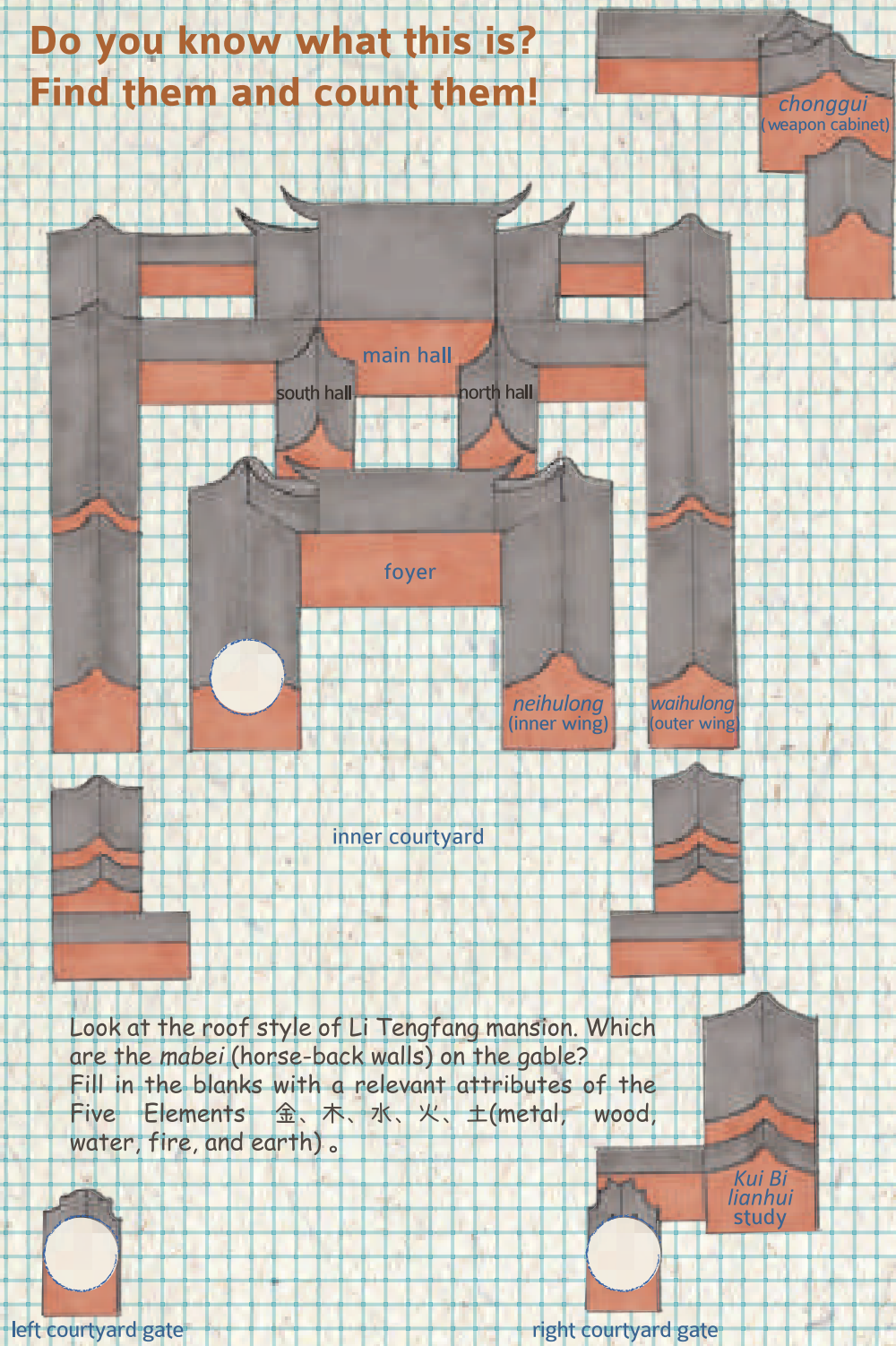


Do you know what this is?
Find them and count them!



Look at the roof style of Li Tengfang mansion. Which are the mabei (horse-back walls) on the gable? Fill in the blanks with a relevant attributes of the Five Elements 金、木、水、火、土(metal, wood, water, fire, and earth)。

National monument

Li Tengfang Mansion

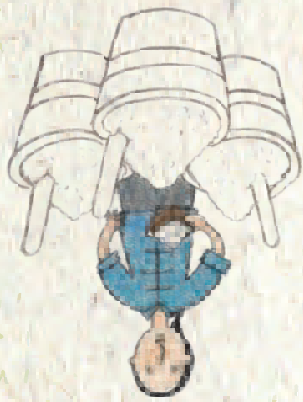
*** tour guide for children ***



In the early days, there were many bandits or pirates looting the boats in Dakekan stream. Only boats with the "Li Jinxing" banners would be let off. This was due to Li family's good hearts and high reputation for helping the poor when needed.

At that time within the Tamsui river watershed, there was a saying, "upstream Li Bingsheng and downstream Li Taiping", meaning both Li families from Daxi and Tamsui are generous with good deeds.

Upstream Li Bingsheng and downstream Li Taiping



The Li family ran a rice business and enjoyed charity works such as providing meals or packing more rice for poor customers.

The boy Li Bingsheng helped his mother bring cattle to plow the fields, and vender pork in the neighborhood. He even used a conch shell horn to make a unique sound attracting the crowd.



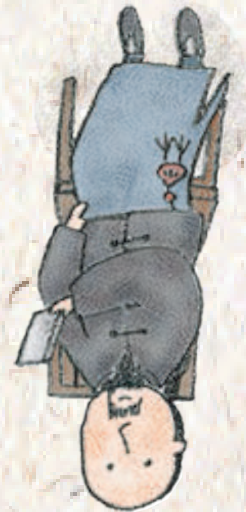
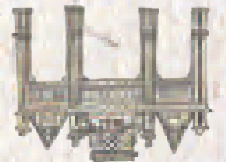
Li Tengfang was Li Bingsheng's third son, originally named Li Youqing. The name "Tengfang" is the official seal bestowed by the emperor when Li passed the highest imperial examination at the provincial level and became a *juren* (successful candidate). Li Tengfang earned a *xiuca* (certified student) title when he was 43 years old in 1856 (the sixth year of Xianfeng reign), a *gongsheng* (tribute scholar) title in 1859 (the ninth year of Xianfeng reign), and finally took the 21st place of *juren* degree when he was 52 in 1865 (the fourth year of Tongzhi reign). Therefore the two flagpole pedestals on the outer courtyard are the celebration of Li's achievement of a *juren* title.

The construction of the Li's mansion started in 1860 (the tenth year of Xianfeng reign) and completed in 1864 (the third year of Tongzhi reign). It is the only designated national monument in Taoyuan City.

Li Tengfang and the mansion

During the Qing dynasty, Li Tengfang's ancestor Li Xianzhua started cultivation in Yuemei area. Since Li Xianzhua passed away at young age, his wife Liao Cou raised three sons by herself with difficulties. Li Tengfang's father Li Bingsheng, Li Xianzhua's eldest son and head of the Li family, ran a successful rice business between Monga and Tamsui with excellent use of shipping facilities of Dakekan stream. The Li family's business was booming and they started a family store called "Li Jinxing" on the Daxi old street.

History of Li Jinxing





The most important ritual of the Three Dedications Ceremony, reading the prayer, was being held in the atrium of Li's mansion. It was performed by three devotees and their accomplices.

At annual autumn harvest, the Li family used to prepare whole pigs and whole lambs for sacrifices.

These sacrifices are now replaced by pigs and lambs made by vermicelli. After the ritual, sharing pigs and sharing lambs symbolized sharing the family's blessings for the descendants.



The Three Dedications Ceremony of Li Jinxing family

The Li family always performs family rituals on each January the first of lunar calendar, vernal equinox and autumnal equinox at the Li Tengfang mansion at Yuemei. It is said that, after Li Tengfang acquired a *juren* title, the Li family began the Three Dedications Ceremony as the ancestor worships for glorifying the family status.

This officially bestowed ceremony continues to this day. The descendants of the family would return home for the rituals. The Three Dedications Ceremony is organized by the Li's Worshipping Public Sector according to the custom, etiquette, ritual, and code, which inherits and manifests the past glory and importance of Li family in Daxi.

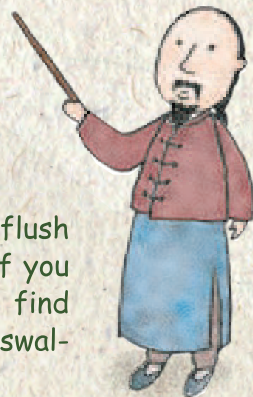
The Three Dedications Ceremony is performed three times a year, and the first one is held on January the first of lunar calendar, which is the death day of Liao Cou (posthumously titled Yude), wife of Li Xianzhua, who was among the first generation for cultivation in Yuemei area. This Three Dedications Ceremony is to commemorate her contribution to the family.



Look up!

The roof of Li Tengfang mansion

The roof of Li's mansion is a two-sloped flush gable, most common in northern Taiwan. If you observe the building carefully, you would find two types of ridges, namely "*yanwei*" (swallow-tailed) and "*mabei*" (horseback).



yanwei (swallow-tailed)

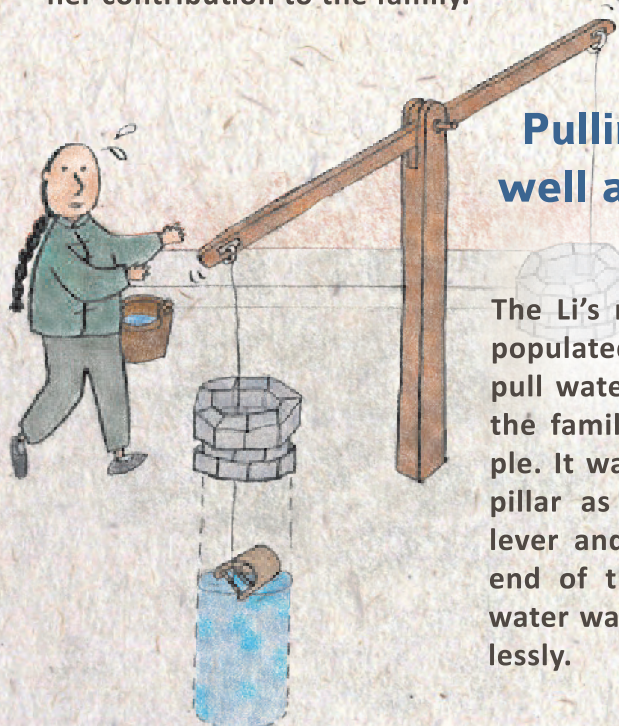
The *yanwei* ridge is a special feature of *juren's* house, which shapes like a swallow's tail. Most halls, foyers, and side wings have "*yanwei*" ridges. The two sets of *yanwei* ridges at the main hall have a more curvy and powerful arc. Those at the foyer are less curvy. Those at the right and left wings are shorter and wider. Have you noticed them?



mabei (horseback)

Except for the main hall, foyer, north and south halls in Li's mansion, all the other buildings have *mabei* ridges which share identical construction and slope but only variate on the "gables".

The *mabei* ridges have five attributes: metal, wood, water, fire, and earth. According to *fengshui* literature, these represent for "metal in circular shape, wood in straight shape, water in curvy shape, fire in angular shape, and earth in square shape".



Pulling water from the well at the Li's mansion

The Li's mansion used to be highly populated in early days. In order to pull water efficiently from the well, the family applied the lever principle. It was done by using a wooden pillar as the fulcrum beneath the lever and hanging a bucket at one end of the lever. As a result, the water was pulled quickly and effortlessly.

