

Ladders

WELCOME TO CHINA

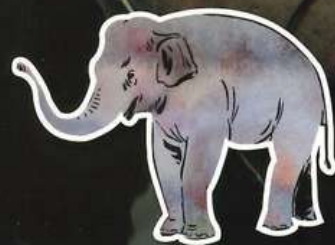
AROUND THE WORLD



Welcome to
China



Rice



The Thief and
the Elephant

RICE FOR BREAKFAST, LUNCH, AND DINNER

Walking down any street in China, you are bound to hear the word *fan*. *Fan* is an important word because it means both “rice” and “meal” in Chinese. Believe it or not, rice is served at every meal. You may think that the Chinese would get tired of eating so much of the same type of food. But as you’ll see, eating rice in China is far from boring.

Rice is prepared in many different ways. For breakfast, you might have a nice warm bowl of rice porridge spiced with cinnamon. Porridge is a soft food made from boiled rice and milk. After a busy morning at school, you could head for



the lunchroom for a cup of soup with rice, followed by steamed sticky rice with vegetables. *Ding, ding, ding!* School's out, and it's time to go home. After doing your homework, you sit down with your family to eat dinner. This is your favorite meal—a stir-fry made of vegetables, chicken, and rice. A stir-fry is a dish that gets cooked quickly while it's stirred. At all of your meals, you eat with **chopsticks**, or thin sticks used to pick up and eat food, instead of a fork.



◀ In China, rice can always be found on the dinner table. It's delicious by itself, or eaten with another dish.

HOW TO HOLD AND USE CHOPSTICKS



Hold one chopstick like a pencil.



Place the other chopstick against your fourth finger (the finger next to your pinkie). Rest it on the base of your thumb. It should be facing in the same direction as the other chopstick. Make sure that the chopsticks are even.



Move the top chopstick up and down. Hold the bottom chopstick still. Pinch a piece of stir-fried shrimp between the tips. Carefully bring the shrimp to your mouth. Mmm, mmm, good!

CELEBRATING WITH RICE

How do you and your family celebrate holidays? In China, people have fun in many different ways on special days. Chinese people always cook and serve delicious foods made with rice.

Chinese New Year is a 15-day festival that happens in January and February. People in China celebrate the beginning of each new year by watching colorful fireworks explode in the sky, wearing bright clothing, and marching in parades. Chinese New Year is also a time for families to be together and share special meals. Many people make sticky rice cakes. These sweet treats are said to bring good luck and a sweet life in the new year.



The last event during Chinese New Year is the Lantern Festival. People hang lanterns of different colors, shapes, and sizes in their homes and shops. Dancers perform with a huge, colorful dragon that is a symbol of good luck. People prepare and eat sticky rice balls filled with nuts and fruits. Each round rice ball stands for family unity, or togetherness.

From the field to the cooking pot, in both villages and cities, rice is an important part of Chinese people's lives. Who would have thought that a little grain could play such a big role?



Colorful dragon dancers carry a cloth dragon on poles. The lead dancer moves the head. The rest of the dancers move the long body.

Check In How do the people of China use rice in different ways?

The Thief and the Elephant

retold by Elizabeth Massie
illustrated by Rich Lo

Stories, both written and spoken, are an important part of a country's culture. They are meant to entertain us, but they can also teach us important lessons about life. A folk tale is a story passed down by families for many years. This Chinese folk tale teaches that honest people do not need to fear the truth.



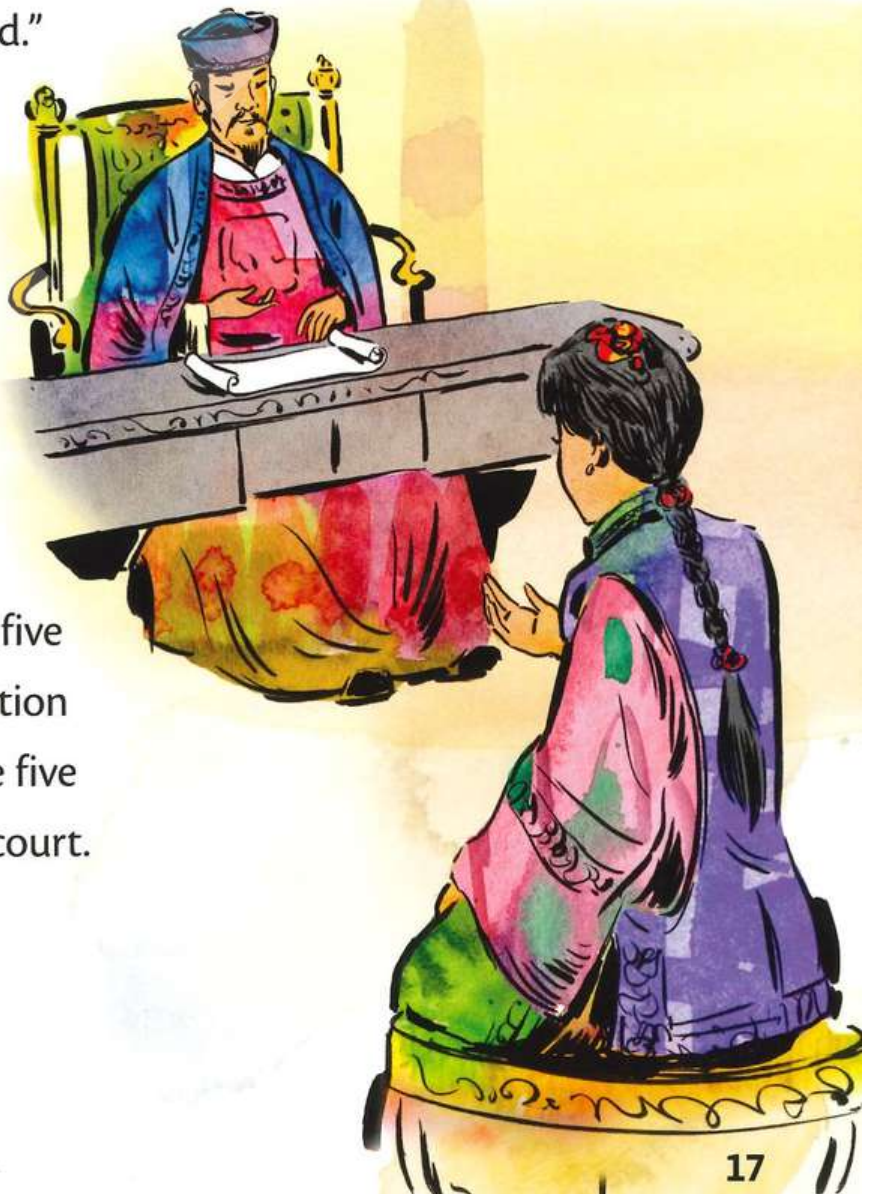
Long ago in China, elephants were taught to do many things. They helped farmers plow their land so crops could be planted, they helped build roads, and they even helped woodcutters carry heavy logs to their shops. People believed elephants were as wise as they were strong. It was said that an elephant could see into a person's heart and know if he or she was lying or telling the truth.

One day, a woman came to visit a judge named Ko-Kia-Yong.

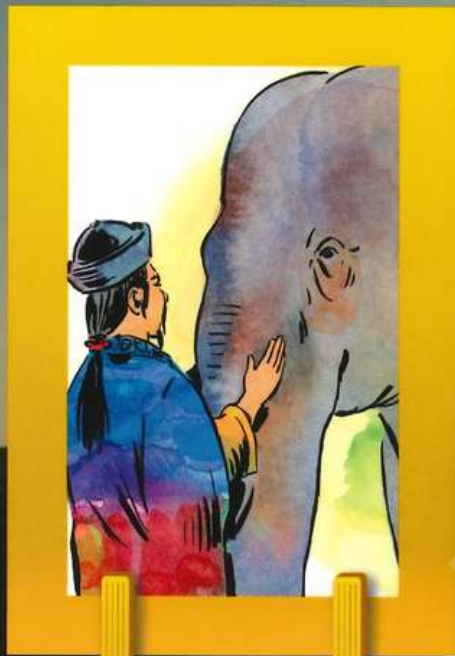
She was very upset. "I have been robbed!" she said. "A man came into my house at night and stole my bracelets and necklaces. I want the guilty man found and punished."

She described the thief to the judge so the guilty man could be arrested.

Ko-Kia-Yong told her he would do all he could to see that this crime was solved. He sent out his officers to find five men who matched the description the woman had given him. The five men were brought before the court.



Ladders



830L

