



黄建滨 主编

# 中国 文化阅读

1500 单词话中国

Chinese  
Culture  
Reading  
in Eng



浙江大学出版社  
ZHEJIANG UNIVERSITY PRESS



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## 1. The Huanghe River

The Huanghe River (黄河), 5,464 kilometers in length, is the second-longest river in China. Flowing east through moors and gorges, the water turns north to make a great loop around the Ordos Desert (鄂尔多斯沙漠). The river then swings sharply east again. After flowing through nine provinces of China, the water empties itself into the great gulf known as the Bohai Sea (渤海). The Huanghe River basin has an east-west extent of 1,900 kilometers and a north-south extent of 1,100 kilometers. Its total basin area is 752,443 square kilometers.





The Huanghe River is regarded as “the cradle of the Chinese civilization”, because its basin is the birthplace of the northern Chinese civilizations and was the most prosperous region in the early Chinese history. Thus the Huanghe River is also called the Mother River by Chinese people.

### New Words and Expressions

length	<i>n.</i>	长度
flow	<i>v.</i>	流淌
moor	<i>n.</i>	荒野
gorge	<i>n.</i>	峡谷
loop	<i>n.</i>	圈
swing	<i>v.</i>	转向
gulf	<i>n.</i>	海湾
basin	<i>n.</i>	流域
extent	<i>n.</i>	范围
cradle	<i>n.</i>	摇篮
civilization	<i>n.</i>	文明
birthplace	<i>n.</i>	发源地
prosperous	<i>a.</i>	繁荣的



## Exercise One

Directions: Decide whether the following statements are true or false.

1. The Huanghe River is the longest river in China.
2. The Huanghe River flows through eleven provinces in China.
3. The Huanghe River only flows through grasslands.
4. The Huanghe basin was the most prosperous region in the early Chinese history.
5. The Huanghe River is the Mother River of the world.

## Exercise Two

Directions: Answer the following questions.

1. Why is the Huanghe River called “the cradle of the Chinese civilization”?
2. What do Chinese people think of the Huanghe River?
3. Where does the Huanghe River flow into?



## 2. Lunar Calendar

The traditional Chinese calendar system is a combination of the solar system and the lunar system, known as *nongli* (农历, agricultural calendar or lunar calendar). The basic principle of *nongli* is that a month is the period of time it takes to complete a moon change cycle, and a year is a period approximately as long as a solar year. Whenever necessary, a leap month is added. According to this system, 24 *jieqi* (seasonal periods indicating the changes of climate) are designed to guide agricultural activities.



Many traditional Chinese festivals are based on the lunar calendar, such as the Spring Festival, the Mid-Autumn Festival and so on. On most occasions, people held memorial ceremonies, offering sacrifices to heaven and their ancestors to ask for blessing and praying for protection.

## New Words and Expressions

calendar	<i>n.</i>	日历
combination	<i>n.</i>	结合
solar	<i>a.</i>	太阳的
agricultural	<i>a.</i>	农业的
approximately	<i>ad.</i>	大约
leap month		闰月
design	<i>v.</i>	设计
occasion	<i>n.</i>	场合
ceremony	<i>n.</i>	仪式
sacrifice	<i>n.</i>	祭品
blessing	<i>n.</i>	赐福
pray	<i>v.</i>	祈求
protection	<i>n.</i>	保护



## Exercise One

Directions: Decide whether the following statements are true or false.

1. The lunar calendar is also known as agricultural calendar or *nongli*.
2. Approximately, a lunar year is as long as a solar year.
3. There is no leap month in the lunar calendar.
4. The 24 *jieqi* indicate the changes of climate.
5. The Mid-Autumn Festival is based on the lunar calendar.

## Exercise Two

Directions: Answer the following questions.

1. According to the lunar calendar, what is a month?
2. What is the major function of 24 *jieqi*?
3. What do people do in the traditional festivals?



### 3. Paper-making

Before the invention and spreading of paper, people used writing materials which were expensive, short of supply, or hard to write on. The invention of paper minimized the cost of the carrying of written languages and made it possible to generalize knowledge among common people, contributing greatly to the development of the world civilization.

Since the Western Han Dynasty, Chinese people began to make paper. In the Eastern Han Dynasty, Cai Lun (蔡伦) carried out a series



of innovations of paper-making technology. The sizing technology for production of alum paper was invented in the Jin Dynasty, and paper became the main carrier of Chinese characters ever since. In the Song and Yuan Dynasties, Chinese paper-making technology reached a stage of maturity. During the period from the 2nd century to the 18th century, Chinese paper-making technology was in the leading place around the world.

Chinese paper-making technology was introduced to its neighboring countries during the 4th and 5th centuries, to central Asia in the 8th century, to Europe in the 12th century, and became popular in almost all the European countries in the 17th century.

## New Words and Expressions

spread	<i>v.</i>	传播
minimize	<i>v.</i>	最小化
possible	<i>a.</i>	可能的
generalize	<i>v.</i>	推广
contribute	<i>v.</i>	贡献
innovation	<i>n.</i>	创新
technology	<i>n.</i>	技术
sizing	<i>n.</i>	上浆料
alum	<i>n.</i>	明矾
carrier	<i>n.</i>	载体
maturity	<i>n.</i>	成熟
leading	<i>a.</i>	领先的



### Exercise One

Directions: Decide whether the following statements are true or false.

1. The old writing materials were expensive or hard to write on.
2. The invention of paper has made great contribution to the development of the world civilization.
3. In the Eastern Han Dynasty, people started to make paper.
4. Paper became the main carrier of Chinese characters since the Song Dynasty.
5. During the period from the 12th century to the 18th century, Chinese paper-making technology was in the leading place around the world.



## Exercise Two

Directions: Answer the following questions.

1. What was the contribution of the invention of paper?
2. When did Chinese paper-making technology reach a stage of maturity?
3. When was Chinese paper-making technology introduced to Europe?



蔡伦像

