LESSON NOTES

Upper Beginner S1 #25
A Mysterious Animal in Hong Kong?

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25

TRADITIONAL CHINESE

1. 佢好可愛啊！

2. 你可以抱吓佢。

3. 嘩，點解佢可以跳咁高。

4. 貓本來就可以跳好高。

5. 吓？我以為佢係隻狗嚟㗎。

JYUTPING

1. keoi5 hou2 ho2 oi3 aa3 !

2. nei5 ho2 ji5 pou6 haa5 keoi5.

3. waa1, dim2 gaai2 keoi5 ho2 ji5 tiu3 gam3 gou1.

4. maau1 bun2 loi4 zau6 ho2 ji5 tiu3 hou2 gou1.

5. haa5? ngo5 ji5 wai4 keoi5 hai6 zek3 gau2 lei4 gaa3.

ENGLISH

1. It is so cute!

2. You can hold it.

3. Wow, how come it can jump so high?

4. Cats can jump really high naturally.

5. Huh? I thought it was a dog.

VOCABULARY

Traditional	Romanization	English	Class
可愛	ho2 ngoi3	cute	adj
乖	gwaai1	obedient	adj
善良	sin6 loeng4	kind	adjective
溫柔	wan1 jau4	gentle	adj
可惡	ho2 wu3	wicked	adj
兇惡	hung1 ngok3	savage	adj
抱	pou6	to carry	verb
攬	laam2	to hug	verb

SAMPLE SENTENCES

點解你唔覺得狗仔可愛?
dim2 gaai2 nei5 m4 gok3 dak1 gau2 zai2 ho2 ngoi3 ?

Why do you think puppies are not cute?

我隻貓覺得我好乖。
ngo5 zek3 maau1 gok3 dak1 ngo5 hou2 gwaai1.

My cat thinks I'm obedient.

善良係美德。
sin6 loeng4 hai6 mei5 dak1.

Kindness is a virtue.

佢溫柔咁摸住隻狗。
keoi5 wan1 jau4 gam2 mo2 zyu6 zek3 gau2.

She gently pets the cat.

拐賣兒童好可惡。	個劫匪好兇惡。
gwaai2 maai6 ji4 tung4 hou2 ho2 wu3.	*go3 gip3 fei2 hou2 hung1 ngok3.*
Child trafficking is evil.	The robber is savage.
隻狗太重，抱唔起。	我爺爺唔鍾意被攬。
zek3 gau2 taai3 cung5, pou2 m4 hei2.	*ngo5 je4 je2 m4 zung1 ji3 bei2 laam2.*
The dog is too heavy for me to carry.	My grandpa doesn't like to be hugged.

GRAMMAR

The Focus of this Lesson is 本來
貓本來就可以跳好高
"Cats can jump really high naturally"

We hear our grammar point for this lesson in this line in the dialogue: 貓本來就可以跳好高, *Maau1 bun2 loi4 zau6 ho2 ji5 tiu3 hou2 gou1*, ("Cats can jump really high naturally"). We want to talk about this adverb: 本來 *bun2 loi4* ("naturally"). It has a bunch of meanings. It can mean "naturally" (like in the dialogue), or "originally," or you could be talking about something that used to be in the past. The exact translation really depends on the context. In the dialogue, we are talking about cats, so it's not cats in the past "used to be" able to jump high. It's their fundamental nature. So the interesting thing about this is that you'll hear it's used to describe the natural characteristics of something, things that exist as a result of the state of nature, but also more normally describe actions and situations in the past.

For examples:

1. 佢本來係老師，而家係醫生
   Keoi5 bun2 lai4 hai6 lou5 si1, ji4 gaa1 hai6 ji1 saang1
   "He used to be a teacher, and he's a doctor now."

2. 我本來鍾意狗，而家鍾意貓
   Ngo5 bun2 lai4 zung1 ji3 gau2, ji4 gaa1 zung1 ji3 maau1
   "I used to prefer dogs, but now I prefer cats."

3. 我本來鍾意貓，而家鍾意狗

   Ngo5 bun2 lai4 zung1 ji3 maau1, ji4 gaa1 zung1 ji3 gau2

   "I used to prefer cats, but now I prefer dogs."

4. 貓本來就鍾意食魚

   Maau1 bun2 lai4 zau6 zung1 ji3 sik6 jyu2

   "Cats naturally like to eat fish."

Bonus Point

A common pattern for 本來 (*bun2 lai4*) is 本來就 (*bun2 lai4 zau6*). It's providing even more emphasis to this, meaning it's naturally this way. Like in the sentence above 貓本來就鍾意食魚 ("Cats naturally like to eat fish") or 香港本來係漁村，而家係一個大城市 *Hoeng1 gong2 bun2 lai4 zau6 hai6 jyu4 cyun1, ji4 gaa1 hai6 jat1 go3 daai6 seng4 si5* ("Hong Kong used to be a fishing village, but now it's a big city").

CULTURAL INSIGHT

Where to Exercise Your Pet in Hong Kong

Looking for a good walk for you and your pet? If you have an hour and a half to spare, try starting from the Central MTR and head up the escalator toward mid-levels. Once you reach the top of the escalator, turn left and keep walking until you hit Old Peak Road. If you're exhausted or getting near there, you can end your hike by turning left and finding the Hong Kong Botanical Gardens.

Alternatively, you can turn right and after a few short turns you'll find an upward pass that heads through the forest all the way to The Peak. In our own treks up the hill, we've run into a lot of dogs happily pulling their exhausted owners up the final few steps to the top.