

# Lesson 2

## Introduction

Lessons 2-8 introduce *wényán* particles and present authentic texts or fragments of texts from Chinese poetry, philosophy, and history. Each Lesson has a set of **Active Vocabulary** words, which the student should memorize. Additional, less common vocabulary items are annotated within the texts as they occur.

**Vocabulary Notes** may contain both cultural information and grammatical or structural explanations. Since most classical Chinese texts are written from a Confucian or Daoist perspective, it is impossible to understand many of them without a knowledge of these world-views, no matter how good one's grasp of the linguistic structures may be. Some relevant notes are included in these lessons, but students are strongly encouraged to read a good introductory work on early Chinese thought in order to become more familiar with Confucian and Daoist ideas and terminology. Other **Cultural Notes**, not specific to Vocabulary, briefly introduce some major literary forms.

The **Exercises** section contains phrases, sentences, or entire short works from the classics. For some of the more difficult selections, English translations are provided for reference.

Each Lesson also introduces five *chéngyǔ* derived from Classical Chinese, which are commonly used in contemporary Chinese texts.

## Active Vocabulary

君	jūn	lord; you (polite)
君子	jūnzǐ	gentleman
子	zǐ	you (polite); Master
曰	yuē	to say, introducing a direct quote
小人	xiǎorén	petty person
道	dào	path; the Way; to say
命	mìng	command; fate
之	zhī	subordinating particle; him, her, it
其	qí	his, her, its; this, that
似	sì	be like, resemble
者	zhě	one who... ; marker for topic
而	ér	and, but
皆	jiē	all
朝	zhāo	morning
懷	huái	think about, remember fondly; embrace
霧	wù	mist
志	zhì	goal, will, aspiration

## Proper Names

孔子	Kǒng Zǐ	Confucius, Chinese thinker (551-479 B.C.)
孟子	Mèng Zǐ	Mencius, Confucian thinker (372-289 B.C.)
老子	Lǎo Zǐ	Lao Zi (Lao Tzu), Daoist thinker, dates unknown.
李白	Lǐ Bái	Li Bai (Li Po), poet (701-762)
白居易	Bái Jūyì	Bai Juyi (Po Chü-yi), poet (772-846)
李煜	Lǐ Yù	Li Yu, poet (937-978)
論語	Lúnyǔ	<i>Analects</i> (Sayings of Confucius and his disciples)
孟子	Mèngzǐ	<i>Mencius</i> (Writings of Mencius; this book and the <i>Analects</i> 論語 are the two primary early Confucian texts.)

## Vocabulary Notes

### 1. 君，子，君子，小人 *jūn, zǐ, jūnzǐ, and xiǎorén*

*Jūn* by itself means “lord” or “prince.” It is also often used as a polite term of address to a man of high social status: “You, sir.”

*Zǐ* means “offspring,” or specifically “son(s).” Like *jūn* it is also used as a term of direct address: “you.”

*Zǐ* is used with the surnames of some of the ancient philosophers as a title of respect:

孔子	<i>Kǒngzǐ</i>	Master Kong = Confucius
孟子	<i>Mèngzǐ</i>	Master Meng = Mencius
老子	<i>Lǎozǐ</i>	The Old Master = Lao Tzu; Lao Zi

In the Confucian *Analects* 論語, from which several of the passages in this textbook are taken, 子曰 *zǐ yuē* means, “The Master (= Confucius) said.”

Confucius used the term *jūnzǐ*, or Lord’s Son, to denote a person who was a Gentleman in a moral, not merely a social, sense. The term is now associated with the Confucian ideals of character and behavior. The opposite of a *jūnzǐ* is a *xiǎorén* (small/petty person), a common, unrefined, self-serving individual.

### 2. 道 *dào*

*Dào*, literally “path” or “way,” refers also to a philosophical principle in both Confucian and Daoist thought. The term has a range of meanings varying from “the supreme force that regulates the universe” to the “way” or “method” of performing a mundane task, as well as its primary meaning of “path.”

*Dào* also means “to speak,” “to say.”

### 3. 天 *tiān*

The basic meaning of *tiān* is “sky;” a related meaning is a philosophical or religious principle similar to the Dao. In its first meaning it is contrasted with 地 *dì* “earth;” in its second meaning it is often contrasted with 人 *rén* “mankind.” *Tiān* can also mean “day,” as in modern Chinese.

Some common compounds with *tiān*:

天下	under heaven = the whole earth, the world
天子	Son of Heaven = the emperor
天命	Heaven’s Command = the Mandate of Heaven (concerning who should rule on earth)

4. 萬物 *wàn wù*

*Wàn wù*, “10,000 things,” “the myriad creatures,” refers to all things on earth. The term is often used in Daoist texts.

5. 有，無 *yǒu, wú*

*Yǒu* means “to have,” “to exist,” “there are. . .” *Wú* is the opposite of *yǒu*: “not to have,” “not to exist,” “there is no. . .”

Examples:

有名	having a name; the named
無名	not having a name; the unnamed; nameless
無聲	without a sound
有人知	there are people who know
無人知	no one knows

6. 是，非 *shì, fēi*

When *shì* and *fēi* are used as substantive or descriptive words, *shì* means “right,” “correct,” “true” and *fēi* means “wrong,” “incorrect,” “false.”

As a verb or copula, *shì* can be used in its modern sense of “to be,” but this use is not common in *wényán*. *Fēi* is more commonly used as a verb, and means “is/are not.”

*Shì* is also used as a demonstrative pronoun, meaning “this.”

*Shìfēi* as a phrase means “right and wrong,” “true and false.”

Examples:

如是	like this
是人	this person
在是	here
無是	without this
明辨是非	clearly distinguish right from wrong

7. 言，曰 *yán, yuē*

*Yán* can mean “words,” “what is said,” and can also mean “to say.” In the latter case it usually introduces an indirect quote.

*Yuē* is used to introduce a direct quotation.

Examples:

聖人之言	the words of the sages (for use of 之 see #9 below)
子曰	The Master said: “...”
詩曰	[The Book of] Poetry said: “...”

## 8. 好 *hǎo, hào*

Note that in *wényán* the word *hào* (fourth tone) is often used as a verb, meaning “to like,” “to be good at,” in addition to its third-tone use as a modifier “good.”

Examples:

好學	love to study
好古	love the ancient [things/ways]

## 9. 之 *zhī*

One of the most frequently encountered *wényán* particles is *zhī*. It has several different uses; two are introduced here, and others will appear in later lessons.

a) *Zhī* can function as a subordinating particle equivalent to 的 *de* in modern Chinese. In this pattern it connects two substantive words or phrases.

Examples:

李白之詩	Li Bai's poems
天之道	the Way of Heaven
少之時	the time when he/she was young
人之正道	the proper path for mankind

b) *Zhī* can also function as a third-person pronoun “him,” “her,” “it,” as the object of a verb.

Examples:

用之	use it
知之	know it
笑之	laugh at him/her/it

## 10. 其 *qí*

*Qí* is often a third-person pronoun: “his,” “hers,” “its,” “their.”

Examples:

其國	his kingdom
其言	his words, what he says
正其心	rectify his heart

It can also mean “this,” “that,” “these,” or “those.”

Examples:

其後	after this
其時	at that time
其中	among them

11. 如, 似 *rú, sì*

*Rú* and *sì* both introduce comparisons or similes.

Examples:

花如雪	flowers resemble snow
似舊時	like old times
如一夢	as in a dream
似朝雲	like the morning clouds

12. 者 *zhě*

*Zhě* can be used as a suffix to mean “one who does or is X.”

Examples:

學者	one who studies; a scholar
老者	old one(s)
美者	beautiful one(s)
無知者	those who don't know anything

13. 而 *ér*

*Ér*, meaning “and” or “but,” connects two verbal elements. The element before the *ér* frequently modifies or presents a condition for the main verb which follows.

少而好學	is young and likes to study/ likes to study when young
敬鬼神而遠之	Respect ghosts and spirits, but keep them at a distance. ( <i>Lunyu</i> )

14. (遠之 **keep them at a distance**)

Note that in the last example in 13 above, 遠 is used in a transitive sense, “to distance, to keep at a distance.” Words which are normally considered intransitive or stative verbs are often used this way in *wényán*.

Examples:

貴之	consider it to be valuable
智其子	consider his son to be wise (智 <i>zhì</i> —wise)
難之	make things difficult for him

## Exercises

### Phrases

1. 如春夢
2. 天地之始
3. 君之子
4. 萬物之母
5. 先成者
6. 治其國
7. 霜如雪
8. 有女如雲
9. 先王之道
10. 美人如花
11. 天下之正道

### Sentences

12. 天長路遠
13. 有客從外來
14. 君子愛之
15. 君之意 我已知之
16. 是非之心 人皆有之 (孟子)
17. 無人知其意
18. 王曰：善

### Lines from Poems (all from Li Bai 李白)

(The space between groups of characters indicates the basic structural or syntactic division of the line.)

1. 明月 出天山
2. 長風 幾萬里
3. 不見 有人還
4. 海鳥 知天風
5. 早起 見日出
6. 五月 天上雪
7. 望望 不見君
8. 今人 不見 古時月

### Poem by Bai Juyi 白居易

花非花

花非花，霧非霧，夜半來，天明去。

來如春夢 不多時，去似朝雲 無覓處。

覓      *mì*              search for, find

### Poem by Li Yù 李煜

Li Yu, also known as Li Hou Zhu 李後主, was king of the Southern Tang, one of the short-lived states that succeeded the Tang dynasty. His kingdom was conquered by the Song dynasty in 974, and he was taken north into captivity, where he wrote many lyric poems including this one, poignantly recalling his earlier life of luxury.

望江南

多少恨？昨夜夢魂中，還似舊時遊上苑。

車如流水 馬如龍，花月正春風。

魂      *hún*              soul  
苑      *yuàn*              garden



## Edifying verse from an anecdote by Liu Xiang 劉向

少而好學，如日出之陽

壯而好學，如日中之光

老而好學，如炳燭之明

陽	yáng	bright
壯	zhuàng	robust, prime of life
炳	bǐng	luminous
燭	zhú	candle

【刘向】（前77? ——前6）本名更生，字子政，西汉沛（今属江苏）人。著名散文家和今文派经学家，汉皇族楚元王刘交四世孙。宣帝时任谏大夫、给事中，成帝时任光禄大夫、中垒校尉。平生著述甚富，校阅群书，筑成《别录》，为我国目录学之祖。所作辞赋三十三篇，今多亡佚，今存《九叹》、《请雨华山赋》等。另撰有《洪范五行传》、《新序》、《说苑》、《列女传》等。《新序》、《说苑》虽属杂史，但有一定的文学价值，记载保存了很多先秦历史故事和民间传说。《叶公好龙》已是魏晋小说的端倪。

## Selections from the *Analects* 論語

1. 子曰：君子謀道而不謀食。(15.31)
2. 子曰：不在其位，不謀其政。(8.14)
3. 子路曰：願聞子之志。  
子曰：老者安之，朋友信之，少者懷之。(5.25)  
子路 Zilù—a disciple of Confucius
4. 事君 敬其事而後其食。(15.37)

## Selections from Lao Zi 老子

1. 道可道，非常道。名可名，非常名。(Ch. 1)
2. 無名，天地之始。有名，萬物之母。(Ch. 1)
3. 知者不言，言者不知。(Ch. 56)
4. 信者不美，美者不信。(Ch. 81)

## Chengyu

[Explain the literal meaning, then check a dictionary to find how each expression is used.]

1. 口是心非
2. 似是而非
3. 如魚得水
4. 志同道合
5. 車水馬龍