this lesson.

- 1 我不是北京人。 Wǒ bú shì Běijīng rén. (I am not from Beijing.)
- 李友不是中国人。 Lǐ Yǒu bú shì Zhōngguó rén. (Li You is not Chinese.)



4 我不叫李中。 Wǒ bú jiào Lǐ Zhōng. (My name is not Li Zhong.)

## 7. The Adverb 🔱 (yĕ)

The adverb (yĕ) basically means "too" or "also." In Chinese, adverbs, especially one-syllable adverbs, normally appear after subjects and in front of verbs. They usually cannot precede subjects or follow verbs. The adverb (yĕ) cannot be put before the subject or at the very end of a sentence.

- 1 我也是学生。 Wǒ yě shì xuésheng. (I'm a student, too.)
- 2 王朋是学生,李友也是学生。 Wáng Péng shì xuésheng, Lǐ Yǒu yě shì xuésheng.

(Wang Peng is a student. Li You is a student, too.)

6 你是中国人,我也是中国人。

Nǐ shì Zhōngguó rén, wǒ yě shì Zhōngguó rén.

(You are Chinese. I am Chinese, too.)

(3a) 你是中国人,\*我是中国人也。

Nǐ shì Zhōngquó rén, \*wŏ shì Zhōngquó rén yĕ.

(3b) 你是中国人,\*也我是中国人。

Nǐ shì Zhōngguó rén, \*yě wǒ shì Zhōngguó rén.

When the adverb 也 (yě) is used together with the negative adverb 不 (bù), 也 (yě) is placed before 不 (bù), e.g.

4 王朋不是老师,李友也不是老师。

Wáng Péng bú shì lăoshī, Lǐ Yǒu yě bú shì lăoshī.

(Wang Peng is not a teacher. Li You is not a teacher, either.)

6 你不是纽约人,我也不是纽约人。

Nǐ bú shì Niǔyuē rén, wǒ yě bú shì Niǔyuē rén.

(You are not from New York. I am not from New York, either.)

### **Language Practice**

# C. 是···吗 (shì...ma)

Based on the text of Lesson 1 and your own situation, ask and answer the following questions with a partner.

EXAMPLE 王朋令学生

A: 王朋是学生吗?

B: 王朋是学生。

1 李友◊美国人

2. 王朋 中国人

Wáng Péng <> xuésheng

A: Wáng Péng shì xuésheng ma?

B: Wáng Péng shì xuésheng.

1. Lǐ Yǒu  $\diamondsuit$  Měiguó rén

2. Wáng Péng 🔷 Zhōngguó rén

- 3. 李友◊美国学生
- 4. 王朋◇北京人
- 5. 李友◊纽约人
- 6. 你◊学生

- 3. Lĭ Yŏu ♦ Měiguó xuésheng
- 4. Wáng Péng  $\diamondsuit$  Běijīng rén
- 5. Lǐ Yǒu ♦ Niǔyuē rén
- **6.** Nĭ ♦ xuésheng

# D. 不 (bù)

Based on the text of Lesson 1 and your own situation, ask and answer the following questions with a partner.

#### EXAMPLE

- A: 李小姐叫李朋吗?
- B: 李小姐不叫李朋。
- 1. 李友是中国人吗?
- 2. 你是王朋吗?
- 3. 王朋是纽约人吗?
- 4. 王先生叫王友吗?
- 5. 你叫李友吗?

- A: Lǐ xiǎojiě jiào Lǐ Péng ma?
- B: Lǐ xiǎojiě bú jiào Lǐ Péng.
- 1. Lǐ Yǒu shì Zhōngguó rén ma?
- 2. Nǐ shì Wáng Péng ma?
- 3. Wáng Péng shì Niǔyuē rén ma?
- 4. Wáng xiānsheng jiào Wáng Yŏu ma?
- 5. Nǐ jiào Lǐ Yǒu ma?

# E. (yě)

Based on the text of Lesson 1 and your own situation, ask and answer the following questions with a partner.

- 1. 王朋是中国人, 你也是中国人吗?
- 2. 李友是纽约人, 你也是纽约人吗?
- 1. Wáng Péng shì Zhōngguó rén,

nǐ yě shì Zhōngguó rén ma?

2. Lǐ Yǒu shì Niǔyuē rén,

nĭ yě shì Niŭyuē rén ma?

- 3. 王朋不是老师, 你呢?
- 4. 李友不是中国人, 你呢?
- 5. 王朋姓王, 你也姓王吗?

- 3. Wáng Péng bú shì lǎoshī, nǐ ne?
- 4. Lǐ Yǒu bú shì Zhōngguó rén, nǐ ne?
- 5. Wáng Péng xìng Wáng,
  nǐ yẽ xìng Wáng ma?

### F. "I'm American. How about you? Where are you from?"

Walk around the classroom and find out about your classmates' nationality, state, or city origins. Remember that, to say that you are from America, California, or Boston, simply attach the word  $\wedge$  (rén: person) to the name of the country, state, or city: 我是美国(Měiguó)/California/Boston  $\wedge$  (rén).

- A: 我是美国人, 你呢?
- B: •••••
- A: 你是Kentucky (the state of your current residence)人吗?
- B: 我是…人。/ 我不是…人,我是…人。
- A: 你是(pick a city in your respondent's home state)人吗?
- B: 我是(Louisville)人。你呢?
- A: 我是(Portland) 人。

- A: Wŏ shì Měiguó rén, nǐ ne?
- B: .....
- **A:** Nǐ shì Kentucky (the state of your current residence) rén ma?
- **B:** Wǒ shì ... rén./

  Wǒ bú shì... rén, wǒ shì ...rén.
- **A:** Nǐ shì (pick a city in your respondent's home state) rén ma?
- B: Wŏ shì (Louisville) rén, nĭ ne?
- A: Wŏ shì (Portland) rén.

### **HOW ABOUT YOU?**

#### Where are you from?

1. 英国 Yīngguó pn Britain; England

2. 法国 Făguó pn France



3. 德国 Déguó pn Germany



4. 日本 Rìběn pn Japan



5. 韩国 Hánguó pn South Korea



6. 加拿大 Jiā'nádà pn Canada



7. 墨西哥 Mòxīgē pn Mexico



8. 印度 Yindù pn India

9. 越南 Yuènán pn Vietnam



12. 上海 Shànghǎi pn Shanghai

Xiàwēiyí

夏威夷

11.

If your country/state/city is not listed above, please ask your teacher and make a note here:

Hawaii

pn

| 我是 | _人 | 0 |
|----|----|---|
|    |    |   |

Wŏ shì\_\_\_\_\_rén.

### **Culture Highlights**

family name.

- 1 Most Chinese family names 姓 (xìng) are monosyllabic. There are, however, a few disyllabic family names such as 欧阳 (Ōuyáng) and 司徒 (Sītú). The number of Chinese family names is fairly limited.

  According to the most recent census, the most common family names are 李 (Lǐ), 王 (Wáng), 张 (Zhāng), 刘 (Liú), and 陈 (Chén).

  Family names precede official titles or other forms of address: 王先生 (Wáng xiānsheng, literally, Wang Mister), 李老师 (Lǐ lǎoshī, literally, Li Teacher), etc. When addressing strangers, it is proper to say 先生 (xiānsheng,
- 2 Family names 姓 (xìng) are sometimes called 姓氏 (xìngshì). 姓 (xìng) were originally passed down along maternal lines. Indeed, some of the most ancient Chinese family names such as 姬 (jī), 妫 (Guī), 姒 (Sì), 姚 (Yáo), and 姜 (Jiāng) as well as the character 姓 (xìng) contain the female radical, 女 (nǚ). Aristocratic men and women were born with a 姓 (xìng). However, only aristocratic men would have a 氏 (shì) as a secondary family name. By the Western Han period (207 BCE-8 CE), 姓 (xìng) and 氏 (shì) had become indistinguishable, and even commoners had acquired family names or 姓 (xìng).

Mr.) or 小姐 (xiǎojiě, Miss) following their

3 When talking about Chinese family names, most Chinese people will reference or mention the *Hundred Surnames*, 百家姓 (Bǎi Jiā Xìng). The book records the known family names of the Northern Song Dynasty in the 10th century. The 400-plus family names included in the work are arranged in quatrains with each eighth character rhymed. The book was a popular reading primer recited by schoolchildren.

赵 禺 采 褚 孙 王 卫 杨

These are the first sixteen surnames listed in the *Hundred Surnames*. Do you recognize any of them?



There are dictionaries to interpret the *Hundred Surnames*. This is the cover of one of those dictionaries.

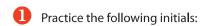
- 4 In Chinese, family names 娃 (xìng) always precede personal or given names 名 (míng). Personal names usually carry auspicious or positive meanings. They can be either monosyllabic, written in one character, or disyllabic, written in two characters. In Chinese culture, a person is seldom referred to by his or her family name alone, especially if the family name is monosyllabic. For example, Wang Peng 王朋 (Wáng Péng), should not be referred to simply as Wang.
- 5 When meeting someone for the first time, it is polite to first ask for his or her family name, rather than his/her full name. Then the question 你叫什么名字? (Nǐ jiào shénme míngzi? What is your name?) can be asked to find out his or her given name or full name.
- 6 In Chinese culture the use of given names often suggests a much higher degree of intimacy than is the case in the West. If one's given name is monosyllabic, its use is even more limited, usually confined to one's lover or spouse. For example, Wang Peng's girlfriend can address him as Peng, especially in letters, but most people would call him Wang Peng rather than Peng.

#### Do you know any people with these family names?

毕(Bì); 蔡(Cài); 陈(Chén); 高(Gāo); 黄(Huáng); 李(Lǐ); 林(Lín); 刘(Liú); 罗(Luó); 毛(Máo); 史(Shǐ); 王(Wáng); 吴(Wú); 谢(Xiè); 徐(Xú); 许(Xǔ); 杨(Yáng); 姚(Yáo); 叶(Yè); 张(Zhāng); 郑(Zhèng); 周(Zhōu)

# **Pronunciation Exercises**





|    | b    | р    | d    | t    |
|----|------|------|------|------|
| 1. | bǎo  | păo  | dā   | tā   |
| 2. | bān  | pān  | dí   | tí   |
| 3. | bù   | рù   | duì  | tuì  |
| 4. | bō   | pō   | dīng | tīng |
| 5. | bēng | pēng | dēng | tēng |

### Practice the following initials:

|    | j    | q    | z   | С   |
|----|------|------|-----|-----|
| 1. | jiāo | qiāo | zāi | cāi |
| 2. | jĭng | qĭng | zăo | căo |
| 3. | jīn  | qīn  | zì  | cì  |
| 4. | jiè  | qiè  | zè  | cè  |
| 5. | jiàn | qiàn | zhè | chè |

### 3 Practice the following initials:

|    | sh    | S    | Х    |
|----|-------|------|------|
| 1. | shà   | sà   | xià  |
| 2. | shàn  | sàn  | xiàn |
| 3. | shēn  | sēn  | xīn  |
| 4. | shēng | sēng | xīng |

4 Practice the following tones:

**1.** tiāntiān

**2.** jīnnián

**3.** jīnglĭ

4. shēngqì

5. xīngqī

**6.** fādá

**7.** fāzhǎn

8. shēngdiào

Practice the following tone combinations:

**1.** nĭ hǎo

**2.** Lĭ Yŏu

3. lǎohǔ

**4.** zhăn**l**ăn

**5.** hǎo duō

**6.** nĭ lái

**7.** hǎo shū

8. qĭng wèn

Practice the following syllables in neutral tones:

1. xiānsheng

2. míngzi

**3.** xiáojie

4. shénme

**5.** wŏ de

**6.** nĭ de

**7.** tā de

8. shéi de

### **English Text**

#### Dialogue I

Wang Peng: How do you do? Li You: How do you do?

Wang Peng: What's your family name, please? (lit. Please, may I ask... your honorable surname

is...?)

Li You: My family name is Li. What's yours? (lit. I am surnamed Li, and you?)

Wang Peng: My family name is Wang. Miss Li, what's your name? Li You: My name is Li You. Mr. Wang, what's your name?

Wang Peng: My name is Wang Peng.

#### Dialogue II

Li You: Mr. Wang, are you a teacher?

Wang Peng: I'm not a teacher, I'm a student. Li You, how about you?

Li You: I'm a student, too. Are you Chinese?

Wang Peng: Yes, I'm from Beijing (lit. I'm a Beijing-er). Are you American?

Li You: Yes, I'm from New York (lit. I'm a New Yorker).

#### **PROGRESS CHECKLIST**

Before proceeding to Lesson 2, be sure that you can complete the following tasks in Chinese:

I am able to

Exchange basic greetings;

Say my last name and full name;

Ask someone's last name and full name;

Say if I am a student or not;

State my nationality;

Ask someone's nationality.

Please review the lesson if any of these tasks seem difficult.