

2015 Primary School Chinese Language Curriculum



Parents' Guide



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Foreword

Bilingual education has been a cornerstone of Singapore's education system. English being the main language of instruction in schools, enables our children to plug into a globalised world. Learning Mother Tongue Languages enables our children to have a deeper appreciation of their own culture. In the age of a globalised world, mastering Mother Tongue Languages will also be equipping one with a precious asset, be it at work or in daily life.

Learning two languages has numerous advantages. The ability to speak two languages enables children to communicate widely with people and gain broader perspectives. Research has shown that the early acquisition of two languages is beneficial to the development of children's cognitive abilities. Bilinguals are more flexible in thinking, more sensitive to language and have a better ear for listening. Being bilingual also has a positive effect on intellectual growth and enhances children's mental development.

To help our children master Chinese Language, the Ministry of Education has been improving the Chinese curriculum, as well as its teaching and testing to ensure relevance to the learning needs of children. Developing children's Chinese language abilities requires the efforts of many parties. No doubt the patience and guidance of teachers is important, the support given by parents is also equally crucial. With the home being the first place in which children live and learn, parents are their children's first teachers. It would thus be most ideal to start from the family, to help children learn Chinese well. In order to support parents, we have developed this guide, which introduces the features and learning resources of the 2015 Primary School Chinese Language Curriculum. In addition, we are also recommending some ways in which parents could help their children learn the language better.

We hope that this guide would help parents understand how their children are learning the Chinese language in schools and could work alongside with schools, by playing an active role in their children's learning. We also hope that this guide could help parents see that there are a variety of interesting ways to learn the Chinese language and that they could facilitate their children's learning in a fun and purposeful manner.

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Introduction of “Huan Le Huo Ban” (Happy Companions)

Why is the 2015 Primary School Chinese Curriculum named “Huan Le Huo Ban”?

The 2015 Primary School Chinese Curriculum is named “Huan Le Huo Ban” (Happy Companions) in the hope that this set of instructional materials will become a learning companion for the students. The main characters in the materials - Huan Huan, Xiao Le, Xiao An and Kang Kang will become happy companions for the students as they grow together with them. It is the wish of “Huan Le Huo Ban” to see students help their peers improve in the process of their learning, becoming one another’s good companions on a learning journey of joy. Through their patient guidance, and infusion of fun and play into teaching, teachers would play the roles of both a mentor and a companion to their students.



What are the components of “Huan Le Huo Ban”?



Oracy Theatre



Pinyin Castle
(only in Primary 1A)



Literacy
Playground



Real-life
Application

What are the key characteristics of “Huan Le Huo Ban”?

In “Huan Le Huo Ban”, there is a theme for every lesson. Each section in the same lesson revolves around the same theme and the sections are all closely-related to one another. Children first learn oral interaction skills and vocabulary in “Oracy Theatre”  . They will then learn the *Hanyu Pinyin* of some of these vocabulary words in “Pinyin Castle”  . Having learnt the meaning and pronunciation of the words in the first two sections (ie “Oracy Theatre” and “Pinyin Castle”), children will then proceed to learn the form of the Chinese characters and pick up reading skills in “Literacy Playground”  . Such an approach scaffolds learning in a step by step manner and helps children tap on their prior knowledge for greater efficacy in their acquisition of oracy skills.

What are the themes in “Huan Le Huo Ban” Primary One textbook?

The themes in the Primary One “Huan Le Huo Ban” textbooks are closely related to the children’s personal, family and school life. As students are able to relate to the learning content, their interest will be aroused. They would find the settings and scenarios in every lesson most familiar, such as a day in and after school, activities with family members, greetings to people, making a visit to the doctor’s and a day out at the zoo with the family.



What is the learning content of "Oracy Theatre"?
Is my child required to recognise the Chinese characters
in "Oracy Theatre"? 

1

Oracy is the foundation of literacy skills.
It is hence important for students to first
acquire oracy skills, by interacting with
their peers in meaningful settings.

2

The thematic picture in
"Oracy Theatre" in every lesson provides a
setting whereby children
learn related vocabulary
and sentence structures.



3

Children will then need to know
how to use the vocabulary and
sentence structures that they
have learnt in everyday life.
For this purpose, an interactive
activity has been designed in
every lesson to help children
reinforce their spoken interaction
skill. An oratorical activity is also
designed to help children acquire
presentation skill.

4

With the focus in "Oracy Theatre" on
the acquisition of oracy skills, children are not
required to recognise the Chinese characters
in this section. To facilitate children's learning
of oracy skills with the aid of Hanyu Pinyin,
the Hanyu Pinyin in this section is placed
conspicuously above the Chinese characters
in a larger font size. The Chinese characters in this
section are also presented in a lighter colour
than that in the "Literacy Playground". 

6



In “*Huan Le Huo Ban*”, why is it that the *Hanyu Pinyin* of certain words are enjoined? Why does the first letter of the *Hanyu Pinyin* start with a capital letter?

To enhance the children’s learning of words and sentence structure, the *Hanyu Pinyin* of the Chinese characters linking to a word are enjoined while the first letter of the *Hanyu Pinyin* in every sentence is in capital letter. This will help children to differentiate words and sentences, thus facilitating their acquisition of oracy and reading skills. Such an approach follows “The basic rules of the Chinese phonetic alphabet orthography” rolled out in 2012 and is widely adopted by many Chinese instructional materials in the world.

Students need not enjoin *Hanyu Pinyin* of characters in words nor use capital letters for the first letter in the sentence.

Are children required to enjoin the *Hanyu Pinyin* of characters in words and to capitalise *Hanyu Pinyin* sentences?

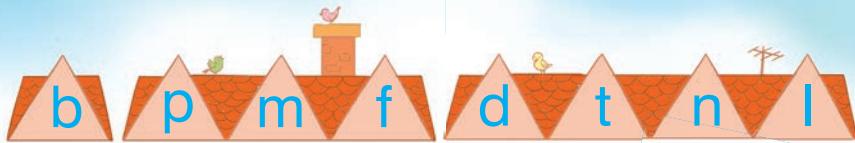
In the learning and testing of *Hanyu Pinyin*, children are not required to enjoin the *Hanyu Pinyin* of the characters in words or capitalise letters when writing sentences in *Hanyu Pinyin*.



Nǐ zěnme le?
你 怎么 了?

Wǒ fāshāo le.
我 发烧 了。





What are the characteristics of learning Hanyu Pinyin in "Huan Le Huo Ban"?

Hanyu Pinyin is a tool for learning Chinese. The use of Hanyu Pinyin not only helps children in the learning of oracy skills but also aids in character recognition and reading. In "Huan Le Huo Ban", the oracy skills which children have acquired serves as the foundation for learning Hanyu Pinyin. Children then make use of Hanyu Pinyin to help them to recognise Chinese characters. Thus, the learning of Hanyu Pinyin becomes interesting and meaningful for them.

Pinyin	Illustration	Pinyin	Illustration
ia	jīā (bed)	shàng xià	shàng xià (swing)
iao	tíào wǔ (dancer)	niǎo	niǎo (bird)
iang	xiāng jiāo (banana)	liáng gē rén	liáng gē rén (people)
ie	jiě jie (girl)	xiě zì	xiě zì (writing)
ian	zài jiàn (girl)	tiān kōng	tiān kōng (sky)

What are the features of the Chinese characters for recognition and writing in “Huan Le Huo Ban”?

The Chinese characters for recognition in “Huan Le Huo Ban” are mainly selected from the frequently-used character list derived from the corpus developed by the Singapore Centre for Chinese Language (SCCL). This corpus consists of characters, found in local newspapers, magazines and children’s publications, etc. As for the selection of Chinese characters for writing, characters with simpler structures, as well as characters with fewer strokes will be identified for writing first.

我会认

衣 一 五 雨 我 牙 鱼

yī yī wǔ yǔ wǒ yá yú

我会写

一 五

、 一 | ノ 八 𠂇



How can I assist my child in learning?

Parents play an integral role in their children's learning of the Chinese Language. To help parents understand what their children are learning during Chinese lessons and to provide them with the necessary assistance, learning objectives can be found in sections such as "I can say" , "I can recognize"  and "I can write"  in the textbook.

I can say days of the week and dates of the months.

I can recognise characters such as “几”，“七” and “个” .



How can I help my child to apply what he has learnt?

In order to create opportunities for children to apply what they have learnt in their daily lives, a section titled “Real-life Application”  is included. Children can extend or consolidate their learning and appreciate the value of the Chinese language through the language activities and tasks. The focus of “Real-life Application”  is about sharing and interacting. Children can share what they have learnt in Chinese class, even if their parents do not speak the language. Children could also take on the role of “young teachers” and teach Chinese to their parents at home. Through this process, children apply their acquired skills and experience success in using the language. This boosts their confidence and allows them to forge closer bonds with their parents.



“Huan Le Huo Ban” (Happy Companions) Resources

What are some of the resources developed?

Teaching & Learning in Class	Printed Resources	Textbooks, Activity Books, Writing Exercise Books
	ICT Resources	Reading Texts, Animations, Songs and Rhymes, Syllable Chart, Sequencing of Strokes, Interactive Games etc
	Tool Kit	
Post-Lesson Consolidation	Printed Resources	Small Flash cards, Small Picture Cards, Small Readers
	ICT Resources	Reading Texts, Animations, Songs and Rhymes, Syllable Chart, Sequencing of Strokes, Interactive Games etc

2015 Primary School Chinese Language Teaching and Learning Resources



Textbooks



Activity Books



Writing Exercise Books



Small Readers



Small Picture Cards



Small Flash Cards

Digital Resources



听说剧场
Oracy Theatre



拼音城堡
Pinyin Castle



读写乐园
Literacy Playground

动画放映室
Animation Studio

学一学
Let's Learn

认一认
Budding Reader

游戏玩一玩
Game Station

复习加油站
Revision Kiosk

读一读
Reading is Fun

知识百宝袋
Word Bank

我爱阅读
I Love Reading

听说智多星
Oracy Master

汉字变变变
Character Transformers



唱游世界
Kingdom of Songs & Rhymes

生字魔法屋
Magic House of Characters

生词游乐场
Vocabulary Playground

快乐探险营
Language Adventure Camp

复习总动员
Grand Revision

What are some of the resources that parents can tap on?

To assist their children in consolidating their learning after lessons, parents are encouraged to use resources such as the small readers, small picture cards, small flash cards and ICT resources on the “*Huan Le Huo Ban*” website (also known as the “*Xuele*” portal).

A variety of fun and meaningful ICT resources are developed to reinforce children’s learning and provide opportunities for students to develop self-directed learning.

Parents can carry out some of the activities with their children.

How can students tap on the ICT resources on “Huan Le Huo Ban” website to develop self-directed learning?

听说剧场
Oracy Theatre

动画放映室
Animation Studio

Developing oracy skills through interesting animations.



知识百宝袋
Word Bank

Students can first predict the right vocabulary that the pictures represent, before clicking on the “show Chinese vocabulary” icon to check their answers. *Hanyu Pinyin* is also provided to help students read. If prompts are required, students can click on the “show English vocabulary” icon to display the relevant English vocabulary. This activity helps students develop and enhance their oral vocabulary.



听说智多星 Oracy Master

Practising oracy skills in authentic scenarios through engaging and interactive games. Students engage in the oral conversations according to the instructions given. Model answers will be provided and students can self-assess their learning.



拼音城堡 Pinyin Castle

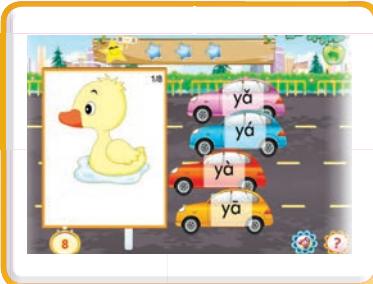
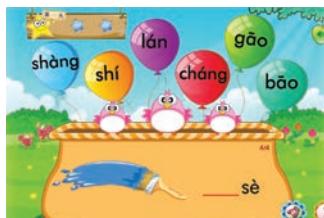
学一学 Let's Learn

Students participate in different games, such as puzzles and Solitaire, to revise and consolidate their learning.



复习加油站 Revision Kiosk

Students participate in a series of games to revise the Hanyu Pinyin they have learnt.



唱游世界
Kingdom of Songs
& Rhymes

Emphasising the connection between pronunciation and the meaning of the Chinese characters through rhymes and songs makes learning fun. Students practise what they have learnt by reciting the lyrics (without the *Hanyu Pinyin*). Using the “karaoke” function, students can also sing along to the music. Through recitation and sing along, students heighten their awareness of the language.



读写乐园 Literacy Playground

生字魔法屋 Magic House of Characters

Through a wide variety of fun and meaningful language games such as jigsaw puzzles and charades, students revise the vocabulary that they have learnt, and improve on their character recognition.



生词游乐场

Vocabulary
Playground

Students participate in a variety of fun games that plays on ideas such as shopping with a shopping cart and harvesting pearls, to revise the vocabulary learnt.



快乐探险营

Language Adventure
Camp

Students revise the sentence structures learnt through language activities such as word pairing and sentence completion. Through the reinforcement of sentence structures, students hone their writing skills.



复习总动员

Grand Revision

Students participate in a series of games to revise what they have learnt, which includes *Hanyu Pinyin*, radicals and strokes.



How do parents access the ICT resources?

Parents can access the “Xuele” portal (www.mtl.moe.edu.sg/xuele) using Google Chrome, and click on the link “*Huan Le Huo Ban*” ICT Resource Website for the Primary School Chinese Language Instructional Materials. This website is mobile compatible.



Tips for Parents*

What roles do parents play in their child's learning of Chinese?

As parents, you play an integral role in your child's learning of the Chinese Language. When your child adopts a positive attitude towards learning Chinese and has shown improvements, giving affirmation will help him to develop a greater sense of motivation in learning Chinese.

You can provide a supportive environment for your child to learn Chinese by playing three roles – the motivator, the role-model and the facilitator.



* Reference for part of this section was taken from *Chinese Language without Tears: Tips for English-speaking Parents* by Dr Soh Kah Cheng. Special thanks to Dr Soh.



I. The Motivator

1

Be positive

Even if you are uncertain of whether your child can learn Chinese well, you can still encourage your child to persevere as difficulties can be overcome as long as he is willing to work hard.

5

Have fun

Let your child acquire the language in an emotionally relaxed state, through participation in language or cultural activities.



2

Respond to your child

Your child will feel rewarded when he is able to use the language meaningfully in daily life. Help your child achieve his communication needs by responding to him in Mandarin wherever possible.



3

Give psychological support

Give your child a smile or a hug when he has made some accomplishments in Chinese, however small they may be.



4

Encourage intrinsic motivation

Help your child want to learn by letting him derive pleasure from learning the language instead of relying solely on extrinsic rewards.

2. The Role-Model

1

Use the language

Your child needs language exposure, especially from you. He will benefit from your language input even if you do not speak perfectly well.

2

Learn together with
your child
Be a role model of a
good language learner.



3. The Facilitator

1

Provide resources for learning

There are a wide range of resources to help your child learn Chinese. Storybooks and games and toys for language learning are readily available on the market. Mass media and technology such as audio readings of stories and rhymes, audio books and online videos can help to facilitate language acquisition. Interactive learning applications are also available for use on mobile phones and tablets.



2

Start small

To encourage your child to speak Mandarin, you could start with small steps such as introducing a "Mandarin Hour" once or twice every week before increasing the duration or frequency gradually.

3

Tap on external help

Involvement in community programmes and interactions with your Chinese-speaking acquaintances will help to increase your child's exposure to the language.

How can I help my child in his listening and speaking skills?

Expose your child to listening and speaking Mandarin as early as possible. This will help to facilitate the acquisition of listening and speaking skills, which will in turn ease his transition to reading and writing later.

Make good use of the textbook



Use the thematic picture in every lesson to revise the oral vocabulary and sentence structures that your child has learnt in school.



Sing or recite the songs and rhymes with your child or simply be your child's audience.



Support your child and affirm his efforts when he tries to engage you in the “Real-Life Application” activities.

Make good use of curriculum resources



Play games using the picture cards with your child. Use them on their own or incorporate them into your own board games. The cards can also be used to weave or tell stories.



Watch the animations on the “Xuele” website. Encourage your child to talk about what he has seen.

Tune in to Chinese radio stations



Make good use of time on the way to school by listening to Chinese radio programmes with your child.

Speak Mandarin with your child



Use the language to engage your child in daily conversation, on topics that are of interest to him.

Enjoy watching Chinese TV programmes



Choose appropriate programmes to watch with your child.

How can I help my child improve his reading skill?

Character recognition is the foundation of reading Chinese. Your child could only start to read after he is able to recognise a considerable number of Chinese characters. Help your child by facilitating the character recognition process so that he could begin reading Chinese as early as possible.

Make good use of the textbook

- Read the texts with your child whenever possible. Encourage your child to recite the texts without the support of *Hanyu Pinyin* when he is ready to do so.
- Let your child talk about the stories and help relate them to his own experiences.



Make good use of curriculum resources

- Use small flash cards to play games with your child.
- Read or listen to the e-texts on “Xuele” website. Encourage your child to recite without the support of *Hanyu Pinyin* when he is ready to do so.
- Go through the small readers with your child. These readers feature words that he has learnt before. This process would help to build confidence and reinforce learning.



Create an environment conducive for learning

Set up a comfortable library space at home. Letting your child have easy access to books will drive his motivation to read. You could also provide visual stimulus by displaying these around the house in Chinese:

- Your child's time-table
- Your weekly menu
- Shopping list for groceries
- To-do list



Make Chinese a daily language

Use the language in ways that will create meaning for your child in everyday life. You could bring to his attention the Chinese words which he encounters in his surroundings. You could also reinforce learning by asking your child to point out the characters or words that he can recognise in newspapers or magazines. Acknowledge his achievements to provide encouragement and support.





Learn as you play

Purposeful play allows your child to familiarise with characters or words in a relaxed setting. This will help to reduce apprehensions that your child might have towards learning Chinese.

Guide your child to recognise Chinese characters

Encourage your child to verbalise the ways that he uses to help him remember Chinese characters, no matter how unconventional the methods may be. You could also tap on what your child knows. Guide him to link an unknown character with known concepts to help him learn the character.



Build up a “Characters Achievement List” with your child

Help your child compile a list of characters learnt. Gradually build it up with related characters to form words or phrases. Your child will have an immense sense of satisfaction when he sees the list grow.

Cultivate good reading habits

Set a routine reading time with your child and read story books or electronic books with your child. Bring your child to the library or the bookshop at least once a week.

Choose reading materials wisely

Select age-appropriate books that are based on your child's interests. You could start with picture books and simple rhyming books.

Make reading a meaningful and enjoyable process

Familiarise yourself with the book first and be animated when reading it to your child. Talk about the pictures, point to objects and ask questions. Engage your child. Let him set the pace of reading, turn the pages, role-play and talk about his thoughts.



Be your child's audience

Encourage your child to read the story to you even if you are unfamiliar with the language.

Be equipped with a dictionary

A bilingual dictionary will come in handy when you need to check for the Chinese-equivalent of a particular word.

Tap on external help

There are plenty of story-telling sessions in our community libraries. You could attend these sessions with your child. There are also audio books available for your child to listen and read independently.

How can I help my child to improve his writing skill?

Have a small white board

It always comes in handy when your child wants to show you what he can write or when an adult can guide him in writing certain words.



Have fun

Play interesting games with your child to explore Chinese characters and words.



Try something new

Join a calligraphy class with your child and enjoy the experience of writing Chinese characters with him.

Co-write with your child

Help your child to keep a journal and write little notes or cards.

Information on Chinese Language Learning Resources

1. ICT Resources for “Huan Le Huo Ban” (Happy Companions)
https://www.mtl.moe.edu.sg/xuele/MOE_web/main.html
A website to access the ICT resources used in the teaching and learning of Chinese Language in school.
2. Parents in Education
<http://www.schoolbag.sg>
MOE online website that contains information and resources for parents to support their children’s learning in schools.



3. Committee to Promote Chinese Language Learning
<http://www.cpcll.sg/>

A website that contains information about the various events and programmes organized by the community to support children in the learning of Chinese Language outside schools.

4. Chinese Story-telling Sessions

<http://www.nlb.gov.sg/golibrary/programme/Story-telling%20~2Fcrafts.aspx>

This link provides details about the Chinese story-telling sessions held in the national libraries.

