

21世纪CBI内容依托系列英语教材

An Outline of Chinese Culture
(English Edition)



中国文化

(英文版)

常俊跃 霍跃红 姚璐 赵永青 主编



北京大学出版社
PEKING UNIVERSITY PRESS

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前言

《中国文化》是在内容依托教学理念指导下,依托国家哲学社会科学项目“英语专业基础阶段内容依托式教学改革研究”推出的系列英语内容依托教材之一,是大连外国语学院优秀教学成果一等奖、辽宁省优秀教学成果一等奖、第六届国家级优秀教学成果奖获奖成果的重要组成部分。这套系列教材的推出具有重要的理论意义和现实意义。

随着我国英语教育的快速发展,英语专业长期贯彻的“以技能为导向”的课程建设理念及教学理念已经难以满足社会的需要。现行英语专业教育大、中、小学英语教学脱节,语言、内容教学割裂,单纯语言技能训练过多,专业内容课程不足,学科内容课程系统性差,高低年级内容课程安排失衡及其导致的学生知识面偏窄、知识结构欠缺、思辨能力偏弱、综合素质发展不充分等问题日益凸显。

针对上述问题,国家哲学社会科学项目“英语专业基础阶段内容依托式教学改革研究”以内容依托教学(CBI)理论为指导,确定了如下改革思路:

(一) 更新语言教学理念,改革英语专业教学的课程结构。在不改变专业总体培养目标和教学时限的前提下,对课程结构进行革命性的变革,改变传统单一的语言技能课程模式,实现内容课程——语言课程的融合,扩展学生的知识面,提高学生的语言技能。

(二) 开发课程自身潜力,同步提高专业知识和语言技能。内容依托课程本身也同时关注内容和语言,把内容教学和语言教学有机结合。以英语为媒介,系统教授专业内容;以专业内容为依托,在使用语言的过程中提高语言技能,扩展学生的知识面。

(三) 改革教学方法及手段,全面提高语言技能和综合素质。依靠内容依托教学在方法上的灵活性,通过问题驱动、输出驱动等方法调动学生主动学习,把启发式、任务式、讨论式、结对子、小组活动、课堂展示、多媒体手段等行之有效的活动与学科内容教学有机结合,提高学生的语言技能,激发学生的兴趣,培养学生的自主性和创造性,提升思辨能力和综合素质。

本项改革突破了我国英语专业英语教学大纲规定的课程结构,改变了英语专业基础阶段通过开设单纯地听、说、读、写四种语言技能课提高学生语言技能的传统课程建设理念,对英语课程及教学方法进行了创新性的改革。首创了英语专业基础阶段具有中国特色的“内容——语言”融合的课程体系;率先开发了适合英语专业基础阶段的内容依托课程;系统开发了英语国家史、地、社会文化、欧洲文化、中国文化、跨文化交际、《圣经》文化教材;以英语为媒介,系统教授专业内容;以内容为依托,全面发展学生的语言技能;扩展学生的知识面,提高学生的综合素质,以崭新的途径实现英语专业教育的总体培养目标。

经过八年的酝酿、准备、实验,内容依托教学改革取得了鼓舞人心的成果。

(一) 构建了英语专业基础阶段内容依托课程与语言课程融合的课程体系。新的课程体系改变了传统单一的听、说、读、写语言技能课程模式,实现了内容依托课程和语言技能课程两种模块的融合;语言技能课程包含综合英语、听力、语音、写作,内容课程包含了美国历史文化、美国自然人文地理、美国社会文化、英国历史文化、英国自然人文地理、英国社会文化、澳新加社会文化、欧洲文化、中国文化、跨文化交际、《圣经》与文化;语言技能课程密切关注听、说、读、写技能的发展,内容依托课程不仅关注系统的学科内容,而且也关注综合语言技能的培养。在课程内和课程

外两个层面把内容教学和语言教学有机结合,通过内容教学培养学生综合语言运用能力,扩展学生的知识面,提高学生的综合素质和多元文化意识,从根本上改变英语专业学生知识面偏窄、综合素质偏低的问题。

(二) 系统开发了相关国家的史、地、社会文化以及跨文化交际课程资源。在CBI教学理论的指导下,在实施内容依托教学的关键期——英语专业的第一学年,成功开出了美国和英国的历史、地理、社会文化等课程。第二学年开出澳新加社会文化、欧洲文化、中国文化、跨文化交际、《圣经》与文化等课程。内容依托教材改变了传统的组织模式,系统组织了教学内容,设计了新颖的栏目板块,设计的活动也丰富多样,实践教学中受到了学生的广泛欢迎。此外还开发了开设课程所需要的大量资源。在北京大学出版社的支持下,系列教材已经陆续出版。

(三) 牵动了教学手段和教学方法的改革,取得了突出的教学效果。在内容依托教学理论的指导下,教师的教学理念、教学方法、教学手段得到更新。通过问题驱动、输出驱动等活动调动学生主动学习,把启发式、任务式、讨论式教学方法和结对子、小组活动、课堂展示、多媒体手段等行之有效的活动与学科内容教学有机结合,激发学生的兴趣,培养学生自主性和创造性,提高学生的语言技能,提升思辨能力和综合素质。曾有专家、教师担心取消专门的英语泛读课以及缩减基础英语精读课会对阅读技能发展产生消极影响。实验数据证明,内容依托教学不仅没有对学生的语言技能发展和语言知识的学习产生消极影响,而且还产生了多方面的积极影响;在取消专门英语阅读课的情况下,阅读能力发展迅速;内容依托教学对学科知识的学习产生了巨大的积极影响。

(四) 提高了教师的科研意识和科研水平,取得了丰硕的教研成果。项目开展以来,团队对内容依托教学问题进行了系列研究,活跃了整个教学单位的科研气氛,科研意识和科研水平也得到很大提高。课题组已经撰写研究论文17篇,在国际、国内学术研讨会交流12篇,在国际学术期刊 *World Englishes*、国内外语类核心期刊《外语与外语教学》、《中国外语》、《教育理论与实践》等发表研究论文9篇。

教学改革开展以来,每次成果发布都引起强烈反响。在2008年3月的第三届中国外语教学法国际研讨会上,与会的知名外语教育专家戴炜栋教授等对这项改革给予关注,博士生导师蔡基刚教授认为本项研究“具有导向性作用”。在2008年5月的“第二届全国英语专业院系主任高级论坛”上,研究成果得到知名专家、博士生导师王守仁教授和与会专家教授的高度评价。在2008年7月的中国英语教学研究会东北地区年会上,改革的系列成果引起与会专家的强烈反响,研究论文获得3个优秀论文一等奖,3个二等奖,1个三等奖。2008年11月在中国英语教学研究会年会上,成果再次引起与会专家的强烈反响,博士生导师石坚教授等给予了高度评价。2008年10月和12月,本项改革成果分别获得大连外国语学院教学研究成果一等奖和辽宁省优秀教学成果奖一等奖,而且还被辽宁省特别推荐参评国家教学成果奖。在2009年5月的“第三届全国英语专业院系主任高级论坛”,本项改革成果再次赢得专家同行们的关注和赞誉。2009年10月在“中国英语教学研究会2009年会”上,中国英语教学研究会会长、中国外语教育研究中心主任文秋芳教授和我国外语教学指导委员会主任戴炜栋教授对我们的教学研究所取得的成果给予高度肯定和赞扬。

目前,该项成果已经在全国英语专业教育领域引起广泛关注。它触及了英语专业的教学大纲,影响了课程建设的理念,引领了英语专业的教学改革,改善了教学实践,必将对未来英语专业教育的发展产生积极影响。

本项改革开展过程中得到了全国各地专家的关注、支持和帮助。衷心感谢戴炜栋教授、王守

仁教授、文秋芳教授、石坚教授、蔡基刚教授、杨忠教授等前辈们的指导和提携,衷心感谢大连外国语学院校长孙玉华教授、赵忠德教授、杨俊峰教授及其他各位领导的大力支持,感谢大连外国语学院教务处刘宏处长、姜凤春副处长以及工作人员们在改革实验中给予的大力支持,感谢大连外国语学院科研处张雪处长和工作人员们给予的热情帮助,感谢大连外国语学院英语学院的领导全力支持和同事们的理解、帮助以及团队成员的共同努力。同时也真诚感谢为我们内容依托教学改革提供丰富教学材料的国内外专家们。特别感谢的是北京大学出版社富有远见的张冰主任和刘强助理,没有他们对新教学理念的认同,没有他们对英语专业教育的关注和支持,这套教材不可能如此迅速地面世。

《中国文化》针对的学生群体是具有中学英语基础的大学生。既适合英语专业基础阶段的学生,也适合具有中学英语基础的非英语专业学生和英语爱好者学习使用。总体来看,本教材具有以下主要特色:

(一) 打破了传统的教材建设理念

本教材打破了“以提高语言技能为终极目的”的传统教材建设理念,在先进、有效的内容依托教学理论指导下,改变了片面关注语言知识和语言技能却忽视内容学习的作法。教材围绕能充分代表中国文化的主题组织素材,摆脱传统的机械性词汇以及语法教学,给学习者提供了一本能让他们沉浸其中的英语教材,学习者对于教材内容更为关注,让学习者在轻松愉悦的氛围中通过积极参与课堂教学活动达到学习使用语言的目的。这不仅能提高学生的民族文化、人生素养和外语水平,更为重要的是能搭建中西文化的桥梁。

(二) 涵盖了中国文化的代表性主题

《中国文化》涵盖十五个精选的中华文化知识板块,其编排是按照衣、食、住、行等主题或专题来组织的。撷取的是中国文化的一个个典型侧面,涉及学生进行语言交流或文化交流的很多主题。本教材大量使用真实、地道的语言材料,为学生提供了高质量的语言输入,并为他们的语言输出提供了素材。

(三) 体现了教材建设的人文关照

《中国文化》以介绍中国优秀的传统文化为主线,主题内容力求具有代表性、民族性和趣味性。使学生通过对这些资料的学习和领悟,培养他们的民族自豪感,陶冶他们的审美情操,弘扬中华民族的人文精神。在选择教材资源以培养学生民族自豪感的同时,也注意引导学生关注异域文化,进行比较,培养文化敏感性,树立多元文化的观念,对于自己的文化既不要自尊大,也不无端菲薄。对其他文化,批判中接受,吸取其精华部分,补充自己的文化。

(四) 突出了学生的主体地位

本教材设计了新颖的活动板块,每一单元的主体内容均包括 Before You Read、Start to Read、After You Read、Read More 四大板块,突出了以学生为中心的思想,而且也方便教师借助教材开展生动有趣的教学活动。在 Before You Read 部分,学生通过自测了解自己的不足,激发学习热情;在 Start to Read 部分获得主要知识内容,拓展知识面;在 After You Read 部分通过练习检测对单元内容的掌握情况;Read More 提供的两篇或三篇辅助阅读材料是对单元内容的延伸。这种设计理念,从学生的要求和实际情况出发,培养他们的自主学习能力。

(五) 设计了多样的训练活动

在强调内容学习的同时,《中国文化》也关注培养学生的语言技能和综合素质。教材精心设计了生动多样的综合练习。这些练习有注重丰富文化知识的,也有专门训练语言技能的,还有培

养学生主动思维,比较中西文化异同的活动,这些活动学生参与度极高,可在课内和课外进行。多样化的活动打破了传统教材单调的训练程式,使得课堂教学得以延伸。

作为一项探索,我们团队成员虽然为打造这套精品教材做出了巨大努力,但由于水平所限,教材中难免存在疏漏和不足,希望全国各地的同仁不吝赐教,希望亲自体验内容依托教学的同学积极提出改进意见和建议,以期不断完善教材,为提高英语专业教育的质量共同努力。

编 者

2011年1月

于大连外国语学院

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Unit 1

Chinese Mythology

set of ancient myths; 神话传说

Thus we hope to teach mythology not as a study, but as a relaxation from study; to give our work the charm of a story-book, yet by means of it to impart a knowledge of an important branch of education.

—Thomas Bulfinch

Unit Goals

- To know and be able to tell about the historical figures in Chinese mythology
- To be familiar with the historical development of Chinese mythology
- To understand the common themes and features of Chinese mythology
- To learn about some differences and similarities of the Chinese creation story and the biblical story
- To learn useful words and expressions that relate to Chinese mythology and improve English language skills

Before You Read

1. Test your general understanding of mythology and culture.

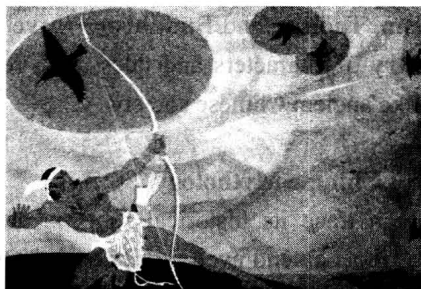
- 1) Is mythology the same as religion? Is Confucianism mythology or religion?
- 2) As far as you know, how was the world created? Have you heard of other creation stories besides Pan Gu? What do you know about Genesis in *the Bible*?
- 3) Do you think scholars as well as primitive people could also create mythical stories?
- 4) What themes do you think are particularly stressed in Chinese mythology?

2. Give the name of the following myths according to the pictures.

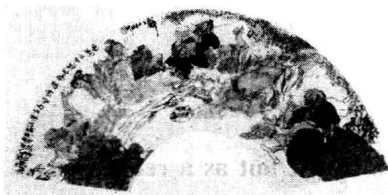
①



②



③



④



Start to Read

Text A Chinese Mythology

Mythology is a body of myths concerning a particular person or race. Ancient Chinese mythology, a remote and mystical world, was created with the wildest imagination by people in primitive ages, when faced with the unknown. It underwent the far-flung years of oral circulation until the Chinese characters were invented to provide a more permanent way of recording. Chinese mythology is similar to modern religion in that they both believe in relationships between mankind and a higher power. Chinese mythology, however, uses myths and legends to tell of these relationships. A myth is a story considered sacred and true to those within the culture of the mythology. A legend is a story handed down from generation to generation that has no real evidence to back it up. A myth is also passed from generation to generation but it has more facts and evidence recorded to support the story.

Shanhaijing is an important book of ancient Chinese mythology. To some people it may be considered as an encyclopedia of ancient China. It provides a lot of detailed information about mountains and seas, myths, witchcraft, and religion of ancient China. *Shanhaijing* also records the geography, history, medicine, customs, and ethnicities in ancient times.

The people of China have a rich and complicated mythology that dates back nearly 4,000 years. Throughout Chinese history, myth and reality have been **intertwined**. Historical figures have been **worshiped as gods**, and ancient myths are sometimes treated as historical truths. In addition, three great religious traditions—**Confucianism**, **Taoism**, and **Buddhism**—have played a role in shaping the mythology. The result is a rich **tapestry** of characters and tales, both real and imagined, and a unique **pantheon** organized very much like ancient Chinese society.



Roots of Chinese Mythology

China can trace its historical roots in an unbroken line for more than 4,000 years, and its mythological roots extend even farther back in time. From about 2000 to 1500 B.C., a people known as the Xia dominated the northern regions of China. The Xia worshiped the snake, a creature that appears in some of the oldest Chinese myths. Eventually, the snake changed into the dragon, which



became one of the most enduring symbols of Chinese culture and mythology.

From about 1500 to 1066 B.C., China entered the Shang dynasty. People at that time worshiped many deities, including natural forces and elements such as rain, clouds, rivers, mountains, the sun, the moon, and the earth. Their greatest deity, Shang Di, remains an important god in the Chinese pantheon.

When a new dynasty, the Zhou, came to power in China in 1066 B.C., significant changes took place in religion. People still worshiped the old gods, but ancestor worship became increasingly important. Confucianism and Taoism appeared near the end of the Zhou dynasty. These two religious traditions have had an enormous influence on the development of the most basic and lasting principles of Chinese culture.

Confucius attracted many followers during his life, and his ideas continued to spread after his death.

Reverence for family and ancestors is an important element of Confucianism.

In 213 B.C., many of the original sources of Chinese mythology were lost when Emperor Shi Huangdi of the Qin dynasty ordered the burning of all books on subjects other than medicine, **prophecy**, and farming. This order was **reversed** in 191 B.C., and much of the literature was reconstructed. But works were rewritten to support ideas popular with the royal court at the time, including that of a **hierarchy** in government. These changes affected religious beliefs, producing a pantheon of deities that mirrored the political organization of the Chinese empire. Gods and spirits had different ranks and areas of responsibility, just like Chinese officials.

Shortly before 100 A.D., **Buddhism** arrived in China from India and added another important influence to Chinese culture and mythology. Buddhist ideas gradually merged with Taoism and Confucianism in the minds of many Chinese. The three traditions were often seen as different aspects of the same religion having basically the same goals. Buddhists and Taoists honored each other's deities in their temples, and both incorporated principles of Confucianism, such as ancestor worship, in their beliefs.

Common Themes in Chinese Mythology

Several common themes appear throughout much of Chinese mythology. Among the most significant are the creation of the world out of **chaos**, the importance of nature, and reverence for ancestors.

Pan Gu

In Chinese mythology, Pan Gu was the first living creature and the creator of the world. Among his acts of creation were the separation of the earth and sky, the placement of the stars and planets in the heavens, and the shaping of the earth's surface.

In the beginning, the universe consisted only of dark chaos in the form of a **cosmic egg**. Within

the egg lay a sleeping giant named Pan Gu. One day Pan Gu awoke and stretched, causing the egg to split open. After Pan Gu emerged, the light pure parts of the egg became the sky, while the heavy parts formed the earth. This separation of the earth and sky marked the beginning of *yin* and *yang*, the two opposing forces of the universe.

Already **gigantic** in size, Pan Gu grew 10 feet taller each day. This went on for 18,000 years, and as Pan Gu became taller, he pushed the earth and sky farther apart and shaped them with his tools until they reached their present position and appearance. Exhausted by his work, Pan Gu finally fell asleep and died. When Pan Gu died, parts of his body were transformed into different features of the world.



Reverence for ancestors is another common theme in Chinese mythology. Long life is viewed as a sign of the gods' favor, and for many centuries, the Chinese have sought the secret of long life and immortality. In the past, Taoists believed that magic **potions** could be created that would **bestow** eternal life on people who drank them and that beings known as Xian (or hsien) gained immortality in this way. Both Taoism and Confucianism stress the importance of paying proper respect to elders, especially parents and grandparents, and **deceased** ancestors are honored with various ceremonies and rituals.

Features of Chinese Mythology

Scholars and critics have written about the special features of Chinese mythology. The most obvious features are:

Mythical stories are **entwined** with history. The history of the long period before recorded history began is partly based on legends, which are interwoven with mythology. Such ancient heroes and leaders as Fuxi, Shennong, Huangdi (the Yellow Emperor) and Yu are both historical figures and important characters in mythical stories.

Feature 1: They sing the praises of labour and creation.

Feature 2: They **extol** perseverance and self-sacrifice.

One typical example is the story of Gun and Yu trying to tame the floods. Gun steals the "growing earth" from the Heavenly God with which to stop the floods, but the God has him killed. Out of his belly Yu is born, who continues his cause. Yu goes through countless hardships, remains unmarried until he is thirty, and leaves his wife of only four days to fight the floods, and finally brings them under control.

Feature 3: They praise rebellion against oppression.

Feature 4: They **eulogize** the yearning for true love.

"The Cowherd and the Girl Weaver" is certainly one of China's earliest love stories. Many of the mythical stories written by intellectuals tell stories of how men and goddesses, fox fairies or ghost women love each other passionately and sincerely. Such stories reflect, in an indirect way, the yearning for true love when it was **stifled** by feudal ethical codes.

Feature 5: They encourage good deeds and warn against sin.

This is an important theme of the mythical stories produced after the Wei and Jin. Their writers

may have been motivated by Confucian teachings about humanity and righteousness and the Buddhist **tenet** that good will be rewarded with good and evil repaid with evil.

All these features add up, perhaps, to one prevailing characteristic: China's mythical stories, either those created by the primitive people or those written by later scholars, are full of human feelings. Gods, ghosts, foxes and spirits are commonly described as living things with human qualities and human feelings. Chinese inventors of myths describe gods the way they describe man, or treat them as if they were human, and **endow** them with human nature. There are also stories which illustrate fatalism, **reincarnation**, and all sorts of feudal ethical principles.

The ancient mythical stories, endowed with a deep sense of romanticism, has had and still has a great impact upon the development of Chinese literature. They were widely regarded as the origin of Chinese literature, where writers of later generations continuously looked for their subjects, drew their inspiration, and found their resources.

After You Read

Knowledge Focus

1. Answer the following questions.

- 1) In which way is Chinese mythology related to Chinese religion, especially religious Taoism and Buddhism?
- 2) What are the characteristics of Chinese mythology?
- 3) Can you tell some other stories in ancient Chinese mythology?
- 4) How much do you know about Fu Xi and Nü Wa?
- 5) How is people's real social life reflected in Chinese mythology?

2. Fill in the blanks according to the knowledge you've learned about Chinese mythology.

- 1) Mythology is a body of _____ concerning a particular person or race.
- 2) Chinese mythology is similar to modern _____.
- 3) A _____ is a story considered sacred and true, while a _____ is a story handed down from generation to generation that has no real evidence to back it up.
- 4) To some people *Shanhaijing* is considered as an _____ of ancient China, as it provides a lot of detailed information in ancient times.
- 5) Three great religious traditions—_____, _____ and _____ have played important roles in shaping the mythology.
- 6) _____ for family and ancestors is an important element of Confucianism.
- 7) In Chinese mythology, _____ was the first living creature and the creator of the world.

3. Match the information in Column A with the time period in Column B.

Column A

- 1) the appearance of Confucianism and Taoism
- 2) the arrival of Buddhism
- 3) snake (later dragon) worship

Column B

- A. the Xia
- B. the Shang
- C. the Zhou

- | | |
|---|-------------------|
| 4) Shang Di worship | D. the Qin |
| 5) deities reflecting a hierarchy in government | E. before A.D.100 |

4. Tell whether the following statements are true or false. Write T if the statement is true and F if it is false.

- 1) *Shanhaijing* is no more than an ancient Chinese mythology book. _____
- 2) The dragon was worshiped by the Chinese people from the very beginning of our culture. _____
- 3) Emperor Shi Huangdi of the Qin dynasty ordered the burning of all books on medicine, prophecy, and farming. _____
- 4) When Buddhism first arrived in China from India, it was rejected by the Chinese people who held Taoism and Confucianism. _____
- 5) In the past, Taoists believed that one way to gain immortality was to drink magic potions. _____
- 6) In the story of Gun and Yu, the floods were caused because Gun stole the "growing earth" from the Heavenly God and was killed by the God. _____
- 7) The one prevailing characteristic of Chinese mythology is that China's mythical stories either created by primitive people or written by scholars are full of human feelings. _____

Language Focus

1. Write the correct word next to its definition.

intertwine	worship	tapestry	deity	reverence
prophecy	hierarchy	chaos	cult	gigantic
potion	extol	stifle	tenet	reincarnation

- 1) _____ a liquid or liquid mixture, especially one that is medicinal, poisonous, or magical
- 2) _____ to praise highly
- 3) _____ the reverent love and respect for a deity or sacred object
- 4) _____ a complete disorder or confusion
- 5) _____ to twist together or entwine
- 6) _____ a specific system of worship
- 7) _____ relating to or suggestive of a giant
- 8) _____ to kill by preventing respiration
- 9) _____ an opinion, doctrine, or principle held as being true by a person or especially by an organization
- 10) _____ a heavy cloth usually hung on walls for decoration
- 11) _____ a god or goddess
- 12) _____ a prediction of the future, made under divine inspiration
- 13) _____ awe mingled with respect and esteem
- 14) _____ rebirth of the soul in another body
- 15) _____ system of people or things arranged in a graded order

2. Fill in the blanks with the words or expressions taken from Exercise 1 and translate the sentences into Chinese.

- 1) He is one of the writers who believe in and follow the _____ of naturalism.
- 2) Medical ethics and business ethics are often _____.
- 3) Songs of _____ the motherland are ringing far and near.
- 4) He personifies the _____ of money.
- 5) Beijing is a dynamic modern metropolis with 3,000 years of cultural treasures woven into the urban _____.
- 6) There must be immediate action if _____ is to be averted.
- 7) The famous artist commands deep _____ among the people.
- 8) He seemed to have the gift of _____.
- 9) In the United States, the Supreme Court is the head of a _____ of federal courts.
- 10) The smoke filled the room and almost _____ the firemen.

3. Fill in the blanks in the passage with the new words you have learned in this unit.

Taoism refers to a variety of related philosophical and religious traditions and concepts. These traditions have influenced East Asia for over two thousand years and some have spread internationally. ____ (1) ____ for nature and ancestor spirits is common in popular Taoism. The basic ____ (2) ____ of Taoism are “loyalty” and “filial piety”. Taoists ____ (3) ____ many ____ (4) ____ and so Taoism is polytheistic. The deities belong to three realms: Shen (神), Xian (仙) and Sheng (圣). They may be translated into the approximate English terms of gods, fairies and saints. Taoism simply reminds us again and again that we are a part of a whole cosmos. The patterns of our lives follow the same laws and cycles as the natural world around us. Originally a way of life, Taoism took on a more religious character after Buddhism arrived in China. Taoism adopted the use of temples and rituals and promoted the belief that all things have their own spirit. It also absorbed many mystical ____ (5) ____ and created an elaborate ____ (6) ____ as well as a new mythology.

4. Error Correction: Each of the following sentences has at least one grammatical error. Identify the errors and make corrections.

- 1) Chinese mythology is similar to modern religion in which they both believe relationships between mankind and a higher power.
- 2) A legend is a story handing down from generation to generation that has no real evidence to back it up.
- 3) A myth has more facts and evidences to be recorded to support the story.
- 4) The result is a rich tapestry of characters and tales, both real and imaginative.
- 5) Eventually, the snake changed into the dragon which became the most enduring symbols of Chinese culture and mythology.
- 6) When Zhou dynasty came to the power in China in 1066 B.C., significant changes took place in religion.
- 7) An important element of Confucianism is reverence of family and ancestors.
- 8) The first emperor of the Qin dynasty ordered the burning of all books on subjects rather than medicine, prophecy, and farming.
- 9) Works were rewritten to support ideas popular with the royal court at the time, including a

hierarchy in government.

- 10) Among the most significant theme is the creation of the world out of chaos, the importance of nature, and ancestor worship.
- 11) Among his acts of creation was the separation of the earth and sky, the placement of the stars and planets in the heaven, and the shaping of the earth's surface.
- 12) In the beginning, the universe consisted only dark chaos in form of a cosmic egg.
- 13) Already gigantic with size, he grew 10 feet taller each day.
- 14) In the past, Taoists believed that magic potions could be created that bestowed eternal life on people who drank them.
- 15) The history of the long period before recording history began is partly based on legends which are interwoven with mythology.
- 16) They were wide regarded as the origin of Chinese literature where writers of later generations continuously looked for their subjects, drew their inspiration, found their resources.

Comprehensive Work

1. **Pair Work:** Read a classic Chinese story and tell your partner a mythical story in English. Present your understanding of the issues concerned. Share the best story and comments with the class.
2. **Solo Work:** Write a short passage about the cultural differences in animal worship between China and the West.

Read More

Text B Jingwei Determines to Fill Up the Sea

“Jingwei Determines to Fill up the Sea” is a Chinese mythological story.

According to the ancient work *Shanhaijing (Classic of the Mountains and Seas)*, the youngest and most favored daughter of the Sun God was named Nü Wa (meaning “little girl”). The Sun God would go to the East Sea to direct the rising of the sun early in the morning every day and he wouldn't return home till sunset. Nü Wa eagerly hoped that her father would take her to the sun-rising place at the East Sea for a look. One day, Nü Wa was rowing a small boat by herself toward the East Sea sun-rising spot. Unfortunately, a sea storm came and mountain-like waves capsized the small boat. Nü Wa lost her life to the merciless sea.

After she died, Nü Wa turned into a bird with red claws and a white beak, vowing to fill up the sea. She would hold stones and tree branches with her beak and throw them into the sea, crying the sound of “jingwei, jingwei...”, as if encouraging herself. She kept filling up the sea year after year without stop.

Later, the story of “Jingwei Determines to Fill Up the Sea” became one of the most important Chinese myths. It is widely considered as a symbol of dogged determination and perseverance in the face of seemingly impossible odds.

