

樂

yuè

MUSIC

Made of 3 parts

樂

絲 Silk
silk strings

白 Pick
plucks strings

木 Wood
wooden stand

Put them together and you have an ancient plucked instrument with silk strings on top of a wooden stand.

This ancient instrument is called gu qin. It is a little like a zither. Zither is hard to say and even harder to play. But its sound is beautiful and deep. Listening to it can also be very relaxing.

SPEAK IT

To say **yuè**, first say “**you**” then start saying “**when**” but don’t say the “n” at the end.

“**You**” + “**when**” = 樂

WRITE IT

Follow the order below and you will know how to write 樂 too!

’ 丿 ㇇ ㇇ ㇇ ㇇ ㇇ ㇇ ㇇ ㇇ ㇇ 樂 樂 樂

樂	樂			
樂	樂			

ONE WORD, TWO MEANINGS

When the character 樂 is pronounced **yuè**, it means music. But the same character can also be pronounced **lè**, meaning happiness.

So when reading Chinese, if you want to know whether the word means music or happiness, you need to look at the words that come before or after it.

For example:

- 音樂 = yīn yuè = music
- 快樂 = kuài lè = happiness
- 樂團 = yuè tuán = orchestra
- 樂趣 = lè qù = pleasure

SPOT THE DIFFERENCE

Some Chinese words look alike.
Which one is not 樂?

樂	樂
藥	樂

1

樂	幾
樂	樂

2

柴	樂
樂	樂

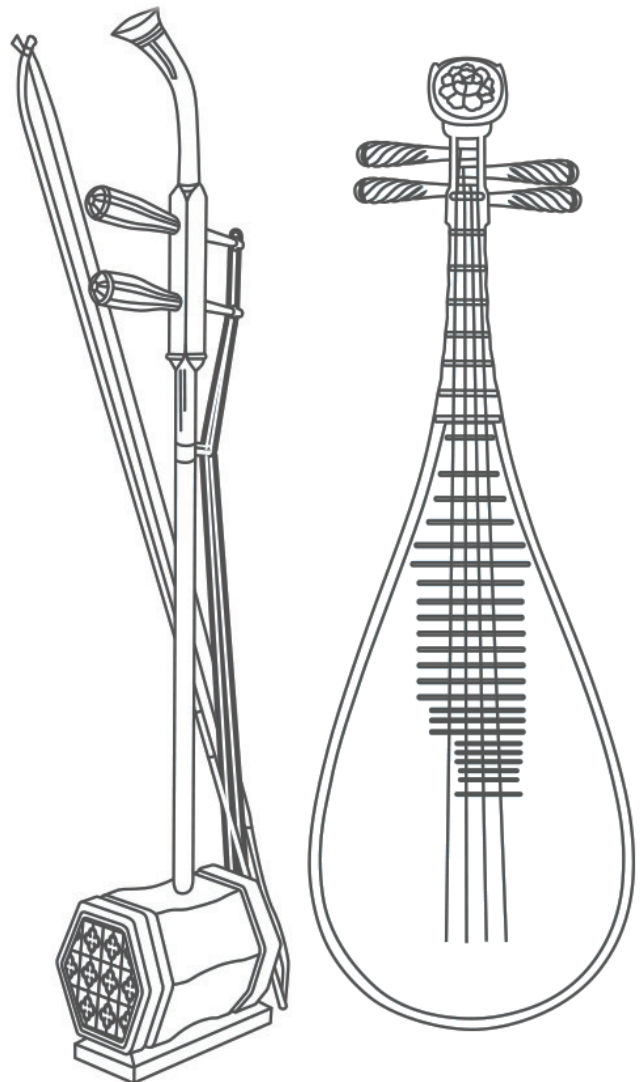
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Answers: 1. 藥 (yào) Medicine 2. 幾 (jǐ) A few 3. 柴 (chái) Firewood

ERHU AND PIPA

The *erhu* and *pipa* are two of the most famous Chinese instruments. Both are played upright on the musician's lap. And both instruments sit right in the middle of the Shen Yun orchestra.

The *erhu* has only two strings, and the bow is inserted between them. The *pipa* has four strings that are played by plucking or strumming them. Would you like to color them?



MEDICINE AND MUSIC

What happens if you take the character for “music” (樂) and add this little part 艸 that symbolizes “herbs?” What you get is the word “medicine.”

樂 + 艸 = 藥

Chinese medicine uses a lot of herbs, that’s true, but why would the word “medicine” have the word “music” in it?

Well, ancient Chinese people believed that one of the best kinds of medicine is actually music. They said that harmonious music is good for the health of both body and mind.

They even had an expression:

樂先藥後
yuè xiān yào hòu

“First music, then medicine.”

樂
藥

PHRASE FINDER

Can you find the expression you just learned, first in Chinese, then in English?

“YUE XIAN
YAO HOU”

X	H	O	U
Y	I	Y	R
U	U	A	P
E	H	O	N

“FIRST MUSIC,
THEN MEDICINE”

A	H	F	M	I	W	G	N
H	E	E	F	C	H	N	O
M	E	D	I	C	I	N	E
T	V	S	R	Z	I	I	J
X	U	S	S	X	C	A	K
M	N	R	T	H	E	N	K
B	K	O	Q	Z	E	O	L
C	Y	D	V	W	Z	N	M

