



Chinese Test

Learn Three Antonyms in Chinese (Beginner)

1. Which one is the opposite of 大(dà)?

A. 小(xiǎo)

B. 水(shuǐ)

2. Which one is the opposite of 上(shàng)?

A. 王(wáng)

B. 下(xià)

3. Which one is the opposite of 左(zuǒ)?

A. 右(yòu)

B. 有(yǒu)

See Answer

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General Chinese

"Ghost" in the Chinese Language (Elementary)

One day, one of my foreign friends rushed to my home and told me that she was really scared and upset because her neighbor, an old Chinese woman, said she was a ghost! How come this old lady behaved so rude to my foreign friend? For me, it's unbelievable because this woman is very kindhearted and the kids around the town treat her as their granny. To convince me, she repeated what the woman said,"

Zhège wàiguó xiǎonǚhái zhēn shì yíge jīlinguǐ."

"这个 外国 小女孩 真 是 一个 机灵鬼。"

As soon as she finished, I burst into laughter at the misunderstanding! The granny was giving praise to my friend!

The issue revolves around how you understand the Chinese word 鬼(guǐ).

Literally, 鬼(guǐ) in Chinese means ghost. For example, some people like listening to 鬼故事(guǐgùshi) — a ghost

story, and some like watching 鬼片(**guǐpiàn**)— a ghost movie.

A 鬼(**guǐ**) is scary, so people usually use it to express negative meanings in the Chinese language. First, 鬼(**guǐ**) can be an adjective to express... ([Learn more](#))

Examples:

A. 鬼天气(**guǐtiānqì**)

Xià dàyǔ le! Zhēn shì guǐtiānqì.

下大雨了! 真是鬼天气。

It's raining heavily. Such terrible weather!

B. 鬼地方(**guǐdìfang**)

Nàge xiǎoshùlín shì yíge guǐdìfang.

那个小树林是一个鬼地方。

That grove is a terrible place.

Second, 鬼(**guǐ**) can also function as a noun referring to people who obviously have certain bad habits, such as an addiction of some kind. We can use 酒鬼(**jiǔguǐ**) in which 酒(**jiǔ**) means wine, to describe people indulging in alcohol, similar to the term "alcoholic" in English. Also, we refer those who are penny pinchers as 小气鬼(**xiǎoqìguǐ**). 小气(**xiǎoqì**) in the Chinese language means that someone is stingy.

Examples:

A. 酒鬼(**jiǔguǐ**)

Tāde bàba shì yíge jiǔguǐ.

他的爸爸是一个酒鬼。

His father is an alcoholic.

B. 小气鬼(**xiǎoqìguǐ**)

Wǒde péngyou shì yíge xiǎoqìguǐ.

我的朋友是一个小气鬼。

My friend is a penny pincher.

Regardless of how much people associate ghosts with fear, the term carries some positive characteristics such as quickness, energy, nimbleness and elusiveness. These are in some way very similar with naughty kids. Therefore, Chinese people also use it to describe... ([Learn more](#))

Examples:

A. 小鬼(**xiǎoguǐ**)

Wǒjiā de xiǎoguǐ huì xiě hànzi!

我家的小鬼会写汉字!

My grandson can write Chinese characters very well!

B. 机灵鬼(**jīlinguǐ**)

Wǒde dìdì shì yíge jīlinguǐ.

我的 弟弟 是一个 机灵鬼。

My little brother is a smart boy.

C. 鬼机灵(guǐjīling)

Tāde mèimei tài guǐjīling le.

他的 妹妹 太 鬼机灵了。

His sister is smart.

I'm sure now you must know why I said that the old woman next door to my friend was actually praising her as a smart and intelligent girl, and not intending to offend her by calling her a ghost. Now, let us do some exercises to enhance what we have just learned above!

Exercises:

What's the meaning of the sentence: "李华是一个机灵鬼。(LǐHuá shì yíge jīlinguǐ.)"? _____

- A. It means Li Hua is a ghost.
- B. It means Li Hua is very smart.
- C. It means Li Hua loves ghost stories.

See Answer

More Exercises

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