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# 1

UNIT

# Being noble



朝阳有其温暖和煦之格，故百草向之以生；细雨有其润物无声之格，故万物受之以长。世间万物，皆有其各自独特的品格。人属万物之一，自然也应修身立世。

本单元，你将通过阅读选篇感受梅兰竹菊“四君子”所代表的高尚品质，了解中国历史上体现这些品质的代表人物和他们的故事。你还将通过观看视频走近宋代名仕范仲淹与张载，从他们的经历中获得人生启迪。



# Reading

## Pre-reading

Complete the following lines of poetry with the correct form of the words in the box.

bamboo   plum blossom   chrysanthemum   orchid

- 1 The \_\_\_\_\_ sprigs in the corner of the wall, alone bloom in the frosty chill.
- 2 Dew on the hidden \_\_\_\_\_ is like an eye with tears.
- 3 Sitting among \_\_\_\_\_ alone, I play my lute and croon carefree.
- 4 I pluck \_\_\_\_\_ under the eastern fence, and serenely I gaze at the southern mountains.



## Four noble plants in Chinese culture

**plum blossom** /'blʊsəm/ *n.* 梅花  
**orchid** /'ɔ:kɪd/ *n.* 兰花  
**chrysanthemum** /krɪ'sæntʰəməm/ *n.* 菊 (花)

**resistant** /rɪ'zɪstənt/ *a.* 抵抗...的  
**bloom** /blu:m/ *n.* 花  
*vi.* 开花  
**frosty** /'frɒsti/ *a.* 严寒的

- 1 If someone calls you a “man of virtue” or *junzi* in Chinese, then you have received high praise indeed – you are considered educated and upright, and a person of great moral integrity.
- 2 In China, the **plum blossom**, **orchid**, bamboo, and **chrysanthemum** are generally referred to as the “four *junzi*,” because their natural characteristics have a lot in common with human virtues. The four noble plants often appear in paintings and poems by Chinese artists and literati.

### Plum blossom

- 3 The plum blossom is **resistant** to cold and comes into **bloom** during the **frosty** winter or early spring, symbolizing the



steadfast and unyielding qualities of *junzi*. Throughout Chinese history, there have been many figures whose personality resembles the characteristics of the plum blossom, and Wang Mian was one of them.

- 4 Wang Mian was a renowned painter and poet of the Yuan Dynasty. Emerging from a humble background, Wang Mian went through many hardships in his early years, which shaped his **resilient** and tough character. As he **matured**, he distanced himself from the court and remained **indifferent** to **fame and fortune**. He admired the purity and bravery of the plum blossom throughout his life, seeking to capture its spirit in his art. Just like the plum blossom, which is unaffected by strong winds or harsh cold, Wang Mian remained **incorruptible** facing challenges and **temptations**.

### Orchid

- 5 The orchid, often found in **secluded** valleys, does not have the vibrant beauty of blossoming branches, but it has an air of elegance and nobility. Its **fragrance** is present no matter whether there are people to appreciate it or not.
- 6 Qu Yuan, a patriotic politician and poet, shared many qualities with the orchid. A statesman of the state of Chu during the Warring States Period, he advocated reforms including the selection of talented and virtuous individuals to serve the country. He also strongly opposed **corruption** and proposed anti-corruption measures. However, his proposals met with opposition from other officials. Though **slandered** and **exiled**, Qu Yuan remained deeply concerned about his country and people. As a poet, he composed many great poems, including “Li

**resilient** /rɪ'zɪliənt/ *a.* 适应力强的  
**mature** /mə'tʃʊə/ *vi.* (人) 变成熟, 变理智

**indifferent** /ɪn'dɪfərənt/ *a.*  
不在乎的

**fame and fortune** 名和利  
**incorruptible** /ɪnkə'rʌptəbəl/ *a.*  
诚实正直的; 廉洁的

**temptation** /temp'teɪʃən/ *n.* 诱惑

**secluded** /sɪ'kluːdɪd/ *a.* 僻静的;  
清静的

**fragrance** /'freɪgrəns/ *n.* 芳香

**corruption** /kə'rʌpʃən/ *n.* 贪污;  
腐败

**slander** /'slɑːndə/ *vt.* 诽谤; 诋毁

**exile** /'eksɪl/ *vt.* 流放; 放逐







**principled** /'prɪnsəpəld/ *a.* 原则性强的

**bend** /bend/ *vi.* 变弯曲

**sway** /sweɪ/ *vi.* 摇晃

**severe** /sə'veɪə/ *a.* 凛冽的

**for the sake of** 由于；为了

**magistrate** /'mædʒɪstreɪt/ *n.* 地方行政官

**ingratiate yourself (with sb.)**  
讨好，奉承（某人）

**tenaciously** /tə'neɪʃəsli/ *ad.* 坚韧不拔地

**wither** /'wɪðə/ *v.* （使）枯萎，凋谢

**chilly** /tʃɪli/ *a.* 寒冷的

**tranquil** /'træŋkwəl/ *a.* 平静的

**envision** /ɪn'veɪʒən/ *vt.* 想象；展望

Sao,” which is generally believed to be a portrait of himself. The orchid imagery in “Li Sao” suggests his pure mind and virtues. With this poem, the orchid has been more often associated with the virtues of highly **principled** individuals.

### Bamboo

- 7 The bamboo is known for its tough nature. It is a symbol of both physical and mental strength, as it **bends** and **sways** in **severe** winds but never breaks. Its deep roots represent resoluteness, and its tall straight stem represents integrity and honor, not yielding **for the sake of** personal gain.
- 8 These qualities of the bamboo can be found in Zheng Banqiao, a celebrated painter, calligrapher, and poet in the Qing Dynasty. Serving as a county **magistrate** in Shandong Province for 12 years, Zheng Banqiao was renowned for his honesty and integrity. He did not **ingratiate himself with** senior officials and the wealthy, but showed a deep concern for the poor and earned the respect of many. He liked painting the bamboo, which always stands tall and straight regardless of wind, rain, or harsh weather. He acted just like the bamboo in his paintings, living **tenaciously** and refusing to yield.

### Chrysanthemum

- 9 Most chrysanthemums flower when autumn arrives and most other flowers **wither**. Against the **chilly** frost, they bloom splendidly without attempting to compete with other flowers. The chrysanthemum represents a **tranquil** mind and great vitality, which are similar to the qualities of *junzi*.
- 10 This flower is often associated with Tao Yuanming, a famous poet from the Eastern Jin Dynasty. Living in a turbulent time, Tao Yuanming found tranquility in nature, and **envisioned** an



ideal world where everyone enjoys peace and harmony. He drew inspiration from the natural world for his poetry writing, with a particular fondness for chrysanthemums. In one of his poems, Tao Yuanming wrote, “I **pluck** chrysanthemums under the eastern fence, and **serenely** I **gaze** at the southern mountains,” revealing his love for the flower. Over time, the chrysanthemum has gradually become a symbol of those who do not strive for glory and wealth but pursue tranquility of the mind.

- 11** Representing the qualities of *junzi* in Chinese culture, the four noble plants have enriched ancient Chinese art and literature, and will continue to be appreciated by the Chinese people.

**pluck** /plʌk/ vt. 采摘  
**serenely** /sə'ri:nlɪ/ ad. 宁静地  
**gaze** /geɪz/ vi. 凝视



#### Notes

- 1 **Wang Mian:** 王冕 (1287—1359), 元代画家、诗人。
- 2 **Qu Yuan:** 屈原 (约公元前340—约公元前278), 战国时期楚国诗人、政治家。
- 3 **Li Sao:** 《离骚》。《楚辞》篇名, 屈原的代表作之一。全篇以自述身世、遭遇、心志为中心。
- 4 **Zheng Banqiao:** 郑板桥 (1693—1766), 原名郑燮, 号板桥, 清代书画家、文学家。
- 5 **Tao Yuanming:** 陶渊明 (约365—427), 东晋诗人。
- 6 **I pluck chrysanthemums under the eastern fence, and serenely I gaze at the southern mountains.**  
采菊东篱下, 悠然见南山。(《饮酒·其五》)





## Global understanding

Check (✓) the statement that best summarizes the text.

- A** Being *junzi* has always been the goal of intellectuals throughout Chinese history.
- B** The plum blossom, orchid, bamboo, and chrysanthemum are known as the “four *junzi*,” reflecting the qualities of men of virtue.
- C** There have been many *junzi* in Chinese history who were indifferent to fame and fortune.

# Detailed understanding

Complete the following notes about the four noble plants in Chinese culture.

	Qualities of the plants	Representative figures
<p><b>Plum blossom</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Being 1) _____ to cold</li> <li>• Coming into bloom during the 2) _____ or early spring</li> <li>• Symbolizing the steadfast and 3) _____ qualities of <i>junzi</i></li> </ul>	<p>Wang Mian: His early years' experiences shaped his 4) _____ character. He also remained indifferent to 5) _____ and incorruptible facing challenges and 6) _____.</p>
<p><b>Orchid</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not having the vibrant beauty of 7) _____</li> <li>• Having an air of 8) _____</li> </ul>	<p>Qu Yuan: He strongly opposed 9) _____. Although he was 10) _____, he remained deeply concerned about his country and people. The orchid imagery in "Li Sao" suggests his 11) _____ and virtues.</p>
<p><b>Bamboo</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As it bends and sways in severe winds but never breaks, it is a symbol of both 12) _____ strength.</li> <li>• Its roots represent resoluteness and its stem represents 13) _____.</li> </ul>	<p>Zheng Banqiao: When he served as a county magistrate, he chose not to 14) _____ senior officials and the wealthy, and showed a deep concern for the poor and 15) _____ of many.</p>
<p><b>Chrysanthemum</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Blooming splendidly without attempting to 16) _____ other flowers</li> <li>• Representing a 17) _____ mind and great vitality</li> </ul>	<p>Tao Yuanming: He found 18) _____ in nature, and envisioned an ideal world where everyone enjoys 19) _____.</p>



# Higher-order thinking

Using objects to represent people and ideas metaphorically is a technique frequently seen in Chinese literature and artworks. Can you think of more examples besides the ones mentioned in the text? To what extent are they enlightening for your life?

## Language focus

Complete the following sentences with the correct form of the expressions in the box.

come into bloom    a tranquil mind    remain indifferent to  
for the sake of    principled individuals

- 1 After doing exercise regularly, she found that she was able to get \_\_\_\_\_, free from the stresses and worries of daily life.
- 2 \_\_\_\_\_ are generally regarded as honorable and trustworthy in other people's eyes.
- 3 She decided to adopt a daily exercise routine and a balanced diet \_\_\_\_\_ her health.
- 4 As spring approaches, the cherry blossom trees in our backyard \_\_\_\_\_, giving the surroundings a delicate pink hue.
- 5 Once you have a clear goal in life, you should stick to it and \_\_\_\_\_ what other people say about you.



# Viewing

## Pre-viewing

Talk about what you know about Fan Zhongyan by answering the following questions.



What is he?

What are his achievements?

What are his famous sayings?



### Great ideals of great minds





## Notes

- 1 **Fan Zhongyan:** 范仲淹 (989—1052), 北宋政治家、文学家。
- 2 **Teng Zijing:** 滕子京 (991—1047), 北宋官员, 范仲淹之友。
- 3 **Be the first to worry about the affairs of the state and the last to enjoy oneself.**  
先天下之忧而忧, 后天下之乐而乐。(《岳阳楼记》)
- 4 **Zhang Zai:** 张载 (1020—1077), 北宋理学家, 世称“横渠先生”。
- 5 **Set spiritual value for the world in general; establish meaning of life for men at large; perpetuate waning wisdom of ancient sages; build foundation of lasting peace for the future.**  
为天地立心, 为生民立命, 为往圣继绝学, 为万世开太平。

## Vocabulary

### New words

**prose** /prəʊz/ *n.* 散文

**shore** /ʃɔː/ *n.* 岸; 滨

**prefecture** /ˈpri:fektʃuə/ *n.* (某些国家的) 省, 县

**contemporary** /kən'tempərəri/ *n.* 同时代的人; 同辈

**frontier** /ˈfrʌntiə/ *n.* 边疆; 边境

**perpetuate** /pə'petʃueɪt/ *vt.* 使永久; 使永恒

**waning** /ˈweɪnɪŋ/ *a.* (重要性、力量、影响等) 减少中的, 衰落着的

**intellectual** /ˌɪntə'lektʃuəl/ *n.* 知识分子

**purposeful** /ˈpɜːpəsəfəl/ *a.* 有明确目标的

### Phrases

**dwell on sth.** 老是想某事

### Proper nouns

**On Yueyang Tower** 《岳阳楼记》(散文篇名, 北宋范仲淹作)

**The Doctrine of the Mean** 《中庸》(中国儒家经典之一)



# Viewing and understanding

Watch the video and answer the following questions by filling in the blanks.



## 1 How was “On Yueyang Tower” created?

Fan Zhongyan was invited by Teng Zijing to write about the newly 1) \_\_\_\_\_ Yueyang Tower. Looking at the painting depicting 2) \_\_\_\_\_ at Dongting Lake, Fan Zhongyan wrote down the prose entitled “On Yueyang Tower.”

## 2 What did Fan Zhongyan want to express in “On Yueyang Tower”?

In the prose, Fan Zhongyan praised the tower, and more importantly, he depicted the scene of Dongting Lake to express his emotions and advised his friend to be more 3) \_\_\_\_\_. The famous saying “Be the first to worry about the affairs of the state and the last to enjoy oneself” inspires individuals to strive for 4) \_\_\_\_\_ rather than dwell on personal 5) \_\_\_\_\_.

## 3 How did Fan Zhongyan inspire Zhang Zai?

Fan Zhongyan advised Zhang Zai to leave 6) \_\_\_\_\_ and focus on the study of the classics. Zhang Zai then dedicated himself to studying the classics and gradually established a new 7) \_\_\_\_\_. Based on the Confucian notion of constant self-improvement, Zhang Zai formulated his life goals which have come to be known as the “Four Sentences of Heng Qu.” They reflected the ideal pursuit of intellectuals to improve the world and 8) \_\_\_\_\_.

# Higher-order thinking

In the video, we learned that Zhang Zai formulated his life goals which are now known as the “Four Sentences of Heng Qu.” These goals still guide young people today. How do you understand these goals, and how do you think they are related to our life?



# Language focus

Translate the following paragraph into English.

理想指引人生方向，信念决定事业成败。青年人理想远大、信念坚定，是一个国家和民族无坚不摧（invincible）的前进动力。广大青年要练就过硬本领，在学习和实践中磨炼意志，增长才干。在成长和奋斗中，青年人要正确面对一时的得失，追求有意义的生活，同时将个人的奋斗目标融入国家的大发展中，努力成为堪当民族复兴重任的时代新人。

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## Unit task

*Junzi* was originally used to indicate a person's social status, generally referring to a ruler or a member of the aristocracy. Beginning with Confucius, the term acquired an additional moral dimension and came to mean someone of true virtue.

In Chinese culture, many objects are believed to manifest the qualities of *junzi*, such as jade and the orchid. The English Club in your university is going to organize a sharing activity on the topic “My idea of *junzi*.” You would like to choose the four noble plants in Chinese culture, namely the plum blossom, orchid, bamboo, and chrysanthemum, as your focus. The following points are for your reference.

- The meaning of *junzi* in general
- Qualities the four noble plants represent
- Representative figures with the qualities of the four noble plants

