

The Chinese Year of the Snake



The Chinese New Year is set for 29 January 2025, marking the beginning of the Year of the Snake and bringing in various traditional celebrations.





The Legend of the White Snake Lady

- Snakes often appear in Chinese tales as fantastic beings associated with magic and shapes shifting.
- This is the case in The Legend of the White Snake Lady, which is one of China's most famous folktales.
- It is the subject of many folk operas, plays and TV shows, as well as a spectacular live show on the waters of West Lake in Hangzhou.
- There are several different versions of the story, but this is the most common one.



- Way back in the time of myths and legends, a white snake spirit called **Bai Suzhen** (Bye Soo-jen) spent a thousand years studying magical arts until the Dragon King of the Eastern Sea turned her into a real woman who took the name Lady Bai.
- Bai means “white” in Chinese. Lady Bai went out into the human world to travel around performing acts of kindness.





One day she came across a beggar threatening to kill a green snake with his stick.

She chased off the beggar and used her magical powers to turn the snake into a real woman like herself.

The snake girl was so grateful that she promised to serve Lady Bai for as long as they lived.

Lady Bai was delighted to have a companion and called the girl **Xiao Qing**, (Hsiow Ching) which means “Little Green” as a reminder of her origins.



The two human snake spirits travelled around the country, until one day they came to the beautiful West Lake in the city of Lin'an, which is now called **Hangzhou**.



There they met a handsome young man who offered Lady Bai his umbrella, when they got caught in the rain on a ferry across the West Lake. The young man's name was **Xu Xian** (Hsoo Hsien) and he and Lady Bai immediately fell in love and soon after got married.



Xu Xian did not know about his wife's magical origins until a Buddhist priest, called **Fahai**, (Fa-hi) who was the abbot of a local temple, recognised Lady Bai for what she really was. He tried to tell Xu Xian, but Xu refused to believe him.

Fahai didn't give up and eventually persuaded Xu Xian to test his wife by getting her to drink a certain kind of wine-traditionally served at the Dragon Boat Festival. Fahai knew that if Lady Bai drank the wine, she would change back into a snake. This is exactly what happened!

Xu Xian was so shocked and scared that he dropped dead on the spot! Lady Bai was grief-stricken but used her magical knowledge and travelled to the heavenly mountains to steal a magic herb that brought Xu Xian back to life.



Xu Xian was still very scared about being married to a snake goddess and went to Abbot Fahai at the Jinshan Temple to ask what he should do. Fahai told him he must stay in the temple for the rest of his life if he wanted to be safe, and Xu Xian agreed.

Lady Bai and Xiao Qing tracked him down to the temple and tried to persuade him to leave, flooding the temple and almost destroying it in the process. Xu Xian refused to go with her, when Lady Bai fled from the temple, but later realised that his wife must truly love him, even if she was a snake goddess.

He escaped from the temple and was reunited with Bai on the Broken Bridge on **West Lake in Hangzhou** - a real bridge that is a popular tourist spot today. Lady Bai and Xu Xian lived happily together and had a son called **Xu Shilin** (Hsoo Shr-lin).



However, Abbot Fahai had not forgiven Bai Suzhen and eventually tracked the couple down.

After another terrible fight, Abbot Fahai defeated Lady Bai and imprisoned her under the **Leifeng** (Lay-fung) Pagoda on the shores of West Lake - another place you can still visit today.

Xu Xian was left alone with his son, and Xiao Qing (Little Green) fled swearing that she would have her revenge.





Twenty years later, Xu Shilin returned home in triumph after coming top of the Imperial examinations.

At the same time, Xiao Qing came back to Hangzhou after spending the intervening years learning new magic powers.

She was now powerful enough to take on Abbot Fahai! He was finally defeated in one last ferocious battle and fled the scene.

Xiao Qing then freed Bai Suzhen from under the Leifeng Pagoda and the family was reunited to live happily together.

Colours in chinese





Colours video

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



白色

báisè



蓝色

lánsè



橙色

chéngsè



灰色

huīsè



绿色

lǜsè



黄色

huángsè



粉色

fěnsè



紫色

zǐsè



黑色

hēisè



红色

hóngsè



棕色

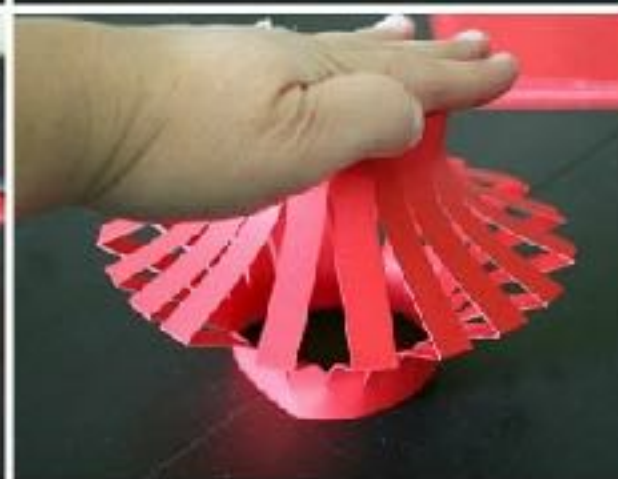
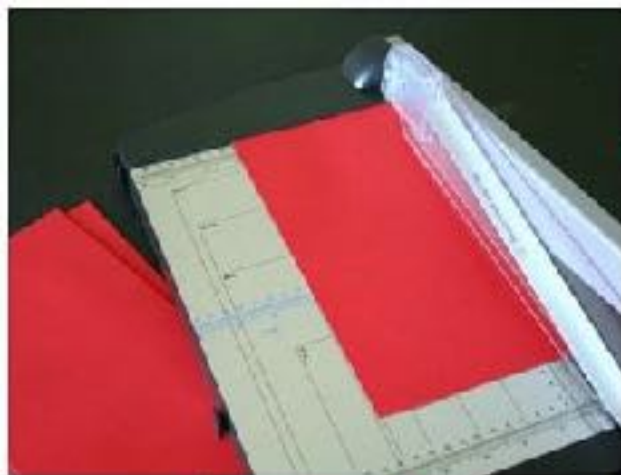
zōngsè

Linguascope e practice



Make a Chinese lantern





Decorate your
lantern and label it
with its colour

