

Numbers

HSK 3 Grammar

Use the examples with their context and limits. Recall a sentence before reading the model. Original teaching additions accompany examples adapted from Chinese Grammar Wiki (AllSet Learning, CC BY-NC-SA); see the course reference provenance.

Approximating with sequential numbers

■ An estimate differs from a sum

- You did not count the visitors exactly but saw roughly five or six.
- 来了五六个人。** – 五六 estimates about five or six people.

■ Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is **Approximating with sequential numbers**. Locate it in the original interlinear examples below.
- Keep the words in their demonstrated positions; the pattern must fit the intended situation as well as the sentence form.

来了五六个人。

lái le wǔ liù ge rén

Word guide: 来 – come; 五六 – five or six; 个 – (measure word); 人 – people.

■ Read examples in context

这儿有十几本书。

zhèr yǒu shí jǐ běn shū

Word guide: 这儿 – here; 有 – have; 十几 – ten-something; 本 – (measure word); 书 – book.

- In the opening example, **来了五六个人。**: 五六 estimates about five or six people.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

■ Know the boundary

- Adjacent-number estimates are not addition: 五六 is not eleven.
- The common estimate 两三个 uses 两. Learn established forms instead of concatenating any pair of numerals.

■ Use the distinction

- 五六 estimates about five or six people.
- Adjacent-number estimates are not addition: 五六 is not eleven. The common estimate 两三个 uses 两. Learn established forms instead of concatenating any pair of numerals.

■ Try it with help closed

You did not count the visitors exactly but saw roughly five or six. Close the examples. Say a Mandarin response, then write it in Chinese. Explain briefly in English what the lesson's pattern adds. Compare with the model, then change one detail and try again.

One possible response: 来了五六个人。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- Adjacent-number estimates are not addition: 五六 is not eleven.
- The common estimate 两三个 uses 两. Learn established forms instead of concatenating any pair of numerals.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

Big numbers: 万 / 亿

■ Convert a large population by groups of four digits

- A city has ten million residents in this invented example.
- 这个城市有一千万人。** – 一千万 equals 1,000 groups of 10,000, or 10,000,000.

■ Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is **Big numbers: 万 / 亿**. Locate it in the original interlinear examples below.
- Keep the words in their demonstrated positions; the pattern must fit the intended situation as well as the sentence form.

这个城市有一千万人。

zhè ge chéng shì yǒu yì qiān wàn rén

Word guide: 这 – this; 个 – (measure word); 城市 – city; 有 – have; 一千万 – ten million; 人 – people.

■ Read examples in context

- In the opening example, **这个城市有一千万人。**: 一千万 equals 1,000 groups of 10,000, or 10,000,000.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

■ Know the boundary

- 万 is 10,000 and 亿 is 100,000,000.
- 一百万 is 1,000,000; read the multiplier and unit together instead of importing English three-digit grouping.

■ Use the distinction

- 一千万 equals 1,000 groups of 10,000, or 10,000,000.
- 万 is 10,000 and 亿 is 100,000,000. 一百万 is 1,000,000; read the multiplier and unit together instead of importing English three-digit grouping.

■ Try it with help closed

A city has ten million residents in this invented example. Close the examples. Say a Mandarin response, then write it in Chinese. Explain briefly in English what the lesson’s pattern adds. Compare with the model, then change one detail and try again.

One possible response: 这个城市有一千万人。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- 万 is 10,000 and 亿 is 100,000,000.
- 一百万 is 1,000,000; read the multiplier and unit together instead of importing English three-digit grouping.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

Times to the minute (点 ... 分)

■ A meeting starts halfway through the hour

- A meeting begins at 2:30 rather than lasting for half an hour.
- 会议两点半开始。 – 两点半 names the clock time 2:30.

■ Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is **Times to the minute (点 ... 分)**. Locate it in the original interlinear examples below.
- Keep the words in their demonstrated positions; the pattern must fit the intended situation as well as the sentence form.

现在三点十五分。

xiàn zài sān diǎn shí wǔ fēn

Word guide: 现在 – now; 三点 – three o’clock; 十五分 – fifteen minutes.

■ Read examples in context

- In the opening example, 会议两点半开始。: 两点半 names the clock time 2:30.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

■ Know the boundary

- 半 after 点 means half past the hour.
- 半个小时 is a duration of thirty minutes; 三点十五分 is 3:15. Do not confuse a clock time with elapsed time.

■ Use the distinction

- 两点半 names the clock time 2:30.
- 半 after 点 means half past the hour. 半个小时 is a duration of thirty minutes; 三点十五分 is 3:15. Do not confuse a clock time with elapsed time.

■ Try it with help closed

A meeting begins at 2:30 rather than lasting for half an hour. Close the examples. Say a Mandarin response, then write it in Chinese. Explain briefly in English what the lesson’s pattern adds. Compare with the model, then change one detail and try again.

One possible response: 会议两点半开始。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- 半 after 点 means half past the hour.
- 半个小时 is a duration of thirty minutes; 三点十五分 is 3:15. Do not confuse a clock time with elapsed time.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

Telling the hour (Number + 点)

■ Read the hour in a natural spoken form

- You tell a friend that class finishes at three o’clock.
- 三点下课。 – 三点 gives the clock hour, not the duration of class.

■ Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is **Telling the hour (Number + 点)**. Locate it in the original interlinear examples below.
- Keep the words in their demonstrated positions; the pattern must fit the intended situation as well as the sentence form.

我三点下课。

wǒ sān diǎn xià kè

Word guide: 我 – I; 三点 – three o’clock; 下课 – finish class.

■ Read examples in context

现在两点。

xiàn zài liǎng diǎn

Word guide: 现在 – now; 两点 – two o’clock.

- In the opening example, 三点下课。: 三点 gives the clock hour, not the duration of class.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

■ Know the boundary

- Use 两点 as the usual spoken form for two o’clock and 三点钟 as a full form for three.
- Numbers read as digits in codes are a different task from ordinary clock speech.

■ Use the distinction

- 三点 gives the clock hour, not the duration of class.
- Use 两点 as the usual spoken form for two o’clock and 三点钟 as a full form for three. Numbers read as digits in codes are a different task from ordinary clock speech.

■ Try it with help closed

You tell a friend that class finishes at three o’clock. Close the examples. Say a Mandarin response, then write it in Chinese. Explain briefly in English what the lesson’s pattern adds. Compare with the model, then change one detail and try again.

One possible response: 三点下课。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- Use 两点 as the usual spoken form for two o’clock and 三点钟 as a full form for three.
- Numbers read as digits in codes are a different task from ordinary clock speech.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.