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啟思中國語文

一下第一冊

Primary 1 Book 3

Poem on Page 41

元日

jyun4 jat6

The First Day of Chinese New Year

by 王安石 wong4 ngon1 sek6

This poem describes the excitement of families celebrating Chinese New Year together.

Listen to the poem read in Cantonese here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PEmk2vgmbUI>

A young boy reading it here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xwtV-bsaBRc>

爆竹聲中一歲除

baau3 zuk1 seng1 zung1 jat1 seoi3 ceoi4

[exploding] [bamboo] [sound] [in the middle of] [one] [year] [send away]

Amid the boom of firecrackers a year has come to an end,

春風送暖入屠蘇

ceon1 fung1 sung3 nyun5 jap6 tou4 sou1

[spring] [wind] [brings] [in] [slaughter] [awaken]

The spring wind sends warmth into the wine.

千門萬戶曕曕日

cin1 mun4 maan6 wu6 tung4 tung4 jat6

[one thousand] [doors] [ten thousand] [households] [sunrise]

[sunrise] [day]

Each and every household sees the rising sun

總把新桃換舊符

zung2 baa2 san1 tou4 wun6 gau6 fu4

[Always] [grammatical] [new] [peachwood] [change] [old] [charm]

People replace the old peachwood charms with new ones.

Notes on Page 41

1. 元旦： The first day of each year, also known as the first day of the Lunar New year.
2. 一歲除： one year has passed.
3. 屠蘇： The name of a type of alcoholic drink. According to the custom in ancient China, every year on Lunar New Year's Eve, each family uses this kind of plant 屠蘇草 to make wine, on the first day of Lunar New Year the plant is taken out and the wine drunk.
4. 瞳瞳： Describes when the sun has just risen. The Cantonese pronunciation of 瞳 tung4 is the same as 童 tung4.
5. 桃符： Peachwood panels with pictures of the Gods on, these are placed on doors on New Year's Day, they are used to ward off disasters and evil spirits, eventually they were gradually replaced with simple red paper couplets.

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Other notes:

Before gunpowder was invented people used to set pieces of bamboo alight. It would make a popping sound whilst it burnt. Ancient people thought this noise could drive away evil spirits.

屠蘇酒 is a type of medicinal alcoholic drink created by a famous doctor 華佗 at the end of the Han Dynasty. The name of the drink links to the ideas of 屠 slaughtering the bad demons and 蘇 a spiritual awakening, both of which herald the new year.

The poem is also thought to have political significance. The poet hopes in the coming year the old political order will be washed away and replaced by a new one.