

Confucius' Teachings

NCTA summer 2021 Seminar

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who was
Confucius?

TEDEd



Decode Chinese ancient secret


The book *Analects* is a collection of Confucius' teachings. In this activity, you will try to understand some of Confucius' sayings by decoding the modern Chinese writing using ancient secret codes.

- On the next slide, the top row of the table is one of Confucius' sayings written in modern Chinese characters.
- Under the table, you will find several cards. Each card includes an ancient Chinese character used during the Confucius' period. Most of them were pictograms written on bamboo scrolls.
- Match the picture on each card to the modern Chinese character it most closely resembles and move each card to the row below the Chinese character it matches.
- By reading the descriptions on the cards, figure out the English translation of these characters. Move the English words to the last row and create your translation of the saying.

#1 Analects Chapter 7-22 -- 三人行，必有我師

Modern Chinese writing	三	人	行	,	必	有	我	師
Ancient Chinese writing				,				
English translation								


Click and resize the cards to read the descriptions and to fit them in the table cells.




A pictograph of a person walking



Ancient Chinese used lines to represent numbers




Represented cutting a short stick as a unit of measure. Later it became "surely" or "must"




A pictograph of a person



A person stands behind a podium and speaks.



A pictograph of a hand trying to grab something which means "to possess"



The left is a hand holding a weapon on the right side, which means "to protect myself from horror".

Walk	My
Three	Must
Have	Person
	Teacher



What do you think this Confucius' saying is about?

- 1. As a group, what do you think that this Confucius' saying, 三人行, 必有我師 means?**

You may use the Internet to help you.

- 2. Type your answer here:**

三人行，必有我師

How do we apply *The Analects* of Confucius to our daily lives? Visit [this Padlet](#) to share your thinking about this analect: *When three people walk together, there must be someone who can be my teacher.*

Print these cards for hand-on in class activities, and can also be used for matching game, memory game, rearrange game, or karuta.

三

人

行

必

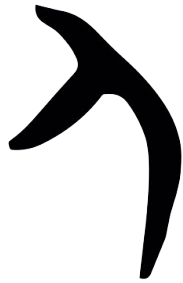
有

我

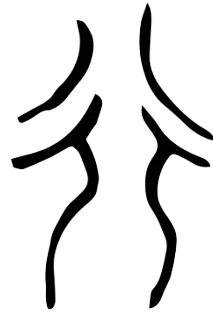
師



Ancient Chinese used lines to represent numbers



A pictograph of a person



A pictograph of a person walking



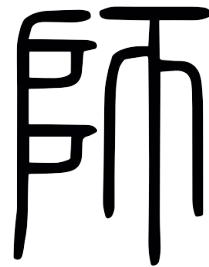
Represented cutting a short stick as a unit of measure. Later it became “surely” or “must”



A pictograph of a hand trying to grab something which means “to possess”



The left is a hand is holding a weapon on the right side, which means “to protect **myself** from horror”.



A person stands behind a podium and speaks.

three

person

walk

must

have

my

teacher




#2 Analects chapter 2-15 -- 學而不思則罔，思而不學則殆




Modern Chinese writing	學	而	不	思	則	罔	,	思	而	不	學	則	殆
Ancient Chinese writing													
English translation													


Click and resize the cards to read the descriptions and to fit them in the table cells.




This is a pictograph of a person trapped in a net who cannot get out. It means "confused" or "useless".




Originally, this was a pictograph of a moustache under a nose. Later, it was used as a conjunction word "and" or "but".




This is a pictograph of using a knife on the right to carve rules on an object on the left. Represents rules or standards, but also used as "then", or "so".




This character combines the head on the top and the heart on the bottom to mean "producing thoughts", or "to think".



The bottom part is a child in a building. The top part is two hands holding books. The character means "to study" or "to learn".



This pictograph shows the roots of a plant that cannot sprout above the ground, shown as the top horizontal line. Used as negative, not or no.



The right side of this character shows the pronunciation, and the left side is a person standing on a high place, to indicate "dangerous".

useless	learn
dangerous	but
	not
	think
	then



What do you think this Confucius' saying is about?

- 1. As a group, what do you think that this Confucius' saying, 學而不思則罔, 思而不學則殆 means?**

You may use the Internet to help you.

- 2. Type your answer here:**

學而不思則罔，思而不學則殆

How do we apply *The Analects* of Confucius to our daily lives? Visit [this Padlet](#) to share your thinking about this analect: *To learn without thinking is useless, to think without learning is dangerous.*

學

而

不

思

則

罔

思

而

不

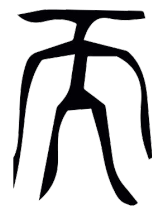
學

則

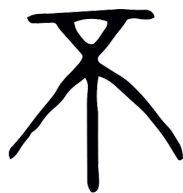
殆



The bottom part is a child in a building. The top part is two hands holding books. The character means “to study” or “to learn”.



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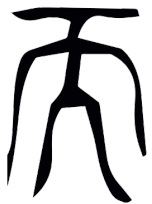
This is a pictograph of using a knife on the right to carve rules on an object on the left. Represents rules or standards, but also used as “then”, or “so”.



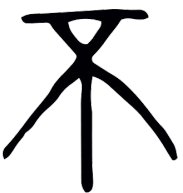
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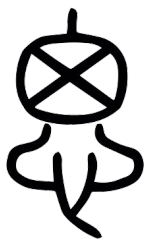
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The right side of this character shows the pronunciation, and the left side is a person standing on a high place, to indicate “dangerous”.

learn

but

not

think

then

useless

think

but

not

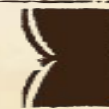
learn

then

dangerous




#3 Analects chapter 12 -- 己所不欲，勿施于人



Modern Chinese writing	己	所	不	欲	,	勿	施	于	人
Ancient Chinese writing									
English translation									


Click and resize the cards to read the descriptions and to fit them in the table cells.




Originally, this was a pictograph of holding a string of flags. Later it meant "do not" or "never".




A person on the left reaches out his hand to the right to give someone something with this heart. The character means "to give" or "apply".




This pictograph shows the roots of a plant that cannot sprout above the ground, shown as the top horizontal line. Used as negative, not or no.




A pictograph of a person




This pictograph shows a person on the right wanting something and asking the person on the left. It means "desire" or "want".



This is a pictograph that resembled a large-bellied person, meaning "oneself" or "personal".



This pictograph is a caliper and later used as a preposition "at", "to", "toward".



Originally, this meant using an axe to cut a log on the left. Later, it was used as a synonym for "places" or "things".

others

to

give

want

not

yourself

something

do not



What do you think this Confucius' saying is about?

- 1. As a group, what do you think that this Confucius' saying, 己所不欲, 勿施于人 means?**

You may use the Internet to help you.

- 2. Type your answer here:**

己所不欲，勿施于人

How do we apply *The Analects* of Confucius to our daily lives? Visit [this Padlet](#) to share your thinking about this analect: *Do not impose on others what you yourself do not desire.*

己

所

不

欲

勿

施

于

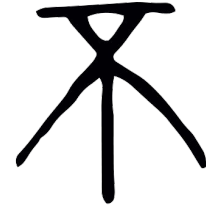
人



This is a pictograph that resembled a large-bellied person, meaning “oneself” or “personal”.



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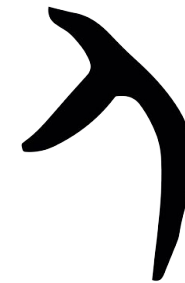
Originally, this was a pictograph of holding a string of flags. Later it meant “do not” or “never”.



A person on the left reaches out his hand to the right to give someone something with this heart. The character means “to give” or “apply”.



This pictograph is a caliper and later used as a preposition “at”, “to”, “toward”.



A pictograph of a person

myself

object

not

want

not

impose

to

person



Ten Confucius' sayings for high school students

1. 三人行，必有我师 (Analects, chapter 7)
 - When three persons walk together, one can be my teacher.
2. 学而时习之，不亦悦乎？ (Analects, Chapter 1)
 - Isn't it pleasant to learn with constant perseverance and application?
3. 有朋自远方来，不亦乐乎？ (Analects, Chapter 1)
 - Isn't it delightful to have friends coming from distant quarters?
4. 人不知而不愠，不亦君子乎？ (Analects, Chapter 1)
 - Isn't he a gentleman who feels no discomposure though men may take no note of him?
5. 学而不思则罔，思而不学则殆。 (Analects, Chapter 2)
 - To learn without thinking is useless, to think without learning is dangerous.
6. 父母在，不远游，游必有方。 (Analects, Chapter 4)
 - While one's parents are alive, one should not travel to distant places. If it is necessary to travel, there should be a definite direction.
7. 君子求诸己，小人求诸人。 (Analects, Chapter 15)
 - A gentleman makes demands upon himself, a mean person makes demands upon others.
8. 与朋友交，言而有信。 (Analects, Chapter 1)
 - Intercourse with friends, keep your words and be sincere.
9. 敏而好学，不耻下问。 (Analects, Chapter 5)
 - Smart and eager to learn, not feel ashamed to ask.
10. 己所不欲，勿施于人。 (Analects, Chapter 12)
 - What you don't want, don't impose on others.

三人行，必
有我师

学而时习
之，不亦悦
乎？

有朋自远
方来，不亦
乐乎？

人不知而
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Isn't it pleasant to learn with constant perseverance and application?

Isn't it delightful to have friends coming from distant quarters?

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To learn without thinking is useless , to think without learning is dangerous.

While one's parents are alive, one should not travel to distant places. If it is necessary to travel, there should be a definite direction.

A gentleman makes demands upon himself, a mean person makes demands upon others.

Communicate with friends, keep your words and be sincere.

Smart and eager to learn, not feel ashamed to ask.

What you don't want, don't impose on others.

Resources

Websites:

汉典: <https://www.zdic.net/>

字源: <https://hanziyuan.net/>

Analects of Confucius: <http://www.acmuller.net/con-dao/analects.html>

Books:

Lindqvist, Celilia. *China: Empire of Living Symbols*, translated by Joan Tate, Merloyd Lawrence Book, 1991
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Peng, Tan Huay. *Fun With Chinese Characters: The Straits Times Collection*, Federal Publications, 1994

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左民安, *细说汉字: 1000个汉字的起源与演变*, 中信出版社, 2015

杨伯峻, *论语译注*, 中华书局, 2016

董作宾, 董敏, *甲骨文的故事: 汉字的寻根探源之旅*, 海南出版社, 2015



Thank you!