

BÓYÌ 博弈 · WEEK 2

Wéi Wèi jiù Zhào

围魏救赵

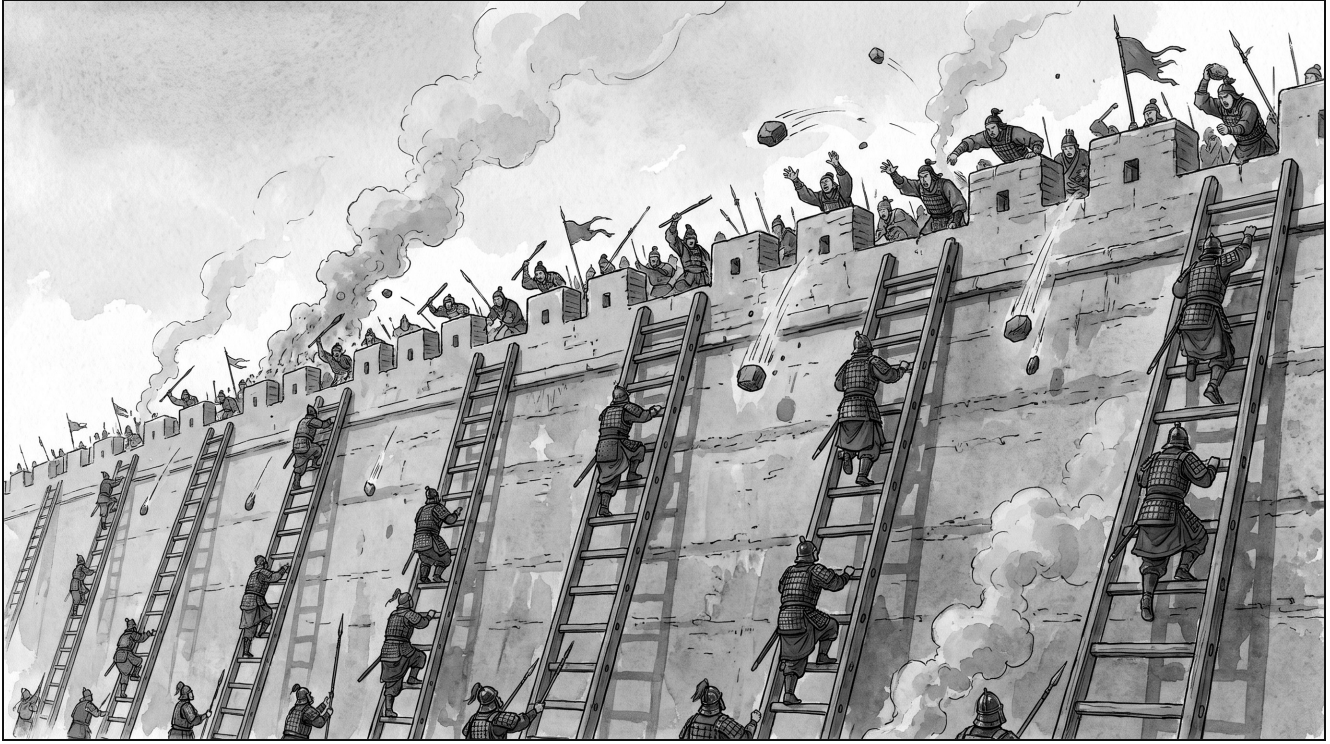
Besiege Wei to rescue Zhao.

You don't win by rushing into the fight. You win by making the fight happen somewhere else. This week you'll learn to write four characters: 围, 魏, 救, 赵.

Stratagem No. 2 of 36 · one story, one lesson, four characters.

本周学：围魏救赵 · 练字：围、魏、救、赵

ONE WALLED CITY, TWO ARMIES



Wei's best army closes in on Zhao's capital

In 354 BC, the kingdom of Wei sent its best army to surround Handan, the capital of Zhao.

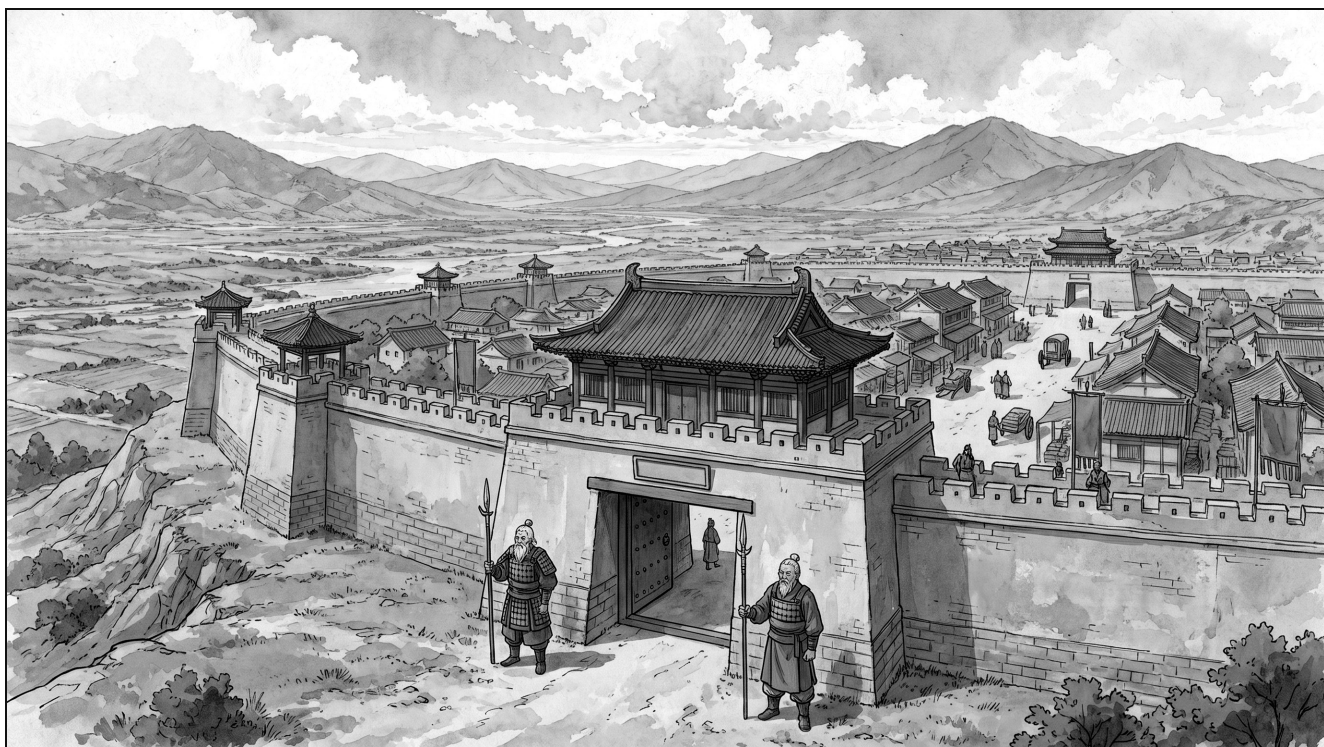
The general was Pang Juan. He had won before, and everyone knew it.

Handan could not hold out for long. Zhao sent messengers to Qi, and begged for help.

Qi sent General Tian Ji — and with him, a strategist named Sun Bin.

《史记》卷六十五《孙子吴起列传》

THE CITY NOBODY EXPECTED



Everyone expected Qi at Handan. Qi went to Daliang.

Tian Ji said: let's march straight to Handan and fight them head-on. That is what anyone would do.

Sun Bin said no. We would march for days. By the time we arrive, our men are exhausted, and tired soldiers lose to fresh ones.

Wei's best soldiers are all at Handan. Their own capital, Daliang, is nearly empty. So we go to Daliang.

Pang Juan heard Daliang was in danger. He had no choice: he turned back. His army raced home day and night — and at Guiling, Qi was waiting, rested and ready. Wei was crushed, and the siege of Handan ended without a single fight there.

《史记》卷六十五《孙子吴起列传》

WHY IT WORKED

Race	Who vs who	中文·pinyin	Result
What they saw	The army marching on Handan	邯郸 Hán dān	Everyone looked there
What they did	They went for Daliang instead	大梁 Dà liáng	Wei had to turn back
What was real	Wei's home was empty	必救 bì jiù	They had no choice

Sun Bin never went to Handan. He went where Wei had to come back. 攻其必救 gōng qí bì jiù

THE ORIGINAL LINES

《三十六计·第二计 围魏救赵》

The Thirty-Six Stratagems, No. 2 — "Besiege Wei to rescue Zhao"

1

gòng dí bù rú fēn dí

共敌不如分敌，

One strong enemy is harder than two weak ones.

2

dí yáng bù rú dí yīn

敌阳不如敌阴。

Hit what they show you, and you lose. Hit what they hide, and they break.

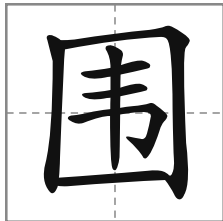
Two lines, nothing more. 避实击虚 and 攻其必救 come from Sun Tzu's Art of War, not from this book's text — they are how people explain this stratagem, not what it says.

原文只有这两句。「避实击虚」「攻其必救」出自《孙子兵法》，不是这一计的原文，是后人用来解释它的说法。

PRACTICE · 围 WÉI · 魏 WÈI

Follow the numbers. Write each stroke in order.

先描一遍分解格，再在田字格里写 5 遍。

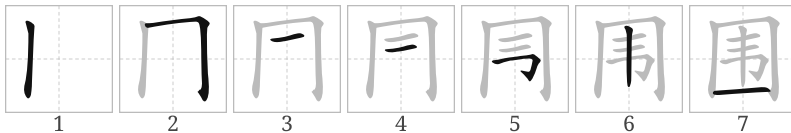


wéi

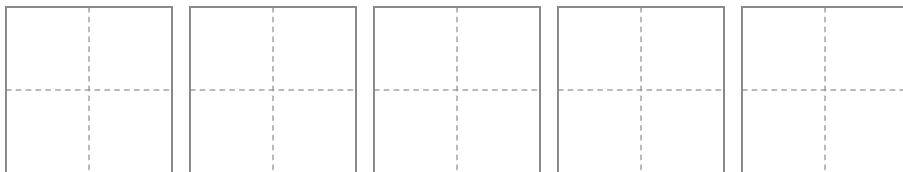
to surround; to enclose

7 strokes

STROKE ORDER



YOUR TURN

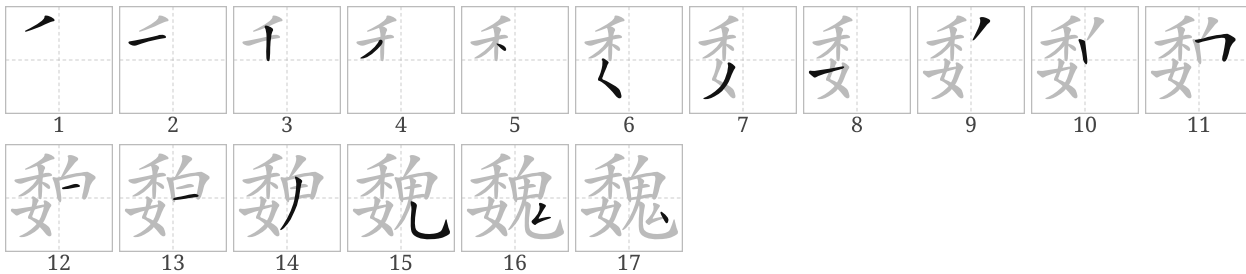


Wèi

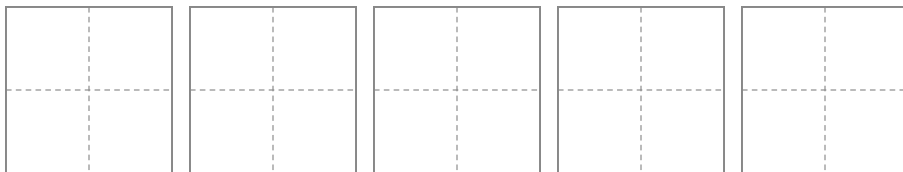
the kingdom of Wei

17 strokes

STROKE ORDER



YOUR TURN



PRACTICE · 救 JIÙ · 赵 ZHÀO

Same order again. Write slowly, and say the sound out loud.

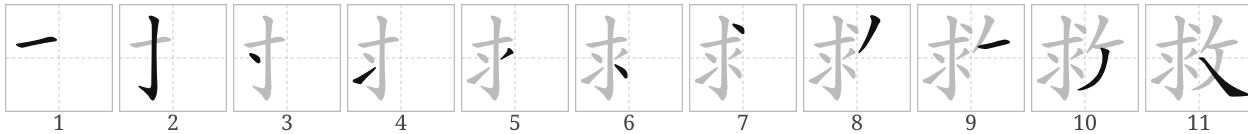


jiù

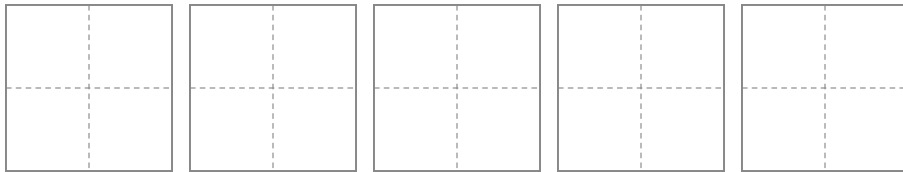
to rescue; to save

11 strokes

STROKE ORDER



YOUR TURN

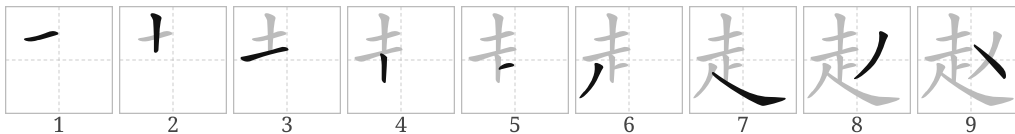


Zhào

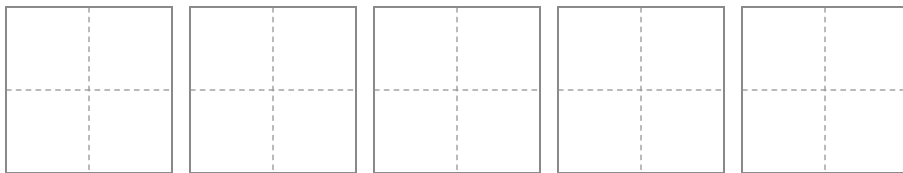
the kingdom of Zhao

9 strokes

STROKE ORDER



YOUR TURN



PRACTICE · 围魏救赵 WÉI WÈI JIÙ ZHÀO

Trace the first row, then write the whole phrase four times. Say it out loud each time.

wéi	Wèi	jiù	Zhào
围	魏	救	赵

围魏救赵 · Besiege Wei to rescue Zhao.

THREE MORE WORDS

wéi gōng

1 围攻

to surround and attack.

tā men wéi gōng le nà zuò chéng

他们围攻了那座城。

They laid siege to that city.

This is the 围 in 围魏救赵.

qiú jiù

2 求救

to ask for help; to call for rescue.

Zhào guó xiàng Qí guó qiú jiù

赵国向齐国求救。

Zhao asked Qi for help.

Zhao called for help. Qi did not come running — it went to Daliang.

bì jiù

3 必救

something they have to save.

Dà liáng shì Wèi guó bì jiù de dì fāng

大梁是魏国必救的地方。

Daliang was the place Wei had to save.

Find the one thing they must protect. That's the real target.

SPOT IT · STOP IT 识破 · 防住

Every meeting, the same coworker picks apart your work. You defend it, line by line. He finds another line. Everyone else looks at their laptop. Nothing you say changes anything, because the argument was never about the slide.

虚 · xū <i>The appearance</i> tā tiāo nǐ de máo bìng 他挑你的毛病 <i>He keeps pointing at your work</i> 	实 · shí <i>The reality</i> tā bù fàng xīn zhè jiàn shì 他不放心这件事 <i>He doesn't trust where this is going</i>
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This week, when someone attacks your work, ask one question first: what are they actually afraid of? Answer that, and the argument usually ends by itself.

这周有人挑你毛病时，先问一句：他真正担心的是什么？回答那个，架往往自己就散了。Zhè zhōu yǒu rén tiāo nǐ máo bìng shí, xiān wèn yí jù: tā zhēn zhèng dān xīn de shì shén me? Huí dá nà ge, jià wǎng wǎng zì jǐ jiù sàn le.

SEVEN DAYS, SEVEN QUESTIONS

Day 1 Name one argument you keep having that never gets resolved. 吵架 chǎo jià

Day 2 What is that argument supposedly about? What is it really about? 表面 biǎo miàn

Day 3 In that situation, what does the other person have to protect? 必救 bì jiù

Day 4 If you stopped defending and asked about that instead, what would change? 换战场 huàn zhàn chǎng

Day 5 Where are you pushing hardest at a wall that doesn't need to move? 用力 yòng lì

Day 6 What is the Daliang in your own week — the one thing that decides everything else? 大梁 dà liáng

Day 7 Is changing the battlefield here wisdom, or are you avoiding something? Be honest. 逃避 táo bì

WEEK 2 REVIEW



The one-page summary of this week. 本周一图总结。

1. In one sentence: why did Sun Bin go to Daliang instead of Handan?
2. What does 围魏救赵 mean, in your own words?
3. Which of this week's four characters can you write now without looking: 围, 魏, 救, or 赵?
4. Think of one fight you keep losing. What is its Daliang?

Did anyone change the battlefield on you this week — and did you notice in time?

这周有没有人换了战场跟你打？你及时看出来了吗？

Zhè zhōu yǒu méi yǒu rén huàn le zhàn chǎng gēn nǐ dǎ? Nǐ jí shí kàn chū lái le ma?