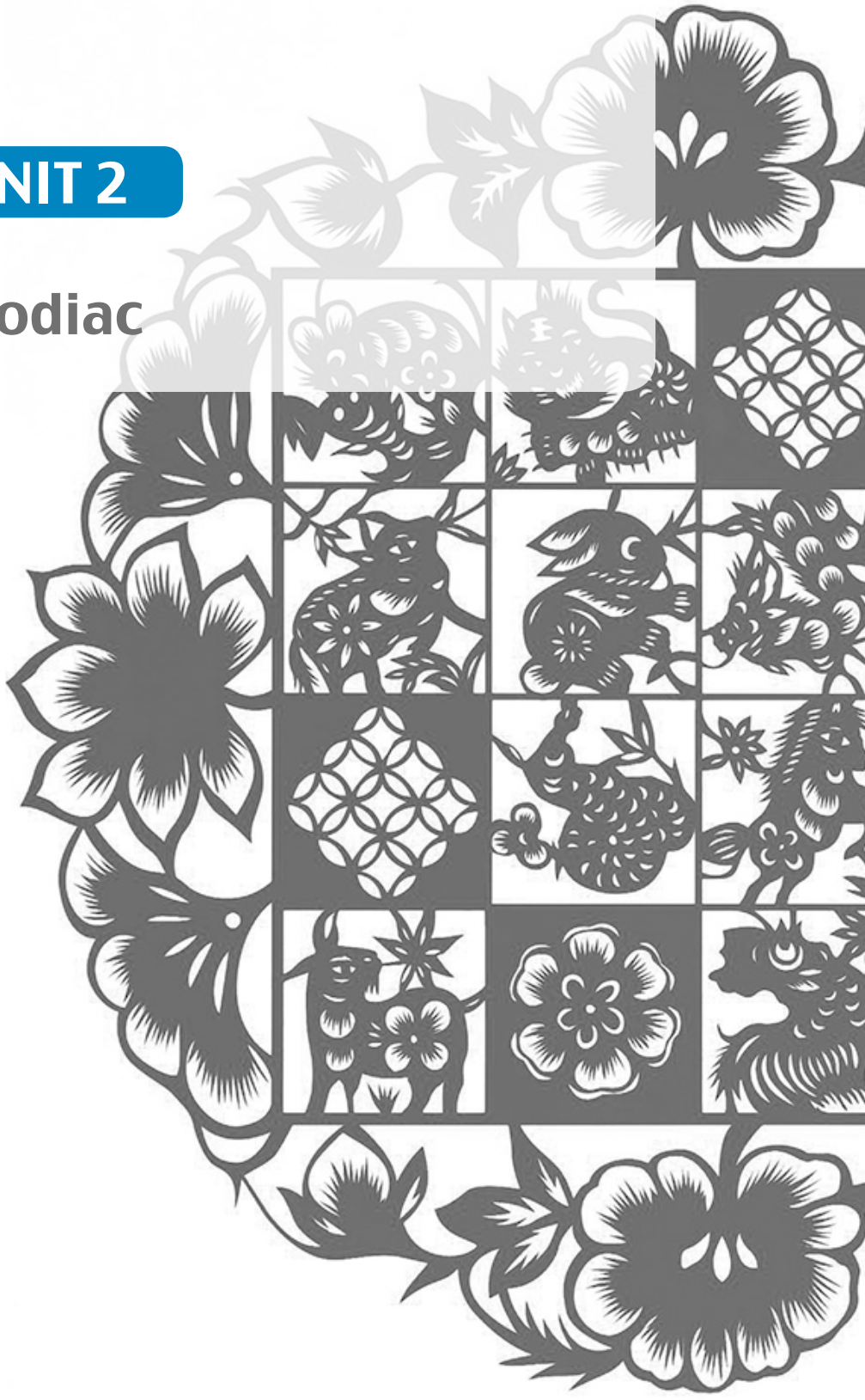
UNIT 2

Zodiac



PART I

Theme Introduction

Chinese people use 12 animals to stand for the year when they are born. People with the same animal sign are said to have similar personality and hobbies, which is miraculous. Listen to the recording, and try to complete the missing information in the table according to what you have heard.

※ This part is used to let students have a rough knowledge about Chinese 12 animal signs.

※ Before class, students are required to talk about 12 Chinese animal signs, such as what are the animals used in the Chinese animal signs, what the personalities each one stands for, etc..

※ Then students are going to listen to the report, finish the blanks below.

※ Some volunteers are asked to report their answers filled in the blanks.

People born in the year of	Personality	Weakness
Rat/Mouse	Active***, self-discipline***	***Timid,*** suspicious
Dragon	Courageous, ***decisive,*** generous	***arrogant***
Snake	Easy-going, cheerful, ***quick-minded***	Staying with ***"dead ends"***
Rooster	Good at ***investigation*** and research	***Eloquent,*** fond of showing off

The Chinese animal signs are a 12-year cycle used for dating the years. They are rat, ox, tiger, rabbit, dragon, snake, horse, goat, monkey, rooster, dog and boar. Every one in China gets their own animal sign

which is decided by the year when he or she is born. It is said that people with different animal signs have some special personalities and weaknesses. People born in the year of rat are active and self-discipline, but timid and suspicious. One who is born in the year of dragon is considered to be courageous and decisive, generous but arrogant. Snake people are easy-going, cheerful, quick-minded, but they are also easy staying with "dead ends". Guess who is eloquent and fond of showing off? The rooster. But they are also good at investigation and research.

Word Bank

Gemini /ˈdʒemɪnaɪ/ *n.*	双子座
dazzling /ˈdæzlɪŋ/ *adj.*	令人炫目的
Cancer /ˈkænsə/ *n.*	巨蟹座
constellation /kɒnstəˈleɪʃən/ *n.*	星座
feeble /ˈfiːbəl/ *adj.*	微弱的
auction /ˈɔːkʃən/ *n.*	拍卖
Scorpius /ˈskɔːpɪəs/ *n.*	天蝎座
Antares /ænˈteəriːz/ *n.*	心大星
coincidence /kəʊˈɪnsɪdəns/ *n.*	巧合
trivial /ˈtrɪvɪəl/ *adj.*	细小的，琐碎的
horoscope /ˈhɒrəskəʊp/ *n.*	星象
Taurus /ˈtɔːrəs/ *n.*	金牛座
work like a horse	勤劳工作
warm a snake in your bosom	姑息养奸

PART II
Listening Task

Task ❶ **Short Conversations**

You will hear eight short conversations about Zodiac. A question will

follow each conversation. Listen carefully and choose the best answer from the four possible choices.

1. W: Hey Sean, why are you looking for telescope?

   M: Oh, don't you know each year on 13th or 14th December, a rain of falling stars pour from Gemini, like sparks from a firework in the sky. It's the best time for us to observe them, and it's only one or two days left.

   Q: what's the date today?

   A. Dec, 12th B. Dec, 13th

   C. Dec, 14th D. Dec, 15th

2. W: Look at the painting, so many dazzling stars, and it seems like a crab in the middle.

   M: Yes, it shows us the Cancer. Actually of all the constellations in the Zodiac, this one is the faintest. With its feeble stars, Cancer is as indistinct as a seaside crab half-buried in the sandy shore.

   Q: what can be informed from the conversation?

   A. There are many dazzling stars in Cancer.

   B. It is easy to see a crab half-buried in the sandy shore.

   C. Many feeble stars make Cancer the faintest constellation.

   D. The painting depicts a big shinning crab.

3. W1: I cannot find the book Zodiac and Month's fortune. It says in this month, I'll suffer unexpected personal financial losses, and it's likely to be the truth.

   W2: Isn't it lying under your bed?

   Q: where did the conversation most probably take place?

   A. In a classroom. B. In a library.

   C. In a dormitory. D. In a lost and found.

4. M: Congratulations, Lily! I heard that you were preparing for your son's wedding ceremony recently.

   W: Yes, but we only have two months for it. Everything is in a hurry. But people say next year is Tiger year, and it's not a good year for

my son.

Q: What's happened to Lily?

A. She will get married next year.

B. Her son will get married in Tiger year.

C. She will cancel her son's wedding ceremony.

D. She is in a hurry to prepare her son's wedding ceremony.

5. W: Have you heard the news that 2 of the 12 Chinese bronze animal heads will go on sale by auction house this week.

M: Yes, the Mouse and the Rabbit. All the Chinese people are discontent with it.

Q: What's the conversation mainly about?

A. Two Chinese animals will be sold to foreign countries.

B. Chineser people are unhappy about the auction.

C. Mouse and rabbit are not friendly in Chinese people's eyes.

D. Most people are indifferent to the news.

6. W: Have you heard that James would be promoted this time.

M: Yea, everyone thinks he deserves it. He works like a horse day and night, and he brings a lot benefits to the new project.

Q: How about James?

A. He is a hardworking man.

B. He looks like a horse.

C. He deserves owning a horse.

D. He shifts his work day and night.

7. W: Do you have any idea about Scorpius? it seems mystical.

M: I know the centerpiece of Scorpius is a flaming, ruby-coloured star. It is 300 times bigger than the Sun. People call it Antares, rival of the red planet — Mars.

Q: what is the heart of the Scorpius?

A. Sun. *B. Antares.*

C. Mars. D. A common star.

8.M1: You know who the criminal is. Point him out, and don't warm a

snake in you bosom.

M2: The guy in grey.

Q: Who is the second speaker?

A. A teacher. B. A criminal.

C. A policeman. *D. A witness.*

Task ❷ **Dialogue**

Lin Tao and Felix are classmates. They are now talking about Zodiac. Four questions will be asked following their conversation. Listen carefully and choose the best answer from the four possible choices.

Lin Tao: It's interesting that we have 12 Chinese zodiac in China, and you have 12 signs in your culture.

Felix: It's no coincidence, I think. We do have many things in common, I mean culture.

Lin Tao: You speak like a scholar today. Forget about it. And now let's say something more trivial. What is your sign?

Felix: I'm Aries. Why?

Lin Tao: Lately I'm interested in horoscopes and Chinese zodiac. I'm curious about these things.

Felix: Really? Do you believe in them?

Lin Tao: I'm not sure. Sometimes the descriptions and analysis sound reasonable.

Felix: I guess so. What is your sign? And is the character description of it true?

Lin Tao: I am Taurus. It says I have a patient, steadfast and reliable personality. I do!

Felix: I think so. You are such a nice person.

Lin Tao: Thank you. To be frank, I don't believe those predictions day's or month's fortunes.

Felix: Me either.

1. How many zodiac and signs related to culture in the whole world according to the conversation?

   A. 12. *B. 24.*

   C. 0. D. countless.

2. What's Lin Tao interested in recently?

   A. Horoscopes. B. Chinese animal signs.

   C. Culture. *D. A and B.*

3. What are the character descriptions of Taurus people?

   A. Patient and diligent. *B. Reliable and steady.*

   C. Nice and reliable. D. Honesty and patient.

4. What's their attitude toward the predictions of day's or month's fortunes?

   A. Both of them believe those predictions.

   B. Lin Tao believes those predictions.

   C. Felix believes those predictions.

   D. Neither of them believes those predictions.

PART III

Speaking Task

People's year of fate

Teaching Steps

1. Ask some students to talk about their understandings of people's year of fate and then the teacher introduces the topic "People's year of fate".
2. Bring the students' attention to the pictures and ask them what the the articles are, and the usage of them. Then play the recording to the whole class.
3. After listening, the teacher can ask the students to answer the following questions: What is the animal year? What are the traditional

ways to deal with one's animal year? It is helpful for training the students'ability to understand the materials and grasp important details of the listening text by this way.

4. Arrange the students in groups and ask them to discuss the topic in the part of Oral Activity.
5. Go around the classroom to supervise the students'discussion. If necessary, give help to the students, especially the weaker ones.
6. Select one or two groups to make short presentation of their discussion in class.

Model

Good morning, my name is Sophie, I'm 23, I was born in the Year of the Horse, and next year is my year of fate. This is my second animal year. One of my friends told me that it's easy for me to make conflicts or suffer difficulties in my big year. I should do as the most Chinese people do: always put on red underwear and wear one or two lucky accessories such as lucky bracelet to avert disasters. So, now, I'll go out to find some red underclothes, and pick up some jewelry.

Oral Activity:

※ After listening to the report, students are required to do some investigations on the same and different customs on people's year of fate between south and north China among their classmates.

※ Students walk around the classroom, and interview at least 5 classmates randomly, and ask them some questions, for example, what's your name? Where are you from? Does your hometown belong to south or north China? Is there any special custom on people's year of fate? Then fill the investigation table below.

※ After the interview, students should make the conclusion of their investigation, and write down the same and different customs in different areas of China.

※ Select 3 or 4 students to present their conclusions to the whole class, and teacher should observe the differences among their conclusions, and if time permitted, teacher can lead the new discussion on the differences.

Interviewee	Hometown	South/North	The traditional customs on people's year of fate

Conclusion:

The same customs: in south and north China, people all _____ _____

The different customs: in south China, people _____ _____ in north China, people_____

PART IV

Leisure Time

Enjoy a video-clip excerpted from the film Twelve Animals. (0:00-01:11)

Get to know the history of the 12 Chinese zodiac statues in the Old Summer Palace.

Building of the Old Summer Palace started in 1709, took more than 150 years to complete, its magnificence awed the world. Envoys called it "The Garden of Gardens". Haiyan Hall was its largest Western mansion, when the 12 Chinese Zodiac statues stood, each majestically spouting water at noon! Foreign armies breached Fort Dagu in July 1860, shattered the Empire's feeble defence. On 6th October 1860, the invaders stormed Old Summer Palace. Imperial treasures including the 12 bronze statues were pillaged or burned. The fire lasted for three nights and days, this 150-year-old architectural masterpiece was razed to the ground. One, two, three.

Going once, going twice, sold! Next item! (Same year, the Monkey-head went for $8,185,000), (and the Tiger-head for $15,445,000). In 2003, the Pig-head was sold by sealed bid for $6,800,000

PART V

Additional Task

Task ❶ **Oral Practice**

Look at the picture and list the 12 constellations. Then talk about them and the unique characteristics each one stands for.

Aries Taurus Gemini Cancer Leo Virgo Libra

Scorpius Sagittarius Capricorn Aquarius Pisces

Task ❷ **Listening Practice**

Listen to a passage and fill in the blanks with the words or phrases while listening.

It is the common sense that, in China, people born in the year of Monkey are the *erratic* geniuses of the cycle. Clever, skillful and *flexible*, they are remarkably inventive and *original*, and can solve the most difficult problems with ease. There are few fields in which Monkey people wouldn't be successful, but they have a *disconcerting* habit of not being obedient. They want to do things now, and if they cannot get started immediately, they *tend to* become discouraged and sometimes give up their projects. Although good at *making decisions*, they tend to look down on others. Monkey people have a deep *desire* for knowledge and have excellent memories. Monkey people are strong willed but their anger cools quickly. They are most *compatible* with the Dragon and Rat.