

1。 人 之 初， 性 本 善。
rén zhī chū xìng běn shàn
(Man's beginning, nature fundamentally good.)

At birth, everyone is morally good.

2。 性 相 近， 習 相 遠。
xìng xiāng jìn xí xiāng yuǎn
(Nature each other near, practice each other far.)

Initially, their characters are very similar; as time goes on, their characters become different.

3。 苟 不 教， 性 乃 遷。
gǒu bù jiào xìng nǎi qiān
(Negligently not taught, character therefore changes.)

Lack of proper teaching makes peoples' characters become bad.

4。 教 之 道， 貴 以 專。
jiào zhī dào guì yì zhuān
(Teaching's way, valuable take special.)

The proper way to teach is with the utmost thoroughness.

5。 昔 孟 母， 擇 鄰 處。
xí mèng mǔ zé lín chù
(Formerly, Mencius' mother chose neighbor place.)

The thoroughness extends even to where a family lives. +

6。 子 不 學， 斷 機 杼。
zǐ bù xué duàn jī zhù
(Child not study, break machine shuttle.)

Learning without thoroughness is like trying to weave with a broken thread. +

7。 竇 燕 山， 有 義 方。
dòu yàn shān yǒu yì fāng
(Dou Swallow Mountain had correct way.)

A man named Dou from the Swallow Mountain knew the right way to teach. +

8。 教 五 子， 名 俱 揚。
jiào wǔ zǐ míng jù yáng
(Taught five sons, reputation of all raised.)

He raised five sons and each of them increased the family's reputation.

9。 養 不 教， 父 之 過。
yǎng bù jiào fù zhī guò
(foster, not teach, father's mistake)

It's not enough for a father to provide materially, he must also teach his children.

10。 教 不 嚴， 師 之 惰。
jiào bù yán shī zhī duò
(teach not severely, teacher's laziness)

A teacher who is not strict is lazy.

11。 子 不 學， 非 所 宜。
zǐ bù xué fēi suǒ yí
(child not study, not therefore proper)

It is not right if a child does not learn. +

12。 幼 不 學， 老 何 爲。
yòu bù xué lǎo hé wéi
(young not learn, old act how)

If the young do not learn, what will happen to them when they are old?

13。 玉 不 琢， 不 成 器。
yù bù zhuó bù chéng qì
(jade not carved, not become useful)

In its natural state, jade is of no use.

14。 人 不 學， 不 知 義。
rén bù xué bù zhī yì
(people not study, not know righteousness)

Someone who has not learned will not know how to live properly.

15。 爲 人 子， 方 少 時。
wéi rén zǐ fāng shǎo shí
(being human child, {at the time when} young time)

While young, one should . . .

16。 親 師 友， 習 禮 儀。
qīn shī yǒu xí lǐ yí
(intimate master friends, {become familiar with} etiquette duty)

. . . form close friendships, become engaged with teachers, and learn the proper way to behave in all respects.

17. 香 九 齡， 能 溫 席。

xiāng jiǔ líng néng wēn xí

(Xiang, nine years old, could warm mat)

Nine-year old Xiang knew how to perform household duties.

18. 孝 于 親， 所 當 執。

xiào yú qīn suǒ dāng zhí

(filial piety towards parents, therefore should carry out)

Children should be very filial towards their parents.

19. 融 四 歲， 能 讓 梨。

róng sì suì néng ràng lí

(Rong, age four, could offer pear)

Four-year old Rong gave the best pears to his family.

20. 弟 于 長， 宜 先 知。

dì yú zhǎng yí xiān zhī

(younger towards elder, should first know)

One of the first things to know is the proper way for younger people to relate to older people.

21. 首 孝 弟， 次 見 聞。

shǒu xiào dì cì jiàn wén

(first, filial piety, brother, next, see, hear)

The very first thing to learn is filial duty and fraternal love, then learn other things.

22. 知 某 數， 識 某 文。

zhī mǒu shù shì mǒu wén

(know certain numbers, know certain characters)

Learn to count, learn to read.

23. 一 而 十， 十 而 百。

yí ér shí shí ér bǎi

(one to ten, ten to one hundred)

The numbers go from one to ten, from ten to one hundred, . . .

24. 百 而 千， 千 而 萬。

bǎi ér qiān qiān ér wàn

(one hundred to a thousand, a thousand to ten thousand)

. . . from one hundred to a thousand, from a thousand to ten thousand.

25. 三 才 者，天 地 人。

sān cái zhě tiān dì rén

(three forces these: heaven, earth, man)

The Three Fundamental Forces are Heaven, Earth, and Man.

26. 三 光 者，日 月 星。

sān guāng zhě rì yuè xīng

(three bright these: sun, moon, stars)

The Three Bright Things are the sun, the moon, and the stars.

27. 三 綱 者，君 臣 義。

sān gāng zhě jūn chén yì

(three principles these: sovereign, subject, duty)

The Three Basic Principles are: the duty between sovereign and subject, . . .

28. 父 子 親，夫 婦 順。

fù zǐ qīn fū fù shùn

(father, son, love; husband, wife, harmony)

. . . the love between father and son, and the harmony between man and wife.

29. 曰 春 夏，曰 秋 冬。

yuē chūn xià yuē qiū dōng

(say spring, summer; say fall, winter)

We speak of four periods: spring, summer, fall, and winter; . . .

30. 此 四 時，運 不 窮。

cǐ sì shí yùn bù qióng

(these four seasons move not end)

. . . these four seasons alternate endlessly.

31. 曰 南 北，曰 西 東。

yuē nán běi yuē xī dōng

(say south, north, say west, east)

We speak of north, south, east and west; . . .

32. 此 四 方，應 乎 中。

cǐ sì fāng yìng hū zhōng

(these four directions respond to middle)

. . . these four directions define the center.

33。 曰 水 火， 木 金 土。
yuē shuǐ huǒ mù jīn tǔ
(say water, fire, say metal, earth)

We speak of water, fire, wood, metal, and earth, . . .

34。 此 五 行， 本 乎 數。
cǐ wǔ xíng běn hū shù
(these five do basis in number)

. . . these five elements have their origin in number.

35。 曰 仁 義， 禮 智 信。
yuē rén yì lǐ zhì xìn
(say benevolence, duty, propriety, wisdom, being true)

We speak of five things: benevolence, duty, propriety, wisdom and being true; . . .

36。 此 五 常， 不 容 紊。
cǐ wǔ cháng bù róng wèn
(these five virtues not tolerate confusion)

. . . these five virtues must not be compromised.

37。 稻 粱 菽， 麥 黍 稷。
dào liáng shú mài shǔ jì
(rice, fine millet, beans, wheat, broomcorn millet, millet)

Rice, fine millet, beans, wheat, broomcorn millet, and millet, . . .

38。 此 六 谷， 人 所 食。
cǐ liù gǔ rén suǒ shí
(these five grains people therefore eat)

. . . these five grains are the ones people eat.

39。 馬 牛 羊， 雞 犬 豕。
mǎ niú yáng jī quǎn shǐ
(horse, ox, sheep, chicken, dog, pig)

Horse, ox, sheep, chicken, dog, pig, . . .

40。 此 六 畜， 人 所 飼。
cǐ liù chù rén suǒ sì
(these five livestock people therefore raise)

. . . these five animals are the ones people raise.

41。 曰 喜 怒， 曰 哀 懼。
yuē xǐ nù yuē āi jù
(say happiness, anger, say grief, fear)

We speak of happiness, anger, grief, fear, . . .

42。 愛 惡 欲， 七 情 具。
ài wù yù qī qíng jù
(love, hatred, desire; seven emotions have)

. . . love, hatred, and desire; these are the seven emotions.

43。 匏 土 革， 木 石 金。
pào tǔ gé mù shí jīn
(gourd, earth, leather, wood, stone, metal)

Gourds, pottery, leather, wood, stone, metal, . . .

44。 與 絲 竹， 乃 八 音。
yǔ sī zhú nǎi bā yīn
(and silk, bamboo, are eight sounds)

. . . silk, and bamboo are the eight materials from which musical instruments are made.

45。 高 曾 祖， 父 而 身。
gāo zēng zǔ fù ér shēn
(higher, great grandfather, grandfather, father, then body)

From your great-great grandfather, to your great grandfather, to your father, to yourself, . . .

46。 身 而 子， 子 而 孫。
shēn ér zǐ zǐ ér sūn
(body then son, son then grandson)

. . . from yourself to your son, to your grandson, . . .

47。 自 子 孫， 至 元 曾。
zì zǐ sūn zhì yuán céng
(self son grandson until original {eight generation difference})

. . . to your great grandson, and then on to your great-great grandson, . . .

48。 乃 九 族， 而 之 倫。
nǎi jiǔ zú ér zhī lún
(are nine generations thus this relationship)

. . . these are the nine generations of your family.

49。 父 子 恩， 夫 婦 從。
fù zǐ ēn fū fù cóng

(father, son kindness; husband, wife harmony)

Kindness between father and son, harmony between man and wife, . . .

50。 兄 則 友， 弟 則 恭。
xiōng zé yǒu dì zé gōng

(elder brother rule friend, younger brother rule respect)

. . . friendliness from elder brother to younger, respect from younger brother to elder, . . .

51。 長 幼 序， 友 與 朋。
zhǎng yòu xù yǒu yǔ péng

(old, young, order; friend support friend)

. . . proper relations between generations, mutual support between friend and friend, . . .

52。 君 則 敬， 臣 則 忠。
jūn zé jìng chén zé zhōng

(sovereign rule respect, subject rule loyalty)

. . . respect from sovereigns, loyalty from subjects, . . .

53。 此 十 義， 人 所 同。
cǐ shí yì rén suǒ tóng

(these ten duties, people therefore same)

. . . these ten behaviors bind all people. +

54. 凡 訓 蒙， 須 講 究。
fán xùn méng xū jiǎng jiù
(all teach ignorant, must explain investigate)

To teach, one must research, then explain.

55. 詳 訓 詁， 明 句 讀。
xiáng xùn gǔ míng jù dù
(minutely teach {old meanings}, clearly sentence paragraph)

Carefully teach the interpretations of the old texts and clearly distinguish sentences and paragraphs. +

56. 爲 學 者， 必 有 初。
wéi xué zhě bì yǒu chū
(become study those, must have beginning)

Those who would learn must have a starting point.

57. 小 學 終， 至 四 書。
xiǎo xué zhōng zhì sì shū
(little learning done, to four books)

After they have learned the basics, they should go on to the Four Books: . . .

58. 論 語 者， 二 十 篇。
lùn yǔ zhě èr shí piān
(Lun Yu this, two ten chapters)

. . . the *Analects of Confucius*, in twenty chapters, . . .

59. 群 弟 子， 記 善 言。
qún dì zǐ jì shàn yán
(group younger brother son write down perfect words)

. . . in which his disciples wrote down his wise words; . . .

60. 孟 子 者， 七 篇 止。
mèng zǐ zhě qī piān zhǐ
(Meng Zi this, seven chapters stop)

. . . the works of Mencius in seven chapters, . . .

61. 講 道 德， 說 仁 義。
jiǎng dào dé shuō rén yì
(speak road virtue, speak benevolence righteousness)

. . . which tell us of the way to achieve virtue, and benevolence and righteousness; . . .

62. 作 中 庸， 子 思 筆。
zuò zhōng yōng zǐ sī bǐ
(made doctrine mean Zi Si brush)

... *The Way of the Mean* written by Zi Si, ...

63. 中 不 偏， 庸 不 易。
zhōng bù piān yōng bù yì
(mean not slanting, way not changeable)

... in whose title, "mean" connotes uprightness and "way" is unchanging; ...

64. 作 大 學， 乃 曾 子。
zuò dà xué nǎi céng zǐ
(made great learning was Ceng Zi)

... and *The Book of the Great Learning* by Ceng Zi, ...

65. 自 修 齊， 至 平 治。
zì xiū qí zhì píng zhì
(from construct order to peace govern)

... which tells of topics ranging from how to develop as an individual to how to govern a state peacefully.

66. 孝 經 通， 四 書 熟。
xiào jīng tōng sì shū shóu
(filial piety classic understood, four books processed)

When the *Classic of Filial Piety* is mastered and the *Four Books* are memorized, ...

67. 如 六 經， 始 可 讀。
rú liù jīng shǐ kě dú
(go to six classics, begin can read)

... you can go on to the *Six Classics*.

68. 詩 書 易， 禮 春 秋。
shī shū yì lǐ chūn qiū
(poetry, book, change, rites, spring, autumn)

The Book of Poetry, the *Book of History*, the *Book of Changes*, the *Rites of the Zhou Dynasty*, the *Book of Rites*, and the *Spring and Autumn Annals*, ...

69. 號 六 經， 當 講 求。
hào liù jīng dāng jiǎng qiú
(call six classics should explain strive for)

... these are called the *Six Classics* which should be studied and understood.

70。 有 連 山， 有 歸 藏。
yǒu lián shān yǒu guī cáng
(have link mountain, have return storage)

There is the Lian Shan *Book of Changes*, that of Gui Cang, . . .

71。 有 周 易， 三 易 詳。
yǒu zhōu yì sān yì xiáng
(have Zhou changes, three changes detail)

. . . and that of the Duke of Zhou; these are the three versions of the *Book of Changes*.

72。 有 典 謨， 有 訓 誥。
yǒu diǎn mó yǒu xùn gào
(have standards, plans, have instruction, mandates)

Standards, advice, instructions, mandates, . . .

73。 有 誓 命， 書 之 奧。
yǒu shì mìng shū zhī ào
(have pledges, orders, book this mystery)

. . . oaths and regulations are the mysteries to be explained in the *Book of History*.

74。 我 周 公， 作 周 禮。
wǒ zhōu gōng zuò zhōu lǐ
(I Zhou duke made Zhou rites)

Our Duke of Zhou wrote the *Zhou Book of Rites*.

75。 著 六 官， 存 治 體。
zhù liù guān cún zhì tǐ
(write six government officials, maintain government body)

In it he established the duties of six classes of government officials thereby insuring that the system would go on.

76。 大 小 戴， 注 禮 記。
dà xiǎo dài zhù lǐ jì
(big small Dai explained rites notes)

The two Dais, elder and younger, annotated the *Book of Rites*.

77。 述 聖 言， 禮 樂 備。
shù shèng yán lǐ lè bèi
(related sage words, rites music arranged)

They wrote down the sages' words and set in order ceremonies and music.

78。 曰 國 風， 曰 雅 頌。
yuē guó fēng yuē yǎ sòng
(say state wind, say proper eulogy)

The GuoFeng, the Ya and the Song . . .

79。 號 四 詩， 當 諷 詠。
hào sì shī dāng fēng yǒng
(call four poetry should chant chant)

. . . are the four parts of the *Book of Poetry* which should be recited over and over.

80。 詩 既 亡， 春 秋 作。
shí jì wáng chūn qiū zuò
(poetry already dead, spring, autumn made)

When age of the *Book of Poems* ended, the *Spring and Autumn Annals* were written.

81。 寓 褒 貶， 別 善 惡。
yù bāo biǎn bié shàn è
(contain praise blame differentiate good evil)

The *Annals* are frank in assigning praise and blame and clearly state what is good and what is evil.

82。 三 傳 者， 有 公 羊。
sān zhuán zhě yǒu gōng yáng
(three commentaries these, have Gong Yang)

These three commentaries are by Gong-yang, . . .

83。 有 左 氏， 有 穀 梁。
yǒu zuǒ shì yǒu gòu liáng
(have Zuo family-name, have Gou Liang)

. . . Zuo, and Gou-liang.

84。 經 既 明， 方 讀 子。
jīng jì míng fāng dú zǐ
(classic now clear then read philosophers)

When the classics have been learned, it is time to read the philosophers.

85。 撮 其 要， 記 其 事。
cuō qí yào jì qí shì
(gather their essentials remember their facts)

Find out the essence of their writings and memorize the facts.

86。 五 子 者， 有 荀 楊。
wǔ zǐ zhě yǒu xún yáng
(five philosophers these - have Xun, Yang)

The five philosophers are Xun, Yang, . . .

87。 文 中 子， 及 老 莊。
wén zhōng zǐ jí lǎo zhuāng
(Wen Zhong Zi reach Lao, Zhuang)

. . . Wen Zhong Zi, Lao Zi, and Zhuang Zi.

88。 經 子 通， 讀 諸 史。
jīng zǐ tōng dú zhū shǐ

(classic philosopher through, read all historian)

When the philosophers have been mastered, read the works of historians.

89。 考 世 系， 知 終 始。
kǎo shì xì zhī zhōng shǐ

(examine generation relations, know end, beginning)

Learn how the states evolved and their sequence in history.

90。 自 羲 農， 至 黃 帝。
zì xī nóng zhì huáng dì

(from Xi Nong to Huang Di)

The Emperors Xi and Nong and the Yellow Emperor Huang Di, ...

91。 號 三 皇， 居 上 世。
hào sān huáng jū shàng shì

(call three emperors lived top generation)

... are called the Three Sovereigns of ancient times.

92。 唐 有 虞， 號 二 帝。
táng yǒu yú hào èr dì

(Tang You Yu, call two emperors)

Emperors Tang and Yu are called the Two Emperors.

93。 相 揖 遜， 稱 盛 世。
xiāng yí xùn chēng shèng shì

(mutually bowed, abdicated; called prosperous age)

They had great respect for each other, and each abdicated his throne to a more qualified man. Theirs was called the Golden Age.

94。 夏 有 禹， 商 有 湯。
xià yǒu yǔ shāng yǒu tāng

(Xia had Yu, Shang had Tang)

The Xia dynasty had Emperor Yu, the Shang had Emperor Tang, ...

95。 周 文 武， 稱 三 王。
zhōu wén wǔ chēng sān wáng

(Zhou Wen Wu, call three kings)

... and the Zhou dynasty had Kings Wen and Wu; they are called the Three Kings. +

96. 夏 傳 子， 家 天 下。
xià chuán zǐ jiā tiān xià

(Xia handed down son, family heaven under)

Xia was succeeded by his son and made the whole country his family. +

97. 四 百 載， 遷 夏 社。
sì bǎi zài qiān xià shè

(four hundred years changed Xia society)

After 400 years, the Xia dynasty ended.

98. 湯 伐 夏， 國 號 商。
tāng fá xià guó hào shāng

(Tang cut down Xia, state name Shang)

Tang brought down the Xia dynasty and instituted the Shang dynasty . . .

99. 六 百 載， 至 紂 亡。
liù bǎi zài zhì zhòu wáng

(six hundred years until Zhou lost)

. . . which lasted 600 years until it ended during the reign of Zhou.

100. 周 武 王， 始 誅 紂。
zhōu wǔ wáng shǐ zhū zhòu

(Zhou Wu king start {put to death} Zhou)

King Wu, first of the Zhou dynasty, killed emperor Zhou.

101. 八 百 載， 最 長 久。
bā bǎi zài zuì cháng jiǔ

(eight hundred years, most duration long)

His dynasty lasted the longest of all, 800 years.

102. 周 轍 東， 王 綱 墜。
zhōu chē dōng wáng gāng zhuì

(Zhou {track of a wheel} east, king {key link} sank)

When the Zhou dynasty moved its capital to the east, they lost their ascendancy.

103. 逞 干 戈， 尚 游 說。
chěng gān gē shàng yóu shuì

(flaunt shield spear, esteem roving persuade)

Feudal states adventured militarily and fell prey to the advice of wandering politicians.

104。始 春 秋， 終 戰 國。

shǐ chūn qiū zhōng zhàn guó

(begin spring autumn, end war state)

The early part of the era after the Zhou capital moved to the east is called the Spring and Autumn period and the later part is called the Warring States period.

105。五 霸 強， 七 雄 出。

wǔ bà qiáng qī xióng chū

(five chiefs strong, seven {influential states} arose)

Five strong feudal lords emerged early in the eastern Zhou; later seven feudal states contended for power.

106。嬴 秦 氏， 始 兼 并。

yíng qín shì shǐ jiān bìng

(Ying Qin family, start annex combine)

The Qin dynasty, formed by the Ying family, united all the States.

107。傳 二 世， 楚 漢 爭。

chuán èr shì chǔ hàn zhēng

(pass on two generation, Chu Han contend)

Two more generations were Qin⁺, then the Chu and Han states fought for supremacy.

108。高 祖 興， 漢 業 建。

gāo zǔ xīng hàn yè jiàn

(Gao Zu rose, Han line establish)

Gao Zu ascended the throne and the Han dynasty was established, and flourished. . .

109。至 孝 平， 王 莽 篡。

zhì xiào píng wáng mǎng cuàn

(until Xiao Ping, Wang Man usurped)

. . . until Wang Man usurped the emperor Xiao Ping.

110。光 武 興， 爲 東 漢。

guāng wǔ xīng wéi dōng hàn

(Guang Wu rose, made east Han)

Guang Wu re-established the Han line, founding the Eastern Han dynasty, which . . .

111。四 百 年， 終 于 獻。

sì bǎi nián zhōng yú xiàn

(four hundred years, end {at least} Xian)

. . . lasted four hundred years, ending with the emperor Xian.

112。魏 蜀 吳，爭 漢 鼎。
wèi shǔ wú zhēng hàn dǐng
(Wei, Shu, Wu, contend Han tripod)

The Wei, Shu, and Wu dynasties fought to succeed the Han.

113。號 三 國，迄 兩 晉。
hào sān guó qì liǎng jìn
(call three states, up to two Jin)

They are called the Three Kingdoms, and lasted until the two Jin dynasties.

114。宋 齊 繼，梁 陳 承。
sòng qí jì liáng chén chéng
(Song Qi follow, Liang Chen undertake)

Then followed the Song, Qi, Liang and Chen dynasties, which are . . .

115。爲 南 朝，都 金 陵。
wéi nán cháo dū jīn líng
(be south dynasties, capital Jin Ling)

. . . called the Southern Dynasties, whose capital city was Nanjing.

116。北 元 魏，分 東 西。
běi yuán wèi fēn dōng xī
(north Yuan Wei, divide east west)

The Northern Dynasties were the Wei (Eastern and Western), of the Yuan family, . . .

117。字 文 周，與 高 齊。
yǔ wén zhōu yǔ gāo qí
(Yu Wen Zhou, and Gao Qi)

. . . the Zhou of the Yu-wen family, and the Qi of the Gao family.

118。逮 至 隋，一 土 宇。
dài zhì suí yí tǔ yǔ
(reach until Sui, one earth sky)

Finally, under the Sui dynasty, the empire was united, . . .

119。不 再 傳，失 統 緒。
bù zài chuán shī tǒng xù
(not again passed on, lost control sequence)

. . . but it did not last long as it lost control of the country.

120。唐 高 祖， 起 義 師。
táng gāo zǔ qǐ yì shī
(Tang Gao Zu, raised righteous army)

The founder of the Tang dynasty raised an army to . . .

121。除 隋 亂， 創 國 基。
chú suí luàn chuàng guó jī
(ended Sui disorder, started nation foundation)

. . . end the disorders of the Sui dynasty and to establish his line.

122。二 十 傳， 三 百 載。
èr shí chuán sān bǎi zài
(twenty times passed on, three hundred years)

The Tang lasted for 300 years and twenty successions, . . .

123。梁 滅 之， 國 乃 改。
liáng miè zhī guó nǎi gǎi
(Liang extinguished it, country thus changed)

. . . but the Liang dynasty overthrew it and started their own.

123a+ 梁 唐 晉， 及 漢 周。
liáng táng jìn jí hàn zhōu
(Liang, Tang, Jin, and Han, Zhou)

The successors to the Tang were the Later Liang, Later Tang, Later Jin, Later Han, and Later Zhou dynasties.

123b。稱 五 代， 皆 有 由。
chēng wǔ dài jiē yǒu yóu
(called five dynasties, each exist reason)

These are called the Five Dynasties and each exists for a reason.

124。炎 宋 興， 受 周 禪。
yán sòng xìng shòu zhōu shàn
(fiery Song rise, receive Zhou abdication)

Then the fiery Song dynasty arose to take over from the Zhou; . . .

125。十 八 傳， 南 北 混。
shí bā chuán nán běi hùn
(ten eight transmissions, south, north mix)

. . . the dynasty lasted 18 generations and the northern and southern empires were reunited.

126.† 遼 于 金， 皆 稱 帝。
liáo yú jīn jiē chēng dì
(Liao with Jin, all call emperor)

There were the two Tartar dynasties, the Liao and the Jin, . . .

126a. 元 滅 金， 絕 宋 世
yuán miè jīn jué sòng shì
(Yuan extinguished Jin, finished Song era)

. . . then the Yuen (Mongols) wiped out the Jin and thus finished the Song era.

126b. □ 中 國， 兼 戎 韃
lì zhōng guó jiān róng dī
(govern middle kingdom, govern west barbarians, east barbarians)

They governed the Middle Kingdom and the barbarians to the east and west, . . .

126c. 九 十 年， 國 □ 廢
jiù shí nián guó zù fèi
(nine ten years, state prosperity used up)

. . . but after 90 years, their rule ended.

127. 太 祖 興， 國 大 明。
tài zǔ xìng guó dà míng
(Tai Zu rose, state great bright)

A new founder arose and set up the dynasty known as the Da Ming.

128. 號 洪 武， 都 金 陵。
hào hóng wǔ dōu jīn líng
(name Hong Wu capital Jin Ling)

He took the name Hong Wu and made Jinling (Nanjing) his capital, . . .

129. 迨 成 祖， 遷 燕 京。
dài chéng zǔ qiān yàn jīng
(until Cheng Zu move Yanjing (Beijing))

. . . where it remained until Cheng Zu moved it to Yanjing (Beijing).

130. 十 六 世， 至 崇 禎。
shí liù shì zhì chóng zhēn
(six ten generations until Chong Zhen)

The dynasty lasted in through seventeen generation; the last was Chong Zhen.

130a. 權 闖 肆，寇 如 林。
quán yǎn sì kòu rú lín

(power eunuchs unbridled, bandits like forest)

By his time, the power of the eunuchs was unchecked and bandits were as common as trees in a forest.

130b. 李 闖 出，神 器 毀。
lǐ chuǎng chū shén qì huǐ

(Li Chuang arrived, divine implements destroyed)

Then the rebel Li Chuang arose and the palace was looted and burned; . . .

130c. 清 太 阻，膺 景 命。
qīng tài zǔ yīng jǐng mìng

(Qing Tai Zu, received situation destiny)

. . . the founder of the Qing dynasty received destiny's summons . . .

130d. 靖 四 方，克 大 定。
jìng sì fāng kè dà dìng

(peace four directions, achieved great stability)

. . . and established peace and stability in every direction.

131-6 *omitted*⁺

137. 廿 二 史，全 在 茲。
niàn èr shǐ quán zài zī

(twenty two histories, complete exist now)

All the historical records are now contained in the 22 official histories. ⁺

138. 載 治 亂，知 興 衰。
zài zhì luàn zhī xìng shuāi

(record govern disorder, know prosper decline)

They record examples of good and bad government; study them to learn what causes prosperity and decay.

139。讀 史 書，考 實 錄。
dú shǐ shū kǎo shí lù
(read history books, examine reality record)

If you want to know history, read the official annals.

140。通 古 今，若 親 目。
tōng gǔ jīn ruò qīn mù
(connect ancient, modern, {as if} personal eye)

Use the past to learn about the present; using the official records you will understand as if you had personally observed.

141。口 而 誦，心 而 惟。
kǒu ér sòng xīn ér wéi
(mouth engage recite, mind engage thought)

Recite them, ponder them . . .

142。朝 于 斯，夕 于 斯。
cháo yú sī xī yú sī
(morning in this, evening in this)

. . . continuously.

143。昔 仲 尼，師 項 圉。
xī zhòng ní shī xiàng tuó
({in the past} Zhong Ni, teacher Xiang Tuo)

In the old days, the grown Confucius took a young boy as his teacher; . . .

144。古 聖 賢，尚 勤 學。
gǔ shèng xián shàng qín xué
(ancient sages {men of virtue}, yet diligently studied)

. . . the sages and wise men of old studied throughout their lives.

145。趙 中 令， 讀 魯 論。
zhào zhōng lìng dú lǔ lùn
(Zhao middle official, read Lu Lun)

The great statesman Zhao Pu studied the Analects of Confucius . . .

146。彼 既 仕， 學 且 勤。
bǐ jì shì xué qiè qín
(he, already official, studied {for a long time} diligently)

. . . and studied them diligently, even though he was already an official.

147。披 蒲 編， 削 竹 簡。
pī pú biān xuē zhú jiǎn
(split cattails, wove; cut bamboo slips)

Splitting cattails and weaving the strips or cutting bamboo into slips, . . .

148。彼 無 書， 且 知 勉。
bǐ wú shū qiě zhī miǎn
(those no books, yet knew exert)

. . . those are ways people of old who had no books made their own; they knew how to sacrifice to learn.

149。頭 懸 梁， 錐 刺 股。
tóu xuán liáng zhuī cì gǔ
(head hang roofbeam, awl prick thigh)

To stay awake they tied their hair to the roofbeams or used an awl to prick their thighs; . . .

150。彼 不 教， 自 勤 苦。
bǐ bù jiào zì qín kǔ
(those not taught, self diligent painstakingly)

. . . they were not taught these tricks; they invented them on their own out of their need to study well and diligently.

151。如 囊 螢， 如 映 雪。
rú náng yíng rú yìng xuě
(for instance, bag firefly, for instance, shine snow)

Some, needing light to study, used bags of fireflies, others used light reflected from snow; . . .

152。家 雖 貧， 學 不 輟。
jiā suī pín xué bù chuò
(family though poor, study not stop)

. . . even though their families were poor, they knew they needed to study unceasingly.

153。如 負 薪， 如 挂 角。
rú fù xīn rú guà jiǎo
({for instance} carry firewood, {for instance} hang horn)
Some cleverly studied while working at menial jobs, . . .

154。身 雖 勞， 猶 苦 卓。
shēn suī láo yóu kǔ zhuó
(body though labor, still hardship outstanding)
. . . even though their bodies were exhausted, they excellently overcame their problems.

155。蘇 老 泉， 二 十 七。
sū lǎo quán èr shí qī
(Su Lao Quan, two ten seven)
Su Lao Quan, at the age of 27, . . .

156。始 發 憤， 讀 書 籍。
shǐ fā fèn dú shū jí
(start issue energy, read book records)
. . . roused himself to begin studying books; . . .

157。彼 既 老， 猶 悔 遲。
bǐ jì lǎo yóu huǐ chí
(he already old, still repented late)
. . . he was quite old to begin studying seriously, even though he succeeded, he greatly regretted his late start.

158。爾 小 生， 宜 早 思。
ěr xiǎo shēng yí zǎo sī
(you small born, should early consider)
You young students should think of these things early.

159。若 梁 □， 八 十 二。
ruò liáng hào bā shí èr
({for instance} Liang Hao, eight ten two)
There was, for instance, Liang Hao, who, at the age of 82 . . .

160。對 大 廷，魁 多 士。
duì dà tíng kuí duō shì

(reply great court, chief many scholars)

... got first place in the annual examination for scholars.

161。彼 既 成，眾 稱 異。
bǐ jì chéng zhòng chēng yì

(he already succeed, crowd call unusual)

When he so succeeded at his age, everyone called it exceptional.

162。爾 小 生，宜 立 志。
ěr xiǎo shēng yí lì zhì

(you small born, {ought to} resolve aspiration)

You young students ought to resolve your minds to get to work.

163。瑩 八 歲，能 詠 詩。
yíng bā suì néng yǒng shí

(Yíng eight years, could compose poems)

Eight year old Yíng could already compose poems.

164。泌 七 歲，能 賦 棋。
mì qī suì néng fù qí

(Mi seven years could {compose in intermixed prose and poetry} chess.

Seven year old Mi could write both prose and poetry about chess.

165。彼 穎 悟，人 稱 奇。
bǐ yǐng wù rén chēng qí

(they clever comprehend, people call wonderful)

They were clever and had deep understanding; people called their accomplishments wonderful.

166。爾 幼 學， 當 效 之。
ěr yòu xué dāng xiào zhī
(you small born, should match them)

You young students ought to strive to match their deeds.

167。蔡 文 姬， 能 辨 琴。
cài wén jī néng biàn qín
(Cai Wen Ji, could distinguish zither)

Cai Wen Ji, could tell the emotions of zither player from the way the music was played.

168。謝 道 韞， 能 詠 吟。
xiè dào yùn néng yǒng yín
(Xie Dao Yun could compose poetry)

Xie Dao Yun was a noted poet.

169。彼 女 子， 且 聰 敏。
bǐ nǚ zǐ qiě cōng mǐn
(they girl children, even clever quick)

They were girls but yet were clever and quick.

170。爾 男 子， 當 自 警。
ěr nán zǐ dāng zì jǐng
(you male children, should self alert)

You boys should keep this in mind and learn from their example.

171。唐 劉 晏， 方 七 歲。
táng liú yàn fāng qī suì
(Tang Liu Yan, just seven years old)

In the Tang dynasty, Liu Yan, at the age of seven . . .

172。舉 神 童， 作 正 字。
jǔ shén tóng zuò zhèng zì
(named {child prodigy}, made zhengzi)

. . . was declared a child prodigy and appointed to a post at the royal academy.

173。彼 雖 幼，身 已 仕。
bǐ suī yòu shēn yǐ shì

(he even if young, body already official)

Even though he was so young, he was still an official.

174。爾 幼 學，勉 而 致。
ěr yòu xué miǎn ér zhì

(you young students, exert then concentrate)

You young students, make the effort and concentrate; . . .

175。有 爲 者，亦 若 是。
yǒu wéi zhě yì ruò shì

(have, do those, also like this)

. . . those who do as Liu Yan did will achieve similar results.

176。犬 守 夜，雞 司 晨。
quǎn shǒu yè jī sī chén

(dog {keeps watch at night}, chicken {takes charge of} morning)

The dog takes care of the night; the chicken takes care of the morning.

177。苟 不 學，曷 爲 人。
gǒu bù xué hé wéi rén

(if not study, why be human)

If one does not study, what is the use of being human?

178。蠶 吐 絲，蜂 釀 蜜。
cán tǔ sī fēng niàng mì

(silkworm spits silk, wasp makes honey)

The silkworm makes silk and the wasp makes honey; . . .

179。人 不 學，不 如 物。
rén bù xué bù rú wù

(humans not study, not equal animals)

. . . if humans don't study, they are not even as good as animals.

180。幼 而 學，壯 而 行。
yòu ér xué zhuàng ér xíng
(young and study, strong and do)

When young, you should study, then when you are grown up you can do something - . . .

181。上 致 君，下 澤 民。
shàng zhì jūn xià zé mǐn
(upward exert emperor, downward benefit people)

. . . on the one hand, help the emperor, on the other, benefit the people.

182。揚 名 聲，顯 父 母。
yáng míng shēng xiǎn fù mǔ
(raise name sound, illustrious father, mother)

Make a name for yourself and thereby honor your parents; . . .

183。光 于 前，裕 于 后。
guāng yú qián yù yú hòu
(brightness in before, abundance in after)

. . . add luster to your forebears' names and provide abundance for those who come after you.

184。人 遺 子，金 滿 贏。
rén yí zǐ jīn mǎn yíng
(man leave child gold full chest)

Some people leave their children pots of gold, . . .

185。我 教 子，惟 一 經。
wǒ jiào zǐ wéi yí jīng
(I teach child only one classic)

. . . I leave only this one classic.

186。勤 有 功，戲 無 益。
qín yǒu gōng xì wú yì
(diligence has merit, play no profit)

Hard work pays off, there is no positive result from play.

187。戒 之 哉，宜 勉 力。
jiè zhī zāi yí miǎn lì
(guard this !, should exert strength)

Guard against this waste! Do your utmost to better yourself.

(Translated by Louis Smogor, Professor of Mathematics, DePauw University)