



# *Infinite Conversations*

Chinese  
Language and  
Art Resource

YEAR 7–8



**NGA**  
National Gallery of Australia

### Teacher's notes:

Produced in collaboration with the Modern Language Teachers Association, this Chinese Language Resource encourages students to engage with language and culture through art. This resource explores contemporary works of art from the National Gallery of Australia's *Infinite Conversations* exhibition and invites discussion around social issues, migration, and inter-cultural experience.

This resource is directly linked to the Australian Curriculum and is designed to develop successful learners, confident and creative individuals and active, informed citizens. Chinese Language students are encouraged to communicate, reflect and create using works of art as a stimulus. Through exploring and responding to this selection of works students can notice, question and develop awareness of how language and culture shape identity.

(previous page) **Kate Beynon** *Self portrait with dragon spirits* 2010, synthetic polymer paint on linen, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, purchased, 2016

### This resource is designed for:

- Year 7–8 secondary students
- Chinese Language students
- Asia and Australia's Engagement with Asia  
Cross-curriculum priority
- can be adapted for use with Visual Art students.

### This resource may be used to:

- complement a visit to the NGA's *Infinite Conversations* exhibition
- inform a series of classroom lessons.

For background information and images of works of art refer to the [Infinite Conversations Secondary Education Resource: Background Information](#).

An extended listing of curriculum links is included on the final pages of this resource.

The NGA values the feedback of students and teachers on the education resources we have produced.

To share students' work, or provide feedback, email: [education@nga.gov.au](mailto:education@nga.gov.au)

Further education resources and programs can be found on our website: <https://nga.gov.au/education/>

# Vocabulary

Kate Beynon *Excuse Me!*

qǐng nǐ shuō màn yī diǎn.	请你说慢一点。	Please speak slowly.
wǒ bù míng bái...	我不明白。	I do not understand.
nǐ hǎo ma?	你好吗？	How are you?
nǐ shuō shén me?	你说什么？	What did you say?
láo jià!	劳驾！	Excuse me!
nǐ béng shuō	你甭说。	You don't have to say.
shén me	什么	What
zhè shì shén me yì sī?	这是什么意思？	What does it mean?
ràng wǒ kǎo lù yī xià?	让我考虑一下？	Let me think about it.
duì bù qǐ	对不起，	I am sorry.
méi guān xi!	没关系！	It's OK.
xiè xiè nǐ,	谢谢你，	Thank you.
bù kè qì	不客气！	You are welcome!



Kate Beynon *Excuse Me!* 1997, chenille sticks,  
National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, The Rotary Collection of Australian Art, 1998

## Learning Tasks

### Kate Beynon *Excuse Me!*

The Chinese character/Pinyin vocabulary list on the previous page is based on the characters featured in Kate Beynon's *Excuse Me!* Refer back to the vocabulary list while completing the following activities.

- Look at the Chinese characters featured in Kate Beynon's *Excuse Me!* and connect each speech bubble to the corresponding characters in the vocabulary list.
- Look at the Chinese characters in the vocabulary list and create your own 3D Chinese characters using chenille sticks (also known as pipe cleaners). Arrange your characters to form phrases.
- Try to write the characters in the vocabulary list on a calligraphy sheet with a brush pen.
- Rearrange the scrambled Pinyin to make sentences:

nǐ shuō diǎn qǐng màn yī.

---

bái wǒ bù míng.

---

ma nǐ hǎo ?

---

shuō me nǐ shén ?

---

jià láo!

---

béng nǐ shuō.

---

shén me zhè shì yì sī?

---

kǎo lǜ yī xià ràng wǒ ?

---

bù xī! méi guān duì qǐ,

---

nǐ kè qì! bù, xiè xiè,

---

## Learning Tasks

Kate Beynon *Excuse Me!*

Practise writing Chinese characters by copying the phrases from the vocabulary list.

Rearrange the scrambled Chinese characters to make sentences:

说慢请你一点。

---

明我不白。

---

说你什么？

---

什么这是思意？

---

我一下让虑考？

---

起没对系不关！

---

你不气谢客谢！

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## Learning Tasks

### Kate Beynon *Excuse Me!*

Research Kate Beynon and look at her work in the *Infinite Conversations* exhibition.

Complete the following questions in English or Chinese as appropriate to your language level:

1. Where was Kate Beynon born?
2. Where does Kate Beynon live now?
3. How long has Kate Beynon been living in Australia?
4. Look at Kate Beynon's work *Excuse Me!* and list three reasons why Kate Beynon might have chosen that title for her work.
5. What is your understanding of 'mixed race', 'mixed heritages' and 'migrant experiences'?
6. Look at Kate Beynon's work *Excuse Me!* Can you see any characters and phrases that are different from what you have seen at school? Why?



Kate Beynon *Self portrait with dragon spirits* 2010, synthetic polymer paint on linen, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, purchased, 2016

## Learning Tasks

### Janina Green *Maid in Hong Kong*

Look at Janina Green's photographic series *Maid in Hong Kong* and answer the following questions in English:

1. In Hong Kong, many local people don't like migrant workers meeting together in the public areas on the weekends. How do you feel about this?
2. If you had the opportunity to do something to help improve the lives of these migrant workers, what would you do?
3. Thinking about the people in these photographs, explain how migrant workers should be treated in a tolerant, multicultural society.



Janina Green *Maid in Hong Kong* #11 2008,  
colour dyes on gelatin silver photograph, gift of Wilbow Group PTY LTD,  
donated through the Australian Government's Cultural Gifts Program, 2012

## Learning Tasks

### Janina Green *Maid in Hong Kong*

Look at Janina Green's photographic series *Maid in Hong Kong* and answer the following questions in Chinese, as appropriate to your language level. Aim to answer these questions in words and phrases.

1. 在照片上你能看到什么？

在照片上，我看到了

我也能看到

2. 我觉得

因为

所以

3. 这些人为什么在那里？

4. 她们/他们在做什么？

5. 你喜欢这个作品吗？为什么？



## Vocabulary

### Li Gang *Hua Xia* bike grid

#### TRANSPORT

交通工具  
自行车/车  
摩托车  
火车  
电车  
汽车  
公共汽车  
高铁  
救护车  
救火车  
飞机  
船  
大客车  
出租汽车  
地铁

#### PLACES AND PEOPLE

停车场  
车站  
车费  
售票员  
售票处  
收票员  
司机  
画家  
艺术家  
作品

#### ACTION WORDS RELATED TO TRANSPORT

上  
下  
骑  
开  
乘  
坐  
学  
可以  
会/不会  
有/没有  
能  
看到



Li Gang *Hua Xia* bike grid no. 92009, chromogenic photograph,  
gift of Jason Yeap OAM and Min Lee Wong, donated through the  
Australian Government's Cultural Gifts Program, 2017

# Vocabulary

## Li Gang Hua Xia bike grid

Verbs that can be used for expressing opinions	Intensifiers	Basic cohesive devices	Connective pairs
想	最	和	因为。。。所以。。。
爱	很	也	不但。。。而且。。。
觉得	慢	但是	又。。。又。。。
喜欢/不喜欢	非常	又	虽然。。。但是。。。
	快		

Questions	Common measure words	Words and phrases to express tense	
什么	辆（车）	辆（车）	
吗	副（画）	副（画）	
哪里	个	个	
几点	例句：	例句：	
为什么	我会骑车/我不会骑车。	我会骑车/我不会骑车。	
什么时候	我非常喜欢骑车/我不喜欢骑车	我非常喜欢骑车/我不喜欢骑车	
怎么			

## Learning Tasks

### Li Gang *Hua Xia* bike grid

Match the English definitions to the corresponding Chinese text by placing the correct number in the brackets provided:

- |                                  |     |       |
|----------------------------------|-----|-------|
| 1. coach                         | ( ) | 交通工具  |
| 2. fire truck                    | ( ) | 自行车/车 |
| 3. motorbike                     | ( ) | 摩托车   |
| 4. train                         | ( ) | 火车    |
| 5. tram                          | ( ) | 电车    |
| 6. car                           | ( ) | 汽车    |
| 7. bus                           | ( ) | 公共汽车  |
| 8. ambulance                     | ( ) | 高铁    |
| 9. high-speed train/bullet train | ( ) | 救护车   |
| 10. ship/boat                    | ( ) | 救火车   |
| 11. bicycle/bike                 | ( ) | 飞机    |
| 12. taxi/cab                     | ( ) | 船     |
| 13. subway                       | ( ) | 大客车   |
| 14. transport                    | ( ) | 出租汽车  |
| 15. aeroplane                    | ( ) | 地铁    |

## Learning Tasks

### Li Gang *Hua Xia bike grid*

Look at Li Gang's photographic series *Hua Xia bike grid* and answer the following questions in Chinese or English, as appropriate to your language level.

1. 这位艺术家姓什么？叫什么？

---

2. 他是在哪儿出生的？

---

3. 你想学骑车吗？

---

4. 你在学开车吗？

---

5. 我已经可以开车了，你呢？

---

6. 你弟弟喜欢骑自行车吗？

---

7. 你的朋友小明会骑自行车吗？

---

8. 你喜欢这个作品吗？

---

9. 在这些照片中，你看到了什么？

---



## Learning Tasks

### Li Gang Hua Xia bike grid

Make sentences with the words and phrases provided:

我	弟弟	你	哥哥	喜欢
已经	乘/坐	可以	自行车	车
爸爸	妹妹	他	狗	不喜欢
想	骑	不可以	上	船
妈妈	同学	她	猫	有
学	会	汽车	下	飞机
姐姐	老师	朋友	小鱼	没有
开	不会	高铁	火车	出租汽车

Example 例句: 我 喜欢 开 车。

---

I like (to) drive car (I like to drive)

---

我想学骑车/我不想学汽车

我在学开车

我已经可以开车了

我喜欢骑自行车

我会骑自行车。

## Learning Tasks

### Lindy Lee *The tyranny and liberation of distance*

After looking at Lindy Lee's photographic series *The tyranny and liberation of distance* and researching the artist, answer the following questions in Chinese or English, as appropriate to your language level:

1. For how many generations has Lindy Lee's family been in Australia?
2. Where did Lindy Lee grow up?
3. Were there many Chinese restaurants where Lindy Lee grew up?
4. How many people are in the family photo?
5. How old do you think the girl in the photo looks?
6. What can you see in the picture *No dust to settle the distance* that you can say in Chinese?
7. Why might the artist have burnt holes in these photographs?
8. Do you think the children in the photographs were happy in Australia? Why?
9. Do the people in the photographs look different from you? Why?



Lindy Lee *The long road of the river of stars* 2015, UV-cured pigment inkjet prints, black mild steel and fire, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, purchased 2018

## Learning Tasks

Lindy Lee *The tyranny and liberation of distance*

Try to write five sentences about these three pictures in Chinese, or try to answer the following questions in Chinese:

一 · 这位画家家里一共有几个人？

---

二 · 她在哪里长大？

---

三 · Chinese restaurants 的中文怎么说？

---

四 · 这个照片上的小女孩大概是几岁？

---

五 · 在那张 “No dust to settle the distance” 照片里，你能说出几个中文的物质名称？

---

六 · 在这三张照片里，一共有多少个烧焦的洞？

---

七 · 他们开心吗？

---

八 · 这个女孩在做什么？

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## Learning Tasks

### Guan Wei *Dow: Island*

Before looking at Guan Wei's painting *Dow: Island* discuss the following points:

1. Were your great grandparents or grandparents born in Australia? Where were they from originally?
2. Watch [this video](#) on the history of Chinese migration. Discuss reasons for Chinese migration and their contributions to Australia's multicultural society.
3. Chinese people have been in Australia since the gold rush in the 1850s. In recent years there has been an increasing trend of Chinese migration to Australia. Why do you think Chinese people choose to migrate to Australia?
4. What are some examples of Chinese traditions that are maintained in Australia and how have these traditions evolved as part of Australia's multicultural society?



Guan Wei *Dow: Island* 2002 (detail), synthetic polymer paint on 48 canvases, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, purchased 2003

#### Related links

<http://www.abc.net.au/btn/resources/teacher/episode/20150217-chinesemigration.pdf>

<https://museumsvictoria.com.au/immigrationmuseum/whats-on/immigrant-stories-and-timeline/>



## Learning Tasks

### Guan Wei *Dow: Island*

While looking at Guan Wei's painting *Dow: Island* discuss the following questions:

1. How is this work of art related to migration?
2. What might the figures be doing? How do you think they feel? Why?
3. Using your prior knowledge of Chinese migration, discuss some possible problems that new Chinese immigrants might encounter when they first arrive in Australia.
4. According to Guan Wei, Australia is represented in his painting *Dow: Island* as the island inhabited by a flock of black birds. What ideas, concepts or emotional responses do the black birds elicit?

After looking at Guan Wei's painting *Dow: Island* complete the following exercise:

1. Work with your teacher to learn the following sentences and phrases to describe one's heritage:

我是 \_\_\_\_\_ 人。

我在 \_\_\_\_\_ 出生。我爸爸/妈妈在 \_\_\_\_\_ 出生。

我们都是 \_\_\_\_\_ 人。我（不）喜欢住在澳大利亚。

## Learning Tasks

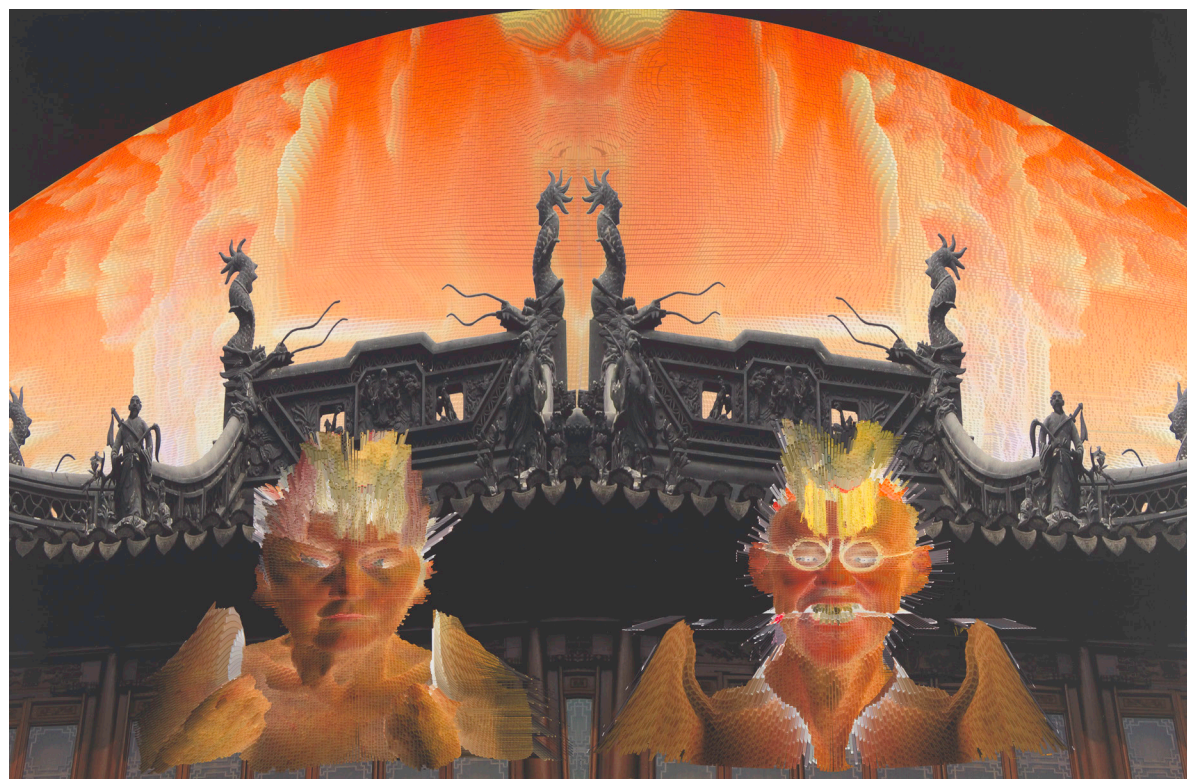
### Farrell and Parkin

The photographs *Entering the no fly zone* and *Elastic electromagnetic waves* attempt to make sense of Farrell and Parkin's feelings about living in China. Based on what you can see in their photographs, what feelings do you think Farrell and Parkin had for China? For example, shocked, excited, amazed, frustrated etc. Why might they feel this way?

Work with your teacher to learn how to express some of these emotions in Chinese.

震惊	惊讶	兴奋	快乐	伤心
----	----	----	----	----

我觉得他们很 \_\_\_\_\_ 因为 \_\_\_\_\_ 。



Farrell and Parkin *Entering the no fly zone* 2009–10, pigment inkjet print, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, purchased 2012

## Learning Tasks

Farrell and Parkin

Look at Farrell and Parkin's photograph *Mandarin ducks at the Great Wall* and discuss with your class:

你看到了什么？ (What did you see?)

---

我看到了。

(I saw ...)

---

Watch the video [Chinese Paper Cutting: An Introduction](#)

Try making your own papercut

Clear step-by-step instructions are provided here:

<http://www.instructables.com/id/How-to-make-a-chinese-paper-cut-art/>



Farrell and Parkin *Mandarin ducks at the Great Wall* 2002, pigment inkjet print,  
National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, purchased 2009

# CURRICULUM LINKS

## Languages: Chinese Second Language Learner Pathway Year 7–10 (Year 7 Entry) Years 7 and 8 Achievement Standards

By the end of Year 8, students:

- Use spoken and written Chinese to interact in a range of familiar contexts.
- Are aware of the key features of the Chinese writing system and its differences to the English writing system.
- Explain the word order of Chinese sentences and the layout and construction of simple familiar Chinese texts in comparison to their English equivalents.
- Recognise and consider the influence of culture on everyday communication.
- Are aware that literal translation between languages is not always possible.
- Are aware of the key features of the Chinese writing system and its differences to the English writing system.

- Summarise the main points of information about known content from a range of spoken and print sources and convey the relevant information in a range of texts.
- Respond to and create simple imaginative and informative texts.
- Describe the distinctive spoken and written language systems of Chinese using metalanguage.
- Identify how information is structured in Chinese texts and understand the importance of cultural and contextual cues to correct interpretation of meaning.
- Explain how features of Chinese culture impact on communication practices and reflect on their own interactions with Chinese-speaking people.

## The Arts: Visual Arts Year 7 and 8 Achievement Standards

By the end of Year 8, students:

- Identify and analyse how other artists use visual conventions and viewpoints to communicate ideas and apply this knowledge in their art making.
- Evaluate how they and others are influenced by artworks from different cultures, times and places.