

## Unit 1

### Reading B

#### Nüwa Creates People 《女娲造人》

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1 Nüwa is briefly mentioned in several ancient Chinese texts, A Classic of History (8th century BC), A Classic of Mountains and Seas (3rd century BC), and Questions of Heaven (4th century BC).

女娲在几部中国古代文献中被简要提及，如《尚书》（公元前 8 世纪）、《山海经》（公元前 3 世纪）和《天问》（公元前 4 世纪）。

2 In addition, many images of Nüwa have been uncovered on ancient Chinese bronze sculptures and paintings. Like many of the early Chinese gods, Nüwa was half animal, half divine. Most often, Nüwa had the face and arms of a human but the body of a snake or dragon. She could change her shape at will. Modern Chinese books prefer to show her as a beautiful woman.

此外，在中国古代的青铜器雕塑和绘画中发现了许多女娲的形象。和许多中国早期的神祇一样，女娲半人半兽，具有神性。通常情况下，女娲有着人的脸和手臂，但身体是蛇或龙。她可以随意改变自己的形态。现代的中文书籍中更倾向于将她描绘为一位美丽的女子。

3 It appeared that women in China had no social standing of their own. However, in their roles as mothers and wives, they were extremely powerful. Since women generally outlived their husbands, they often asserted themselves and ran the household after their spouses' death. Even in politics, several women (empresses) became extremely powerful after the death of their husbands, the emperors.

在中国，女性似乎没有自己的社会地位。然而，作为母亲和妻子，她们却极具影响力。由于女性通常比丈夫长寿，所以在丈夫去世后，她们经常会展现出自己的能力并管理家庭。即使在政治领域，有几位女性（皇后）在她们的丈夫——皇帝去世后变得极为强大。

4 Although most gods were male, Nüwa is a very powerful female goddess in early mythology. She creates mankind and is responsible for repairing the heavens.

虽然大多数神祇都是男性，但女娲在早期神话中是一位非常强大的女神。她创造了人类，并负责修补天空。

5 The world was indeed a sparkling jewel. Sturdy pine trees dotted the mountains, and weeping willows lined the streams. Apple, quince, and plum blossoms burst into bloom and later yielded ripe, heavy fruit. Birds flitted about in the azure sky, leaving their black, crimson, and iridescent green feathers drifting in the wind. Silverfish and carp splashed gleefully in the waterways. Fierce beasts like tigers and gentle creatures like deer roamed with equal abandon across the rocky hills.

这个世界确实是一颗璀璨的宝石。挺拔的松树点缀着山峦，垂柳排列在溪流边。苹果树、榲桲树和李树繁花盛开，之后结出成熟饱满的果实。鸟儿在湛蓝的天空中飞来飞去，它们黑色、深红色和彩虹色的绿色羽毛在风中飘荡。银鱼和鲤鱼在水道中欢快地跳跃。凶猛的野兽如老虎和温顺的动物如鹿在多石的山上同样自由自在地漫步。

6 Nüwa, a goddess, stumbled accidentally upon this vibrant world during her travels. The earth was humming and teeming with life. She marveled at its many wondrous creatures. Everywhere she looked, she found a creature more marvelous than the one before. She saw every type of fur and fin, feather and scale, horn, hoof, and stinger. Creatures lumbered, crawled, and slithered upon the earth. They jumped, darted, and roiled in the sea. Scented flowers like jasmine, hyacinth, and narcissus wrapped the entire world in their warm, strong perfume.

女娲，一位女神，在旅行中偶然踏入了这个充满生机勃勃的世界。大地生机勃勃，充满了生命的气息。她对这里众多奇妙的生物感到惊叹。无论她看向哪里，都能发现一个比前一个更加奇妙的生物。她看到了各种毛皮、鱼鳍、羽毛和鳞片，角、蹄和刺。生物们在大地上笨拙地行走、爬行和滑行。它们在海洋中跳跃、疾驰和翻滚。像茉莉、风信子和水仙这样芳香的花朵用它们温暖而浓郁的香气包裹着整个世界。

7 But as she explored its niches and crannies, Nüwa began to feel strangely dissatisfied with the budding world. The goddess found it to be enchanting, but empty. It felt lonely to Nüwa, who sat by a river to ponder her feelings. She gazed at her reflection in the water, and suddenly she knew what was missing: She wanted the world to be filled with thinking, laughing creatures like herself. But when she explored the world's corners and crevices, Nüwa began to feel a strange dissatisfaction with the budding world. The goddess found it to be enchanting, but empty. It felt lonely to Nüwa, who sat by a river to ponder her feelings. She gazed at her reflection in the water, and suddenly she knew what was missing: She wanted the world to be filled with thinking, laughing creatures like herself. But when she explored the world's corners and crevices, Nüwa began to feel a strange dissatisfaction with the budding world. The goddess found it to be enchanting, but empty. It felt lonely to Nüwa, who sat by a river to ponder her feelings. She gazed at her reflection in the water, and suddenly she knew what was missing: She wanted the world to be filled with thinking, laughing creatures like herself.

8 The river stretched out before her, its waves slapping the shore. The cloudy green waters left a rim of thick yellow earth along its banks. Nüwa felt its slippery texture with her fingertips and scooped out a ball of clay. The cool, sticky earth deposited by the river was perfect for her task, and she rolled the damp clay into a doll, giving it a head, shoulders, chest, and arms like her own. For the doll's lower body, she hesitated. Nüwa considered giving it scales and claws like a lizard, or fins and tails like a fish. Both shapes were quite useful, since the goddess frequently changed the shape of her own lower body to be able to get around the oceans and the heavens quickly. Finally, she decided to attach legs to the new creature so it could both walk on land and paddle about in the sea.

河流在她面前伸展，波浪拍打着岸边。浑浊的绿色河水在河岸留下一圈厚厚的黄色泥土。女娲用指尖感受着泥土滑溜溜的质地，挖出一团黏土。河边沉淀的凉凉的、黏黏的泥土非常适合她的任务，她把潮湿的黏土揉成一个玩偶，给它一个像自己一样的头、肩膀、胸部和手臂。对于玩偶的下半身，她犹豫了。女娲考虑给它像蜥蜴一样的鳞片和爪子，或者像鱼一样的鳍和尾巴。这两种形状都很有用，因为女神经常改变自己下半身的形状，以便能够快速穿梭于海洋和天空之间。最后，她决定给这个新生物加上腿，这样它既可以在陆地上行走，也可以在海里划水。

9 From the many shades of yellow earth, Nüwa made tall dolls and short dolls. She made thin dolls and fat dolls. She made curly-haired dolls and straight-haired dolls. She made dolls with eyes as round and large as cherries, some with eyes as long and narrow as a mosquito's wing. She made some with eyes so dark they looked like the midnight sky, others so light they looked like liquid honey. Each creature was different, so the goddess could recognize her creations. Then, as she

breathed on each doll, it sprang to life, giggling and hopping about.

女娲用许多不同颜色的黄土，做出高的玩偶和矮的玩偶。她做出瘦的玩偶和胖的玩偶。她做出卷发的玩偶和直发的玩偶。她做出眼睛像樱桃一样又圆又大的玩偶，也做出眼睛像蚊子翅膀一样又长又窄的玩偶。她做出一些眼睛黑得像午夜天空的玩偶，还有一些眼睛亮得像液态蜂蜜的玩偶。每个生物都不一样，这样女神就能认出她的创造物。然后，当她对着每个玩偶吹气时，它们就活了过来，咯咯笑着，蹦蹦跳跳。

10 Nüwa was so delighted with her handiwork that she wanted to make more. But she needed a quicker method. Along the riverbanks, slender reeds arched their graceful stems over the water. Nüwa rolled up her sleeves, cut a reed, and dipped it into the river mud like a spoon. Expertly, she flicked her wrist and dropped blobs of mud on the ground. When they dried, she breathed a huge puff of air into each blob, and instantly they became round, smiling creatures. The cheerful laughter of her creatures filled the goddess with happiness and pride.

女娲对自己的杰作非常满意，她想创造更多。但她需要一种更快的方法。在河岸边，细长的芦苇将它们优美的茎弯向水面。女娲卷起袖子，砍下一根芦苇，像用勺子一样将它浸入河泥中。她熟练地甩了一下手腕，把一团团泥甩到地上。等泥团干了，她对着每个泥团吹一大口气，它们立刻变成了圆滚滚、笑嘻嘻的生物。她创造的生物们欢快的笑声让女神充满了幸福和自豪。

11 However, Nüwa was tired. As much as she loved her new creations, she knew she could not watch over these humans every second. What would happen to these creatures when they grew old and died? Nüwa did not relish making repairs, nor did she wish to repeat the tiring task of making new people. She thought and thought. How could these creatures reproduce without her?

然而，女娲很疲惫。尽管她很爱自己的新创造物，但她知道自己不能每时每刻都照看着这些人类。当这些生物变老死去时，会发生什么呢？女娲不喜欢进行修补，也不想重复创造新人这一累人的任务。她想了又想。这些生物如何能在没有她的情况下进行繁衍呢？

12 With a twist and a poke, she made some of the clay creatures male and some of them female. Then she gathered up all the noisy creatures who were slipping and falling in the mud. In the hubbub, she began to deliver her most important instructions. As Nüwa spoke, the clamor died down to a silent hush. The humans listened solemnly to her words. She spoke of the importance of marriage and a couple's obligations to each other. She told them how to make children and how to raise them. She wished them a long and joyful existence on their earth. As the goddess left, she expressed her fervent hope that they would make new people and live happily without her. Then she ascended to the sky seated in a thundering chariot pulled by six winged dragons.

她扭一扭、戳一戳，把一些黏土生物做成男性，一些做成女性。然后，她把所有在泥里滑来滑去、跌跌撞撞的吵闹生物聚集起来。在一片喧闹中，她开始传达最重要的指令。随着女娲开口说话，喧闹声渐渐平息，变得鸦雀无声。人类严肃地听着她的话。她谈到了婚姻的重要性以及夫妻对彼此的义务。她告诉他们如何生孩子以及如何养育孩子。她祝愿他们在这片大地上拥有长久而快乐的生活。当女神离开时，她表达了热切的希望，希望他们能创造新的人类，在没有她的情况下幸福地生活。然后，她坐着由六条有翼巨龙拉着的隆隆作响的战车升上天空。

13 To this day, people continue to marry and have children who brighten the world with their

joyous laughter, just as the dancing mud dolls did in the days of Nüwa.

直到今天，人们仍然结婚生子，他们用欢快的笑声照亮这个世界，就像女娲时代那些蹦蹦跳跳的泥娃娃一样。