

【大师智慧】

Can You Read Englishmen's English?

I have heard several people tell me that in reading English-language newspapers they find Chinese news far easier to read than foreign news, and that they are often at a loss to discover¹ the meaning of even a very short piece of news from some little town in England or America. I also feel that there are many who can read without much difficulty articles written by Chinese on Chinese subjects but cannot read those written by Englishmen on English subjects.

The trouble with such people is that while they have acquired a knowledge of the English language, they have not learnt much about the English mind², the English character³, the English life, the English traditions, and

so forth. They have not got, so to speak⁴, the spirit of the language. Imagine a man who knows several thousand Han characters⁵ and a great deal of Han syntax and yet is entirely ignorant of the Chinese mind, the Chinese character, etc. Do you think this man could read even the ordinary Han-language newspaper and general literature in Han?

Reader, do you think you are among those who know English but as a rule find great difficulty in reading Englishmen's English? I am afraid you are. I would advise you to read as much as possible in general English literature and to cultivate the habit of thinking in English⁶. I would also advise you to read some concise history of England and commit

to memory⁷ every bit of knowledge about English life and thought that you may find in reading or study.

【NOTES】

1. are often at a loss to discover 往往不能看出
2. mind 心理状态
3. English character 英国的民族性格
4. so to speak 可以这样说
5. Han characters 汉字
6. cultivate the habit of thinking in English 养成以英语思维的习惯
7. commit to memory 记入心中

(以上内容由上海译文出版社词典编辑室供稿,内容选自《葛传槿向学习英语者讲话》)

【英语成语故事】

The Third Wheel 电灯泡——多余的人

the / a third wheel有好几种解释。如果有谁加入某对恋人的活动,那就成了局外人,就是我们汉语中的“电灯泡”。这个短语大家都会生疏,生活中时不时有人会说“我可不想当你们的电灯泡”这样的话。“电灯泡”意味着“多余”,由此引伸出“局外人”、“碍手碍脚的人或不合时宜的人”的意思。

有一部美国搞笑电影就叫*The Third Wheel*,讲述了憨厚的男主爱上了美丽的女

主,终于有一天他鼓起勇气邀约佳人,却不料第一次约会就与一个流浪汉不期而遇,于是,笑料连连,流浪汉就那么跟着很想单独享受浪漫的情侣,成为名副其实的the third wheel。

至于它的词源,普遍认为可能源于自行车。自行车通常是两个轮子,若再加上一个,一定是多余的。但也有不少悖论:单就现在来看,三个轮的自行车也不是没有。不过,这种争论对普通老百姓

而言毫无意义,反正the third wheel(电灯泡)已经被大众广为使用。

所以说,哪天若有某对情侣邀你一起看电影,你完全可以这样说:Youtwo go on ahead. I don't want to be a third wheel.(你们俩去好了,我可不想当电灯泡。)

(以上内容由上海译文出版社词典编辑室供稿,内容选自《英语成语趣事与幽默会话》 廖锡震 编著)

【单词练习】

Complete the sentences. You need the past simple in sentences 6 - 9.

完成句子。第6-9句使用一般过去时。

I sat down at my desk and worked for two hours.

1. The children have to up when the teacher comes into the classroom.

2. I often_____ to work in the summer - it's only twenty minutes on foot.

3. I want to _____Mount Kilimanjaro next year.

4. Do you often_____when you go to nightclubs?

5. The doctor asked me to down on the bed.

6. The boys _____ into the swimming pool.

7. She_____her bike to school this morning.

8. I was late, so I _____to the bus stop, but I _____over.

9. She_____off the bus, went into the station and _____a train.

答案

1. stand
2. walk
3. climb
4. dance
5. lie
6. jumped
7. rode
8. ran, fell
9. got, got

(以上内容由上海译文出版社词典编辑室供稿,内容选自《牛津英语词汇 初级》)