

KS3 Geography. Life in China

Shanghai

JUEWEN: Hi my name is Juewen. I'm ten years old. My nickname is Wen-Wen. I live in Shanghai.

NARRATOR: Shanghai is the largest city in China. It is an important shipping port. This is the busy Huangpu River where the Yangtze River meets the sea.

JUEWEN (TRANSLATED): Shanghai is a trading city. It's a bustling, energetic and noisy city. I'm always very busy. I set off for school at 7:40. I speak Chinese Mandarin to my mother and also to my classmates at school. But in Shanghai there's a separate language called Shanghainese. It's different from Mandarin or Cantonese. I can't speak it but I understand some.

Most children start arriving from about 7:50 to 8:10. Lots of children come to school with their grandparents. We all bow to our teachers when we come in. This is to greet the teachers and show respect. At 8:10 the gates close.

NARRATOR: Shanghai has grown massively in recent years. The city is now a mix of traditional Chinese buildings and shiny modern office blocks. With so many cars on the roads and so much congestion many people prefer to use public transport. More than 23 million people live in Shanghai.

JUEWEN (TRANSLATED): I finish school at 3:10 but often I have extra classes. Today, I am going to my teacher's house after school for my cello lesson. It's some way away so I get on the metro. Shanghai has a huge metro network. Over 5 million people take it every day! It's the fourth busiest metro line in the world! On the way to my teacher, I pass a famous area called the 'Bund'.

NARRATOR: Shanghai is split in half by the river but many bridges and tunnels connect the two sides. The Huangpu River flowing through Shanghai forms the final section of the Yangtze River before it opens into the East China Sea. It's very deep. It has to be to accommodate the giant container ships. Across from the Bund is the new commercial and financial district with its skyscrapers, swanky hotels and shopping malls.

- NARRATOR:** The tall building with the hole at the top is the World Financial Centre. At the moment it's the third tallest building in the world. Juewen's cello teacher lives just up from the Bund.
- JUEWEN (TRANSLATED):** I study music to comply with my mother's wishes. My mother always strives for the best. I've already entered a cello competition and won third prize.
- NARRATOR:** Life can be pretty hectic for Chinese children, especially those living in cities. Their parents push them hard to achieve.
- JUEWEN (TRANSLATED):** [SINGING] My weekends are really busy. Every Saturday at 9 o'clock I go to my Shanliangong Choir. Once the choir practice is over I go to my D&T class.
- NARRATOR:** In China it's seen as very important to get a good job and to keep the economy booming. So Chinese children go to lots of after-school clubs to develop their skills as much as possible.
- JUEWEN (TRANSLATED):** We make something different every time. Sometimes we make cars; other times we make boats or aeroplanes. After this class I do 'Olympic Maths'.
- NARRATOR:** Olympic Maths is very popular in China. Children study hard and regularly take part in competitions. Many children are keen to work as accountants and bankers and it is thought that Olympic Maths will give them the edge.
- JUEWEN (TRANSLATED):** Sunday is also a busy day. I study English and Calligraphy. I think that learning English is really important because with this one language you can communicate with everyone. One day I hope to be able to go to England.
- On Sunday I also have a calligraphy class. Our teacher spends a long time showing us the art of writing. He teaches us that part of calligraphy is also about patience. It's very important in our culture and we all learn it at school.
- NARRATOR:** Shanghai is the largest centre of Chinese industrial technology. The city is one of the most important seaports and China's largest commercial and financial centre. Shanghai draws the attention of the whole world.