

孝 FILIAL

xiào

IN CHINA, THE IDEA OF XIÀO, OR BEING FILIAL, goes back thousands of years. It means being devoted to our parents and our grandparents. It includes things like being polite, being respectful, and being obedient.



Like a child supporting an older person.


 Elder
 +

 Child

You can be filial today by talking nicely to your mom and dad, saying “thank you” and “please.” Doing what they ask you to do right away, not after five gazillion times. Asking them, “How was your day?” Looking at them when they talk to you, and giving hugs for no reason.

Being filial also means doing well at school and in sports or music or anything you do, and being a good and kind person—making your parents proud of you.

SPEAK IT

To say the **x** in xiào, say “shhh” but then put your tongue down, flat in your mouth. It’s like trying to whistle over your tongue! The **iao** is like yelping: “ee-ow!”

shh-ee-ow = 孝

SPOT THE DIFFERENCE

Some Chinese words look alike. Which ones are NOT 孝?

孝	孝
孝	教

孝	孝
老	孝

孝	考
孝	孝

李	孝
孝	孝

教 (jiào) to teach.
考 (kǎo) to consider, or be considerate.

老 (lǎo) old, or older.
李 (lǐ) plum; also Chinese last name Li or Lee.

UNSCRAMBLE THE WORDS

How fast can you unscramble these 5 words?

derel _____

omm dan add _____

specter _____

lionlizga _____

they 'darf as _____

Word bank: Elder, Mom and Dad, Respect, Gazillion, Father’s Day

孝 FILIAL
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父 + 子
Elder + Child

Chinese words, also called characters, are written in a certain order. Follow the order below and you will know how to write 孝 too!

一 + 土 父 考 考 孝

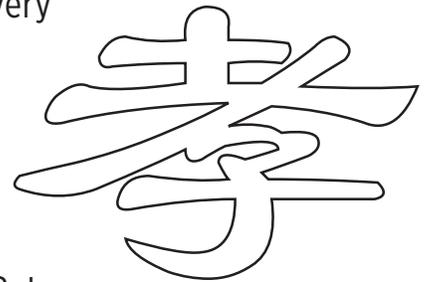
花木蘭的故事

The Story of Mulan

TODAY, WHEN WE THINK OF MULAN, we may think of a girl who was very brave. She dressed up as a man, went to war, and became a great hero! And she had a pet lizard who turned out to be a dragon, and...

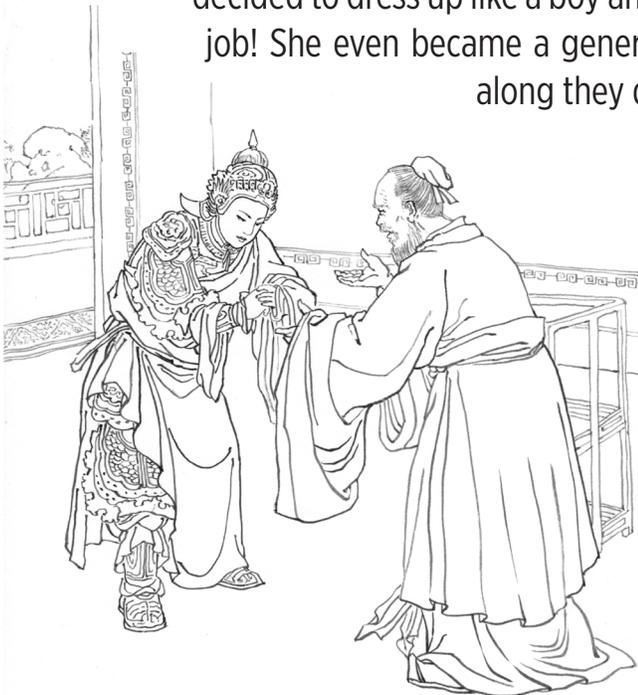
Yes, all those things are true, though we're not so sure about the pet dragon part, or whether she spoke perfect English like in the movie...

What Mulan is really famous for is being filial. She was very devoted to her parents. As a child, she always did what they said and took good care of them and helped with chores around the house.



But then it was time for war. All the men in her village had to go fight, which was very dangerous! Her father also had to go. But he was already pretty old and was no longer strong like he used to be.

Mulan was afraid that something bad might happen to him if he went. So she decided to dress up like a boy and go to war instead of him. And she did a great job! She even became a general and commanded many other men. And all along they didn't even know she was actually a lady!



WHEN THE WAR WAS OVER, Mulan decided that what she really wanted to do was to go home. She wanted to stay at home and take good care of her parents.

And so that whole story is how Mulan became a symbol of xiào (孝).

Shen Yun's dance *Mulan Joins the Battle* tells this story on stage.

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