

## Preface (For Students)

Many students learning Chinese are taught to begin with English definitions and pronunciations. While this approach may help you recognize characters, it often makes Chinese feel abstract and difficult to remember. You may know what a character means, yet still struggle to picture it or feel connected to it—especially when reading stories, reflections, or poems.

This book takes a different path.

Chinese characters were not created as random symbols. They were formed from how people observed the world—people standing on high ground, eyes looking into the distance, fire burning, light spreading, and nature changing. To truly understand a character, it helps to *see* it as an image and experience it as a feeling, not just memorize its meaning in English.

In this book, you will learn characters through visual scenes that show how their components and radicals work together. Instead of starting with definitions, you will first encounter a character as part of a meaningful image. From there, you will explore its structure and understand how meaning naturally emerges. This process helps your mind build a clear internal picture, making characters easier to remember and easier to recognize when reading.

You can also click on each character to hear its pronunciation and watch an animated demonstration of how it is written—stroke by stroke. Writing practice and short quizzes are provided to help you reinforce what you see and hear. By connecting image, sound, movement, and practice, you are learning characters through multiple pathways at the same time.

Most learners of Chinese are visual learners. Research shows that visual imagery and mnemonic techniques help learners remember characters more effectively and for a much longer time than rote memorization. When you associate a character with an image, a scene, or a feeling, that memory becomes stronger and lasts longer.

The goal of this book is not to replace meaning, but to deepen it. When you can see a character clearly in your mind, you no longer need to translate every word into English. Over time, Chinese becomes less about memorizing definitions—and more about understanding, recognizing, and reading with confidence, much like native readers do.