MID-AUTUMN FESTIVAL
CHINA EDUCATION PACK

Celebrating the culture and language of China
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Introduction

The Mid-Autumn Festival, also known as the Moon Festival, takes place on September 19 this year. It is the second most important festival of the Chinese lunar calendar, after the Spring Festival that celebrates the New Year.

We have prepared this addition to the Snakes and Dragons Education pack that we launched in January 2013 (schoolsonline.britishcouncil.org/projects-and-resources/snakes-and-dragons) with the Institute of Education Confucius Institute, for primary schools across the UK to help you explore Chinese culture and language with pupils.

In this pack you will find:

• Assembly plan
• Lesson plans
• Links to films and music that support the lesson and assembly plans
• Make a paper lantern activity
• Design a mooncake activity
• Make mooncakes activity
• Make a mooncake box activity
• A list of further resources to support investigation of the festival
• A glossary of the Chinese terms used in the pack
• More information on how to get involved in international work with China — and other countries

Of course, China is just one of many countries that our children will need to understand and be able to engage with in their future lives. Many schools are already involved in international education work through British Council-run programmes like Connecting Classrooms, Comenius, Language Assistants or the International School Award.

If you would like to find out more about opportunities that might suit your school, look at the Schools Online website, or contact us at schools@britishcouncil.org or 0161 957 7755.

We hope this pack proves useful for teachers and pupils alike. Please send us your feedback!
Assembly plan: Mid-Autumn Festival

Intro: Play the traditional music Autumn Moon Over Calm Lake in YouTube clip: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bDGc-1VejQI
Minimise for music only if desired. (Clip duration: 06:02)

Script to introduce PowerPoint (Assembly version) and video clip

Slide 1:
Holding slide

Slides 2–3:
In this assembly we are looking at the second most important holiday in the traditional Chinese calendar after Chinese New Year. It is called the Mid-Autumn Festival but is also most commonly called the Moon Festival.

Slide 4–5:
I think you will all remember that Chinese New Year falls on a different day each year because it uses the old, traditional calendar based on the moon, not the sun. The Mid-Autumn Festival is the same, and this year it falls on 19th September, the 15th day of the 8th lunar month.

Slide 6:
There is an old story connected with the Moon Festival about Hòu Yì, famous for his skill with a bow and arrow, and his beautiful wife Cháng Ē. Some versions of the story say Hòu Yì and Cháng Ē were actually gods who had been punished by being sent down to live on the earth.

One day, instead of just one sun rising in the morning, ten suns appeared and the earth began to burn under their heat. The people called on Hòu Yì to do something to save them. Hòu Yì took his great bow and shot down nine of the suns, leaving just one again, as there should be. In gratitude the people made Hòu Yì their king, and Cháng Ē their queen.

Hòu Yì so much enjoyed his power as king that he wanted it to last forever and he began to search for the secret of living forever. Eventually he found it and made it into a single pill which he locked in a box in his palace. Cháng Ē was curious about what was in the box and one day opened it and swallowed the pill. Immediately her body became light as air and flew out of the palace window up into the sky until she reached the moon. Hòu Yì saw what was happening and took his bow to try to shoot her back down to earth. However, he could not hit her, and from then on Cháng Ē remained on the moon, forever separated from Hòu Yì.

There are many different versions of this story, and some of you may investigate some of these in your class.
Assembly plan: Mid-Autumn Festival

Slide 7:
According to tradition, Cháng Ê was/is not alone living on the moon; as her companion she also has a magic rabbit which spends its time making more pills of immortality. So when Chinese people look at the moon, instead of seeing the man in the moon, they see the rabbit in the moon.

Slide 8:
Just as there are special foods associated with the Chinese New Year, the Moon Festival has mooncakes. These are delicious small pastries with different fillings which people give as gifts and families enjoy together.

Slide 9:
And in the evening families eat dinner together and go out to admire the beautiful full moon.

Play BBC video clip of family celebration:
(Clip duration: 04:23)

Slide 10:
Exit holding slide. Play Lang Lang’s version of Autumn Moon Over Calm Lake:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gwZSkrCAJAY
(NB. There is a commercial preceding this clip; in setting up, you may wish to fast forward through it and pause the clip ready to play.)
(Clip duration: 04:38)

Discussion points
• Do you know any other stories from other cultures about the moon?
• The moon is often thought to be more magical and mysterious than the sun; why do you think this is?
• What does the moon make you think of?
Lesson plan: literacy

Upper primary

Aims:
To introduce the ideas of development and variation in legends and story-telling, and to familiarise the students with a traditional Chinese myth.

Objectives:
• Students will demonstrate their understanding of the different themes and components of the Hòu Yì/Cháng Ē story
• Students will demonstrate their ability to select appropriate themes to create a balanced story
• Students will identify the differences between their own and others’ versions and discuss the reasons for making their choices

Resources:
• Paper/card, pens and pencils to construct storyboards
Lesson plan: literacy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15 mins</td>
<td>Whole class</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Introduction
Revisit, if told in assembly (see plan), or tell the class the story of Hòu Yì and Cháng Ė using the basic version given on the right.

N.B. You can find the three principal variations of the story in the Wikipedia article on Cháng Ė here: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chang_E

Other versions of the story can be found here: http://www.china.org.cn/english/features/Festivals/78311.htm and here: http://www.moonfestival.org/change.html

This lesson plan uses these variations to create the storyboard activity below.

Identify with the students the key elements of the story to create a basic storyboard:

1. Great archer, Hòu Yì,
2. wife, Cháng Ė,
3. ten suns,
4. pill of immortality,
5. Cháng Ė swallows pill,
6. Cháng Ė flies to moon, separated from Hòu Yì.

These can be written on separate cards or pieces of paper.

Explain that there are many different versions of the story; introduce some of the traditional variations and write them on new cards:

a) Ten suns: children of the Heavenly Emperor misbehaving or just an unexplained phenomenon
b) Hòu Yì (and Cháng Ė): immortals sent to Earth as punishment for killing the sons of the Heavenly Emperor, or mortal heroes who save the Earth
c) Pill of immortality: a reward for saving the Earth, or something Hòu Yì searched for
d) Introduce villain Féng Měng, servant of Hòu Yì who tries to steal pill, or not
e) Cháng Ė swallows pill out of curiosity or to save it from Féng Měng
f) Hòu Yì shoots at Cháng Ė in anger or to save her
g) Hòu Yì stays on Earth mourning or flies to the sun to be near Cháng Ė

There is an old story connected with the Moon Festival about Hòu Yì, famous for his skill with a bow and arrow, and his beautiful wife Cháng Ė. Some versions of the story say Hòu Yì and Cháng Ė were actually gods who had been punished by being sent down to live on the earth. One day, instead of just one sun rising in the morning, ten suns appeared and the earth began to burn under their heat. The people called on Hòu Yì to do something to save them. Hòu Yì took his great bow and shot down nine of the suns, leaving just one again, as there should be. In gratitude the people made Hòu Yì their king, and Cháng Ė their queen. Hòu Yì so much enjoyed his power as king that he wanted it to last forever and he began to search for the secret of living forever. Eventually he found it and made it into a single pill which he locked in a box in his palace. Cháng Ė was curious about what was in the box and one day opened it and swallowed the pill. Immediately her body became light as air and flew out of the palace window up into the sky until she reached the moon. Hòu Yì saw what was happening and took his bow to try to shoot her back down to earth. However, he could not hit her, and from then on Cháng Ė remained on the moon, forever separated from Hòu Yì.
Lesson plan: literacy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10 mins</td>
<td>Instruct the students to assemble the storyboard elements into their own version of the story.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Activity (35 mins)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 mins</td>
<td>Check that they have created coherent storyboards and ask if there are any variations of their own they would like to introduce.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 mins</td>
<td>Instruct the students to write their own version of the story.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Plenary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 mins</td>
<td>Discuss the choices they made to create their stories; which elements were the most important; what makes a good story; what makes a story into a myth or legend.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Whole class</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Extension activity

Incorporate this into wider investigation of world myths and stories. Create a class display by getting the students to illustrate their storyboard elements and mounting them with a written version of the final story.

Repeat the process with a myth or fairytale from another world culture to investigate common elements of traditional stories.
Lesson plan: geography

Upper primary

Aims:
To introduce the basic geography of China through places of national significance on Chinese banknotes; to introduce the idea of national identity.

Objectives:
• Students will demonstrate their existing knowledge of China
• Students will demonstrate their ability to locate specific places on a map using either an atlas or on-line maps
• Students will identify the reasons people and places may be used to represent national identity

Resources:
• Atlas (online or book)
• Interactive whiteboard with internet access
• Outline map of China with provinces
• Geography PowerPoint presentation
Lesson plan: geography

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15 mins</td>
<td><strong>Introduction</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whole class</td>
<td>• Locate China on a world map and conduct Q&amp;A to establish students’ existing knowledge of China.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• If necessary, provide very basic facts (more if desired), for example location, population size, capital city.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Introduce Chinese currency: Rénmínbi / Yuán (slide 1 of Geography PowerPoint) and use a search engine to find the current sterling-yuán exchange rate (around £1=RMB/yuán 9).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Slide 2 of PowerPoint showing one yuan note with scene of West Lake in Hángzhōu; explain relevance to the Moon Festival.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Slides 3 and 4 of PowerPoint showing all denominations of banknotes with locations of scenes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 mins</td>
<td><strong>Activity (35 mins)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In pairs or small groups</td>
<td>Instruct students to use an atlas or online maps to identify each location and mark it on a map.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 mins</td>
<td>Use an appropriate search engine to find out what is famous or important about each location (<a href="http://bbs.chinadaily.com.cn/thread-731067-1-1.html">http://bbs.chinadaily.com.cn/thread-731067-1-1.html</a>).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 mins</td>
<td>In pairs or small groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individually</td>
<td>Slide 5 of PowerPoint showing famous people on English banknotes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pose question: If you were asked to design a new currency for the UK, what would you put on the reverse? People, places or something else that you feel represents the country? Ask students to produce ideas for new £5, £10, £20 and £50 banknotes and write down reasons for their choices.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Lesson plan: geography

Time          Details

10 mins Whole class Plenary

Discuss with the whole class the choices they made and why they made them. What kind of image of the nation do their choices create? Discuss the concept of national identity and what other means are used to illustrate it.

Extension activity
Create a classroom display of designs for new notes, along with examples of currencies from other countries linked to the world map. Ask students to bring in examples of banknotes from other countries and talk about them.
Activity: make a Chinese lantern

You will need:
- A sheet of A4 coloured card
- Scissors
- A stapler or sticky tape

ACTIVITY SHEET

1. Cut a strip about 3cm wide from the short side of the card. This will be used to make the handle.

2. Fold the rest of the sheet of card in half lengthways.

3. Cut a straight line across the fold of the card, about 2cm in from the side, stopping about 2cm from the unfolded edge. Don’t cut all the way across.

4. Repeat step 3 across the card, with the cuts about 2cm apart. This will be used to make the folds of the lantern.

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www.britishcouncil.org/schoolonline
Squash the lantern down a little so that the middle pushes outwards. Staple the handle strip to either side of the top of the lantern.

Unfold the card curve it round so the two short sides are just overlapping, and staple together at the top and bottom (or stick together with tape).

You can decorate your lantern in any way you like, and hang up a row of different coloured lanterns along a string from the ceiling.
Activity: design a mooncake

Mooncakes are small round or square pastries made especially for the Mid-Autumn Festival, or Moon Festival, as it is also known. A month or more before the festival, special mooncake shops open up, and existing stores, hotels and restaurants all compete with each other to produce the best and sometimes the most unusual fillings and packaging.

Mooncakes are made in special moulds which create beautiful patterns on the top of the cakes. The filling of the cakes is traditionally sweet, with pastes made out of red bean and lotus seeds being a favourite. Often they have an egg yolk in the middle, representing the moon. Recently, the fillings have become stranger and more exotic, with savoury fillings of all kinds also becoming popular.

The link below has a page of designs for mooncakes with their fillings:


Use this as a starting point for designing your own set of four mooncakes – remember you can be as imaginative as you like with the fillings. Perhaps you might like to make some that you think would sell well in your own home town or city.

Delicious mooncakes also need a beautiful box, so finally you can design and make a suitable box for your special cakes. You might want to include the moon and/or lanterns in your design, and remember that the lucky Chinese colour is red.
Activity: make mooncakes

Ingredients:

**Dough**
- 560g plain flour
- 85g dried milk powder
- 1 tablespoon baking powder
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 3 large eggs
- 250g caster sugar
- 170g unsalted butter, melted and cooled to room temperature
- 1 ½ teaspoons vanilla essence

**Filling**
- 340g apricot jam
- 150g chopped pitted dates
- 80g desiccated coconut
- 130g raisins or sultanas

For a more authentic version, you can use a can of red bean paste instead of the jam.

**Glaze**
- 1 egg, lightly beaten
- 2 tablespoons water

This recipe takes around 1 ½ hours to make. If your school has suitable facilities you might want to try it with your class. However, it may be more suitable for students to try at home with their families.

You will need:
- 2 large mixing bowls
- Sieve
- Wooden spoon
- Large metal spoon
- 2 baking sheets
- Baking paper
- Pastry brush
- Wire cooling rack
- Fork
- Wooden skewers

Makes approximately 20 cakes

1. **Make the dough.**

   In one bowl, mix the flour, milk powder, baking powder and salt together.

2. **Break the eggs into another bowl.** Add the sugar, and beat together for up to five minutes. Pour in the melted butter and vanilla essence. Add the sieved dry ingredients to the liquid mixture. Using a metal spoon, fold in to create a dough.

3. **Put the dough onto a floured surface and knead lightly.** Once smooth, the dough is ready.

   Roll the dough into a log shape. If possible, wrap the dough in cling film and chill in the fridge overnight, as this makes it easier to work with.

4. **Cut into evenly sized discs.** Making approximately 20 pieces.

   You will need:
   - 1½ teaspoons baking powder
   - 1 70g unsalted butter
   - 1 250g caster sugar
   - 1 170g unsalted butter
   - 1 130g raisins or sultanas
   - 1 80g desiccated coconut
   - 1 150g chopped pitted dates
   - 1 340g apricot jam
   - 1 1 egg, lightly beaten
   - 1 2 tablespoons water

   This recipe takes around 1 ½ hours to make. If your school has suitable facilities you might want to try it with your class. However, it may be more suitable for students to try at home with their families.
Preheat the oven to 375ºF/190ºC/Gas mark 5.
Prepare two baking sheets by covering them in baking paper.

6. Make the filling. Mix the apricot jam (or bean paste), chopped dates, coconut and raisins together in a small bowl. Use a fork to mash down any chunks of apricot.

7. Press each dough piece into a 7cm circle. When stretching the dough, make the edges thinner and the centre thicker.

8. Press a portion of filling into the middle of each circle. Gather the edges together to enclose the filling and pinch closed. Roll into a ball then flatten.

9. To replicate the look of traditional mooncakes, shape the cake as round as possible and use a wooden skewer to draw your design on the top.

10. Make the glaze. Beat the egg and water together in a small bowl. Brush each mooncake with the glaze using a pastry brush.

11. Place each cake about 3cm apart on a baking sheet and put in the oven. Bake for 30 minutes or until the mooncakes turn golden brown. Remove from the oven and leave to cool on a wire cooling rack.
Activity: make a mooncake box

You will need:
- A sheet of A3 coloured or white card,
- Scissors, glue, an elastic band, coloured pencils, pens
- Other decorative elements as required.

1. Cut out the paper template shape (not going too close to the lines) and stick with just a few dots of glue to the back of your cardboard sheet.

2. Fold the card inwards along all the dotted lines shown on the template. The template should be on the inside. Make the folds sharp by running your fingernail along them.

3. Open the box shape out again and remove the paper template from the card.

4. Grab the box shape out again and remove by running your fingernail along the solid lines this time cutting along the solid lines. The box will be removed later.

5. Glue the cardboard sheet as it will be removed later. Just a few dots of glue to the back of your going too close to the lines and stick with some glue, an elastic band, coloured pencils, pens.
Once the glue has set, remove the elastic band. Put your mooncake in the box. Fold the four curved flaps up and in towards the centre. Close the flaps by fitting the notches of the circular top sections around each other one at a time, going around the box anticlockwise.

Apply glue to the four small flaps, tuck them inside and press together with the sides of the box. Put an elastic band around the box to hold it together while the glue sets.

Decorate the outside. Mooncake boxes are beautifully decorated, often in red and gold. You may want to draw or glue on some Chinese characters (see glossary) or elements from the story of Hòu Yì and Cháng É (marked X) will be glued inside and not visible. Remember that the central square of the box will be glued inside and not visible. The moon and the rabbit from the story of Hou Yi and Chang E such as Chinese characters (see glossary) or elements can be decorated on the box in red and gold.
Glossary of Chinese terms

Terms used in the assembly and literacy lesson:

**Cháng É, 嫦娥:** Beautiful heroine in Chinese mythology, moon goddess and wife of Hòu Yì

**Féng Méng, 逢蒙:** Villain in Chinese mythology (also known as ’Peng Meng’); apprentice of Hòu Yì

**Hángzhōu, 杭州:** City in Zhèjiāng province, eastern China; location of the West Lake

**Hòu Yì, 后羿:** Hero in Chinese mythology, skilled archer and husband of Cháng É

**Húběi, 湖北:** Province in central China

**rénmínbi, 人民币:** Official name of the currency used in the People’s Republic of China. Literal meaning is ‘people’s currency’. Abbreviation: ‘RMB’. See also ‘yuán’.

**Sū Shì, 苏轼:** 11th Century Chinese poet and statesman, lived AD 1037-1101

**Wūhán, 武汉:** City in Húbei province, central China; location of the Yellow Crane Tower

**yuán, 元:** Unit of Chinese rénmínbi currency, for example a five yuán banknote. Abbreviation: ‘CNY’. Symbol is ¥ or 元.

**yuè bǐng, 月饼:** Mooncake, a delicious pastry traditionally eaten at the Chinese Mid-Autumn Festival

**Zhèjiāng, 浙江:** Province in eastern China

**zhōng qiū jié, 中秋节:** Mid-Autumn Festival

**zhōng qiū jié kuài lè, 中秋节快乐:** ‘Happy Mid-Autumn Festival’

Additional terms used in the geography lesson:

**Báidìchéng, 白帝城:** Ancient temple by the Kui Gate on the Yangtze River

**Běijīng, 北京:** Capital city of the People’s Republic of China; features on the 100 yuán banknote

**Guilin, 桂林:** City in Guangxi autonomous region, southern China; location of the River Li

**Lāsà, 拉萨:** Administrative capital city of the Tibet autonomous region, China; features on the 50 yuán banknote

**Kuímén, 峨门:** ‘Kui Gate’ (also called the Qútáng Gorge), a famous site on the Yangtze River where the river passes between two high mountains; features on the ten yuán banknote

**Shǎndōng, 山东:** Province in eastern China; location of Tàishān

**Tàishān, 泰山:** ‘Tai Mountain’ in Shandong province, eastern China; features on the five yuán banknote

**Pronunciation**

To hear how the Chinese is pronounced, follow the hyperlinks in this document and click the speaker symbol, as indicated below. The hyperlinks will take you to Google Translate (http://translate.google.com/). Internet access and speakers/headphones are required. Hyperlinks are provided for each term in this glossary.

For a general pronunciation guide and other Chinese language notes for beginners, visit the BBC Languages Real Chinese webpages:

http://www.bbc.co.uk/languages/chinese/real_chinese/

BBC pronunciation guide:

http://www.bbc.co.uk/languages/chinese/real_chinese/pronunciationguides.shtml#1
Further resources

The following is a list of links to some of the resources used in compiling this pack:

**Family celebration:**

**Mid-Autumn Festival general introduction:**
Hello China clip
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ndknxk4v4QY

 Animated, subtitled online resource
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HyZAWq5Qnxr

**Moon Festival in Hong Kong:**
http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-pacific-14886406

**Music:**
Lang Lang plays *Autumn Moon over Calm Lake*
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gwZSkrCAJAY

Traditional version of *Autumn Moon over Calm Lake*
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bDGc-1VejQl

**The story of Cháng É:**
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oXczHYZcRvo
http://www.moonfestival.org/change.html
http://www.china.org.cn/english/features/Festivals/78311.htm

**Chinese banknotes:**

**Existing Mid-Autumn Festival and Chinese poetry lesson plans:**
http://www.thechinesestaffroom.com/resources/lesson-plans/10-09-16/celebrating-mid-autumn-moon-festival-scheme-work-no-3-series

**Chinese poetry:**
A selection of Chinese poems from the Tang Dynasty. See particularly poem 15, *Night Thoughts*, which is often recited when watching the moon at this festival.
http://www.chinesechinese.net/chinesepoems.html

**Mooncake patterns:**

An excellent **lesson plan** centred on the phases of the moon, adaptable to different year groups and containing many useful links and worksheets, can be found here:
http://btc.montana.edu/ceres/html/Birthday/birthday1.htm
Find out more

We hope you enjoyed the activities in this pack. There are lots more ways you can get involved in international work with China – and other countries:

Find a partner school
Use our Schools Online partner finding tool to link up with schools in China and many other countries worldwide. www.britishcouncil.org/schoolsonline

Communicate
Use our forums and online project spaces with your partner school. www.britishcouncil.org/schoolsonline

Access resources
Check out our global learning resources, including classroom activities, videos and lesson plans. schoolsonline.britishcouncil.org/projects-and-resources

Learn Mandarin
Host a Mandarin language assistant. It’s easy to organise and you can share the assistant with other local schools. This scheme is supported by HSBC. www.britishcouncil.org/languageassistants-uk-schools-and-authorities.htm

Courses for primary pupils
Take part in our free week-long Chinese culture and language immersion courses specifically aimed at KS2 pupils in England and Wales. This course is sponsored by HSBC. www.britishcouncil.org/schoolpartnerships-keystage2course

Travel
Meet your partners from China (or another country) with a Connecting Classrooms partnership grant. Your partner can also get a grant to visit you. www.britishcouncil.org/connectingclassrooms

Get accredited
Sign up to our prestigious International School Award scheme to earn accreditation for your international work. www.britishcouncil.org/schoolsonline/isa

HSBC has worked extensively with the British Council for over 10 years to support UK school partnerships with China, through the teaching of Mandarin and Chinese culture.

Information about China

Chinese history
www.ancientchina.co.uk
www.earlyimperialchina.co.uk
www.britishmuseum.org/PDF/Teachers_resource_pack_30_8a.pdf

Chinese culture
www.britishmuseum.org/whats_on/uk_tours_and_loans/china_journey_to_the_east/teaching_resources.aspx
www.activityvillage.co.uk/chinese_new_year.htm

China – general teaching resources
www.countries.mrdonn.org/china.html

Introduction to Chinese language and support for Chinese language learning
www.bbc.co.uk/schools/primarylanguages/mandarin
www.hellomylo.com
http://ci.ioe.ac.uk

Chinese name generator
www.mandarintools.com/chinesename.html

General contemporary information on China
www.chinatoday.com
www.chinaculture.org