

## MAKING NEW WORDS YOUR OWN

### Lesson 2

### CONTEXT: Amazing Nature

#### *Fire-breathing Myths: Chinese Dragons*

What do you think of when you picture a dragon? A scary, cruel monster? An enormous fire-breathing lizard with a long, scaly tail? This is how many people think of dragons. In China and much of Asia, the dragon is considered to be a friendly, even a lucky, creature. Chinese myths depict dragons being ridden by the gods. Two popular dragon festivals are still held in China. One is the dragon dance, held during the Chinese New Year celebrations. The other is the dragon boat festival, which may originally have been a rainmaking festival.

In the following exercises, you will have the opportunity to expand your vocabulary by reading about Chinese dragons. These ten Vocabulary Words will be used.

astonish      innumerable      journalism      quote      summarize  
 conference      interview      legend      session      unexpectedly

#### EXERCISE 1

#### *Wordbusting*

**Directions.** Follow these instructions for this word and the nine words on the next page.

- Figure out the word's meaning by looking at its **context**, its **structure**, and its **sound**. Fill in at least one of the three CSS boxes. Alternate which boxes you complete.
- Then, look up the word in a dictionary, read all of its meanings, and write the meaning of the word as it is used in the sentence.
- Follow this same process for each of the Vocabulary Words on the next page. You will need to draw your own map for each word. Use a separate sheet of paper.

1.

astonish

Does it **astonish** you to learn that in Chinese tradition the dragon is a sign of good luck? It surprised me.

Context:

Structure:

Sound:

Dictionary:

2.

**unexpectedly**

The Chinese also believed that angry dragons could cause a lot of trouble **unexpectedly**. For instance, a flood or storm that occurred suddenly without warning might be caused by a dragon.

3.

**conference**

In some of the dragon myths, rulers would hold **conferences**. At these meetings, they would discuss how they could honor the dragons.

4.

**session**

In the story "Liu Yi and the Dragon King," Liu meets with the dragon king. In this **session**, they discuss the king's daughter.

5.

**summarize**

I will briefly **summarize** the story of "The Dragon's Pearl." First, a young boy finds a pearl that belongs to a dragon. The pearl makes everything—grass, money, and rice—multiply. By accident, the boy swallows the pearl and turns into a dragon.

6.

**legend**

Have you ever heard the **legend** of the dragon of the Gaoliang Bridge? It is one of China's oldest and most popular stories.

7.

**quote**

The storyteller **quoted** a statement made by an ancient Chinese emperor and then translated the words for us.

8.

**innumerable**

Every year **innumerable** people—too many to count—attend the dragon dance in San Francisco.

9.

**journalism**

Some reporters in the field of **journalism** collect and publish news about Chinese cultural events.

10.

**interview**

They **interview** older people who remember the traditions. Sometimes they need a translator for these face-to-face conversations.

**EXERCISE 2** *Context Clues* 

**Directions.** Scan the definitions in Column A. Then, think about how the boldface words are used in the sentences in Column B. To complete the exercise, match each definition in Column A with the correct Vocabulary Word from Column B. Write the letter of your choice on the line provided. Finally, write the Vocabulary Word on the line before the definition.

**COLUMN A**

\_\_\_\_\_ 11. word: \_\_\_\_\_  
*v.* to amaze; to surprise

\_\_\_\_\_ 12. word: \_\_\_\_\_  
*n.* a popular story or myth handed down for generations; a person whose deeds are remembered as stories; a note on an illustration or map

\_\_\_\_\_ 13. word: \_\_\_\_\_  
*n.* a face-to-face meeting for evaluating or questioning; *v.* to meet with for the purpose of evaluating or asking questions

\_\_\_\_\_ 14. word: \_\_\_\_\_  
*adv.* suddenly; in an unannounced way; in a way not known before

\_\_\_\_\_ 15. word: \_\_\_\_\_  
*v.* to reproduce word for word; to refer to as an example; to state, as a price; *n.* words repeated exactly

\_\_\_\_\_ 16. word: \_\_\_\_\_  
*adj.* too many to be counted; countless

\_\_\_\_\_ 17. word: \_\_\_\_\_  
*n.* a formal meeting for discussion

\_\_\_\_\_ 18. word: \_\_\_\_\_  
*n.* writing and publishing news

\_\_\_\_\_ 19. word: \_\_\_\_\_  
*n.* a meeting of a group; a series of such meetings; a period of activity; a school semester or term

\_\_\_\_\_ 20. word: \_\_\_\_\_  
*v.* to give a brief account of; to say briefly

**COLUMN B**

(A) Saint George, who is said to have fought a dragon in fourteenth-century England, has become a legend. His deeds are still remembered.

(B) Like the European dragon, the Chinese dragon is believed to guard innumerable priceless treasures. Countless items are hidden in the dragon's lair.

(C) It is difficult to summarize Chinese beliefs about dragons. There are just too many to describe in a few words.

(D) In an interview, the Chinese storyteller Li Cho discussed Chinese dragons. This face-to-face discussion was videotaped.

(E) To quote a famous Chinese emperor, "The dragon is the symbol of the throne."

(F) Journalism cannot capture the excitement of the dragon-boat race. Reading the news is just not the same as being there!

(G) The colorful costumes worn during the dragon-boat festival will astonish you and take your breath away.

(H) Storytelling sessions in China have always been popular group activities.

(I) Dragon stories were the main topic at a recent conference of folklore experts.

(J) Just when we thought he was finished, our teacher unexpectedly added a dragon myth to the list of readings for tomorrow.

**EXERCISE 3****Like Meanings and Opposite Meanings** 

**Directions.** For each item below, circle the letter of the choice that means the same, or about the same, as the boldface word.

21. to astonish with a roar

- (A) respond
- (B) surprise
- (C) call to
- (D) yell at

22. an interview with a king

- (A) meeting
- (B) audition
- (C) dance
- (D) argument

23. journalism in San Francisco

- (A) storytelling
- (B) celebration
- (C) myth-making
- (D) news-writing

24. to quote the price of

- (A) state
- (B) misunderstand
- (C) pay
- (D) hear

25. an afternoon session

- (A) nap
- (B) meal
- (C) meeting
- (D) fight

**Directions.** For each item below, circle the letter of the choice that means the opposite, or about the opposite, of the boldface word.

26. a conference in July

- (A) family dinner
- (B) competition
- (C) informal meeting
- (D) series of meetings

29. to summarize a dragon story

- (A) describe in full detail
- (B) predict accurately
- (C) understand fully
- (D) give a brief account of

27. the innumerable scales on the dragon's back

- (A) slimy
- (B) few
- (C) hard
- (D) countless

30. dragons appearing unexpectedly

- (A) as predicted
- (B) in formation
- (C) angrily
- (D) at a low altitude

28. a legend in Chinese culture

- (A) respected scholar
- (B) well-known reporter
- (C) little-known figure
- (D) mythical emperor