

1

**Chinese  
Numbers**

2

**Chinese  
Orientation**

3

**Chinese  
Five  
Elements**

**Related  
Seasons and  
Health**

# PREVIEW

## Outline

# Numerical Worship and Taboo in Chinese Culture

- Implicit meaning of 1-10
- Numbers Chinese like and dislike in everyday life.
- Special meaning of 666,888,1314,520,etc.

**1**

> One  
> The beginning of the universe

Chinese believe that "one" represents the beginning of everything. It refers to the chaotic state that existed before anything in the universe was created.

It refers to the superior.

It refers to "uniqueness".

Yi

Mean: Good things come in pairs 好事成双

**2**

Chinese believed that everything in the universe possesses two properties: Yin (feminine) and Yang (masculine).

So, Chinese are fond of the number "2". It symbolized some kind of balance.

Er

Mean: Good things come in pairs 好事成双

**3**

Laotse, the founder of Taoism, said: "One created two. Two created three. Three created all things." Just like Yin and Yang produced many new things. Therefore, the number "three" can represent "many".

San

**4**

The pronunciation of "死" is similar to that of "死" si (death). Therefore, people believe that this number will bring bad luck and intentionally avoid it.

Si

Bad Luck!

**5**

• Mu5  
The Pronunciation of "五" is similar to that of "无" wú (no).

• Five elements: Wuxing  
Could be used to explain absolutely everything.

Wu

**6**

• Indicates smooth  
The pronunciation of "六" is similar to "流" (liú), which is "flow" in English. Therefore, the number 6 indicates that everything will go smoothly.

• Indicates enrich  
The pronunciation is close to "福" (fú) which is "blessing".

Liú

**7**

Guess the meaning of "666" in Chinese.

In Chinese, the number 7 is considered to be a lucky number. But because it has both positive and negative connotations in Chinese culture, it is often avoided when indicating something awesome.

**8**

Traditional Chinese believe the number 8 is considered to be a lucky number. But because it has both positive and negative connotations in Chinese culture, it is often avoided when indicating something awesome.

Qī

**9**

9 is the highest of the Yang numbers. So, it is greatly used in Chinese culture and history, and always associated with the heaven or emperor.

"九" sounds the same as the other Chinese word "久", which has the meaning of "eternally, everlasting and longevity". Hence, 99 and 999 are always widely welcomed among Chinese people.

Jiǔ

**10**

10 represent the desire for "perfect in any way".

Shí

Mean: "十全十美" (shí quán shí měi) everything is perfect.

**11**

Some examples of the important 8 in Chinese people's daily life.

Telephone numbers: In China, the lucky number 8 will be priority. Chinese people would like to pay more money for a telephone number with several "8".

Buying an apartment: Residents on the eighth floor of buildings will be among the last to be sold out. Other addresses with the number 8 are favored by people as well.

Important occasions: Chinese people prefer to choose good dates for important occasions, such as weddings and opening ceremonies. Buying Olympic Games medal is the perfect example, as the opening ceremony began at 8:08 pm on 08/08/2008.

**12**

**13**

Chinese Lucky Number Combinations

520 (wǔ èr líng) sounds similar to "我爱你" (wǔ ài nǐ) in Chinese, which means "I love you".

1314 (yī sān yī sì) sounds like "一生一世" (yī shēng yī shì) in Chinese, which means the whole life. This number combination is often used by lovers, usually with 520, indicating they will love each other forever.

**14**

Chinese Lucky Number Combinations

666 (liù liù liù) means everything will go smoothly. When you say "666" to someone, it's like a compliment, indicating someone is awesome.

168 (yī lǐu bā) sounds similar to "一路发" (yī lù fā) in Chinese, which means you can have good luck in making money all the way.

**15**

Chinese Lucky Number Combinations

Can you guess the meaning of 888?

888 (bā bā bā) As the number 8 has the best wishes for good fortune and prosperity, the number 888 is also very auspicious for Chinese people. It represents all the good wishes.

**16**

Is there any numerical worship and taboo in your country?

Discuss and Share



# Chinese Orientation Words

- Direction
- Position

A quick introduction on how to read and write:

北 north

西 west

东 east

南 south

前 front

上 up

左 left

右 right

下 down

后 behind

Chinese words and orientation



22

What's "方位" (orientation)?



23

Chinese words and position



24

Chinese words and position



25

In China: "右" is much powerful



26

Chinese words and position



27

Chinese words and direction



28

Chinese words and direction



29

Chinese words and direction



30

Why China is called "中国"?



31

The Five Elements

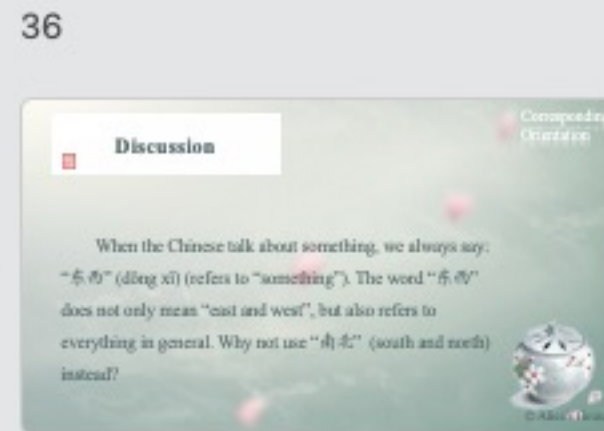
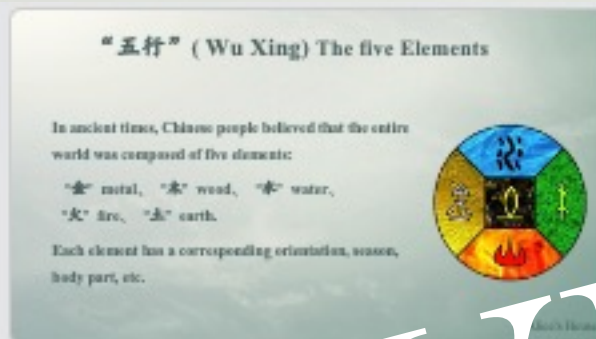


32

# The Five Elements

Wood, Metal, Fire, Water, Earth

## The relation between five elements and orientation






# The Five Elements

- The relation between five elements and seasons.
- Some healthy knowledge in each season according to “the five elements.”

**Discussion**


When the Chinese talk about something, we always say: “东西”(dōng xī) (refers to “something”). The word “东西” does not only mean “east and west”, but also refers to everything in general. Why not use “南北” (south and north) instead?



**Wood 木** → **春 Spring**


In spring, the vegetation grow fast.

People should pay attention to their livers and eat green food, such as green beans, spinach, Chinese cabbage, etc.



**Water 水** → **冬 Winter**

People should pay attention to their kidneys and eat black food, such as mushrooms and black soya beans.




**Discussion**

Why can “东西”(east and west) refer to “anything” while “南北”(south and north) cannot?


“东” corresponds to “wood” and “西” corresponds to “metal”. Many things are made of wood and metal.

In contrast, “南” corresponds to “fire” and “北” corresponds to “water”; rarely things are made of water and fire. So, the word “东西” rather than “南北” came to be used to refer to all physical objects in general.





**Fire 火** → **夏 Summer**

People should pay attention to their hearts and tongue and eat red foods that could warm their hearts, such as sweet potatoes, etc.



**Earth 土** → The period between summer and autumn

Earth is related to germination and breeding. It corresponds to the period between summer and autumn. People need to pay attention to their stomachs and eat sweet food, such as corn and pumpkin.





**Seasons**

**Body Parts**


**Health**

The Five Elements



**Metal 金** → **秋 Autumn**


People should pay attention to their lungs because autumn is easy to make people feel tired and dry, which is harmful to their lungs. So, people need to eat some white food, like lotus root, Chinese yam and pear.



**Activity**

**Find your Friends**

- Each student picks a card representing the five elements, seasons or directions.
- After the game start, students have 1 minute to find their related things or elements, and then they should stand together with their “friends”. Such as “木” wood- east-spring
- The group that finds their “friends” the quickest wins!



# The Five Elements

## Easy-understanding: Interaction between the five elements

### “Generating and Overcoming”

**Interaction between the five elements**  
相生相克 Generating and Overcoming

**相生(shēng) generating**

metal  
↓  
water  
↓  
wood  
↓  
fire  
↓  
soil

**相克(kè) overcoming**

metal  
↓  
wood  
↓  
soil  
↓  
water  
↓  
fire

**Shēng cycle include “generate”, “create” or “strengthen”, as well as “grow” or “promote”.**

- Wood feeds Fire
- Fire produces Earth (lava)
- Earth produces Metal (gold)
- Metal produces Water (condensation)
- Water nourishes Wood (Water flows, plants thrive)

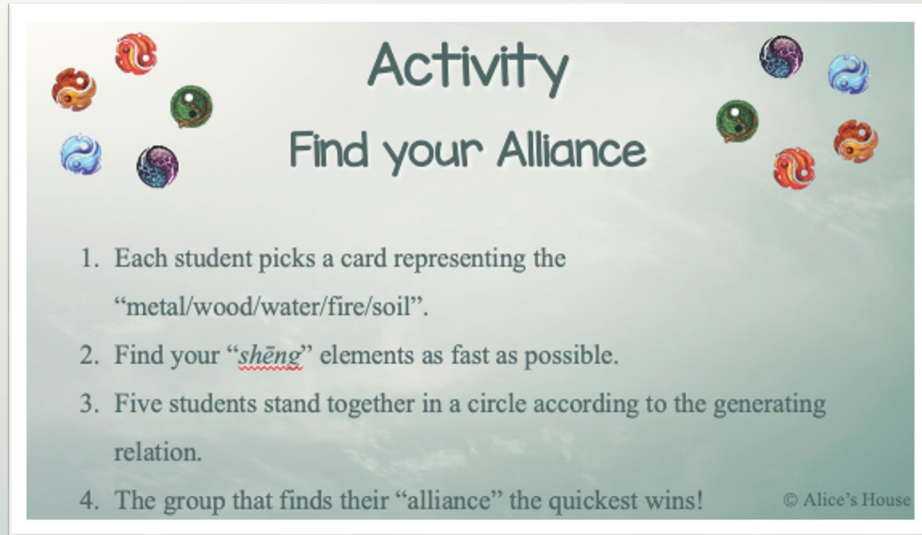
**Kè cycle include “controls”, “restrains” and “fathers”, as well as “oppresses” or “regulate”.**

- Wood controls (or stabilizes) Earth (roots of trees can prevent soil erosion)
- Earth contains (or directs) Water (dams or river banks)
- Water dampens (or regulates) Fire
- Fire melts (or refines or shapes) Metal
- Metal chops (or curves) Wood

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# Fun Activity :

Help students understand the relation between the five elements and their corresponding position and season.

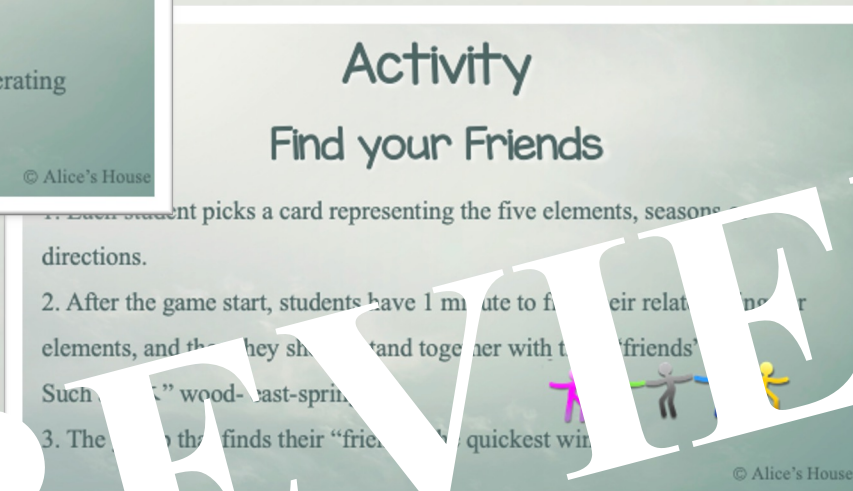


**Activity**  
**Find your Alliance**

1. Each student picks a card representing the “metal/wood/water/fire/soil”.
2. Find your “shēng” elements as fast as possible.
3. Five students stand together in a circle according to the generating relation.
4. The group that finds their “alliance” the quickest wins!

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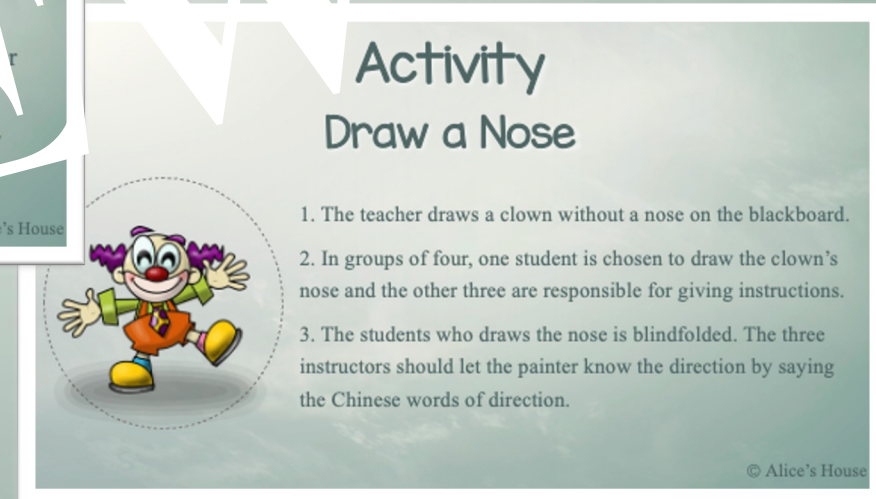
<small>Students pick before the lesson:</small>			
	mù 木 Wood	huǒ 火 Fire	
2		3	
shuǐ 水 Water	tǔ 土 Earth	dōng 东 East	xī 西 West
6		7	8
nán 南 South	běi 北 North	zhōng 中 Center	chūn 春 Spring
10		11	12
xià 夏 Summer	qiū 秋 Autumn	dōng 冬 Winter	xià qiū 夏-秋 The period between summer and autumn



**Activity**  
**Find your Friends**

1. Each student picks a card representing the five elements, seasons and directions.
2. After the game start, students have 1 minute to find their relation between the elements, and then they should stand together with their “friends”.
3. The group that finds their “friends” the quickest wins!

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**Activity**  
**Draw a Nose**

1. The teacher draws a clown without a nose on the blackboard.
2. In groups of four, one student is chosen to draw the clown's nose and the other three are responsible for giving instructions.
3. The students who draws the nose is blindfolded. The three instructors should let the painter know the direction by saying the Chinese words of direction.

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Printable Game Cards are Included