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**BU-MIT China Care
Dumplings Playgroup**

Hello parents! This is a summary of the materials we have introduced today. We wish you to keep this because you are the most important source of information for your children. So we want to equip you with a substantial amount of knowledge on the Chinese Culture, and become a reliable source for your children.

Beijing Opera Brief Description:

Beijing Opera (京剧) is a national treasure of China that is more than 200 years old. It was originated around 1790, during the Qing Dynasty. As a synthesis of acting, singing, mime, dance and acrobatics, Beijing Opera requires its performer to be skillful in multiple areas of performing art. It usually takes a person *more than ten* years of training to become a qualified performer in Beijing Opera!

There are four main roles in Beijing Opera: 生 *Sheng* (male), 旦 *Dan* (female), 净 *Jing* (painted face), and 丑 *Chou* (comic). Each role has its own vocabulary of gesture, walking, and vocal technique.

Facial paintings are representations of the roles of the characters. For example, red is the color of loyalty and bravery; white, of treachery and guile; green, of stubbornness and lack of self-restraint; yellow, of cruelty; black, of integrity. Gold and silver distinguish deities, gods and demons, giving the sense of illusion. There are over one thousand painted facial patterns in Beijing Opera.

The costumes in Beijing Opera are mainly based on fashion of the Ming Dynasty (1368 - 1644). Costumes function specifically to designate roles. Different colors indicate different social status: yellow for the imperial family, red or blue for high nobility, white for old officials, black for men of fierce or aggressive characters.

In summary, Beijing Opera, also known as Peking Opera, is a classical Chinese art form that combines sounds and movements to depict stories based on Chinese history and culture.

Journey to the West Legend:

One of the most popular plays in Beijing Opera is "Havoc In Heaven" (《大闹天宫》), which is a subpart of a greater legend called *Journey to the West* (《西遊記》), written by Wu Cheng'en 吴承恩. Other subparts of the legend that are also popular Beijing Opera plays are "Havoc in the Dragon Palace" (《闹龙宫》 *nào lónggōng*), and "The Iron Fan Princess" (《铁扇公主》 *tiě shàn gōngzhǔ*). *Journey to the West* is honored as one of the four classical novels in Chinese tradition, and contains many elements in Chinese superstition, legends, fables, popular beliefs, and fairytales.

The legend began with the Monkey King who was born from a rock, and lived in the Cave of the Water Curtain on the Mountain of Flowers and Fruit. The Monkey King was highly intelligent, and learned kung-fu and magic tricks from a Taoist master. The Monkey King, also called Sun Wukong (孙悟空 *sūnwùkōng*), was able to transform into 72 different things and travel thousands of miles in one somersault. With his skills, he bullied the Dragon Kings to give him the transformable golden iron bar, which he kept behind his ear!

The Monkey King grew more and more mischievous as time passed. Eventually, he demanded to be called "The Great Sage Equal to Heaven". His defiance angered the Great Emperor of Heaven, a.k.a. the Great Emperor of Jade. The Emperor of Jade sent the Heavenly Army after the Monkey King but they were all no match for him. In the Heaven, the Monkey King ate all the holy wine and even the Peaches of Immortality. With all these magical nourishments, the Monkey King became so powerful that the Emperor of Jade had to seek the Buddha for help to tame the Monkey King. At last, the Buddha trapped the Monkey King within his palm. He then turned his five fingers into mountains and sealed the Monkey King inside them.

Five hundred years later, the Monkey King was given a chance to redeem himself. He was to escort a Tripitaka (a holy man who wished to make a pilgrimage) named Tangzang (唐僧 tángsēng) to the West to retrieve the Buddhist scripture. The Buddha gave Tangzang a golden band to put around the Monkey King's head. If the Monkey King were to become mischievous, Tangzang could mutter a chant which would contract the band and bring the Monkey King under control. Along with them were Pigsy (猪八戒 zhū bajie) and Sandy (沙悟净 shā wù jìng) as well, both were Tangzang's disciples. After 14 years of traveling and surviving through 81 different obstacles on their journey, they successfully accomplished the task. During the journey, each learned a great deal about teamwork, humility, trust, and also about his own strengths and weaknesses. In the end, the Buddha awarded each an immortal life and everlasting happiness.

Chinese Words

Beijing Opera	京剧	jīng jù
National treasure	国粹	guócuì
facial painting	脸谱	liǎnpǔ
costume	服装	fúzhuāng
legend	传说	chuánshuō
Journey to the West	西遊記	xī yóujì
Havoc in Heaven	大闹天宫	dà nàotiāngōng
Havoc in the Dragon Palace	闹龙宫	nàolóngōng
Iron Fan Princess	铁扇公主	tiěshàngōngzhǔ
Cave of the Water Curtain	水帘洞	shuǐliándòng
Mountain of Flowers and Fruit	花果山	huāguǒshān
Monkey King	美猴王	měihóuwáng
Sun Wukong	孙悟空	sūnwùkōng
kung-fu	功夫	gōngfu
magic tricks	魔法	mófǎ
"The Great Sage Equal to Heaven"	齐天大圣	qítiāndàshèng
The Buddha	如来佛祖	rúláifózhǔ
Tangzang	唐僧	tángsēng
Pigsy	猪八戒	zhūbājiè
Sandy	沙悟净	shāwùjìng

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