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僑教雙週刊叢書

Idioms
From
The
Classics

成語 故事



海華文庫

中華民國僑務委員會印行



成語故事

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漢字瑰寶 文化傳承

本會職司海外僑民教育工作，為協助僑社傳承中華文化，長年來研編正體字教材，作為海外華裔青年學習華語文及僑校推廣華文教育之用。「正體字」歷經長久發展，形、音、義多已定型，大體符合六書構字原則，且約八成左右為「形聲」字，其「部首表義」及「聲旁表音」的特性，有助於學習者輕鬆習得漢字，收到事半功倍之效果。正體字肩負五千年中華文化傳承與傳播的任務，現存古籍均使用正體字印刷，習得正體字，不僅可跨越橫向空間障礙，更可突破縱向時空壁壘，悠遊於不同時空背景之華語文世界，領略蘊藏其中的豐沛人文思想與智慧結晶；另正體字結構勻稱、形體優美，可發展出千姿百態的書體風範，成為一門獨特的藝術樣式，可謂既含學理，又兼藝術。

根據我國中央研究院院士鄭錦全博士研究指出，一般人對於一種語言所能掌握運用的詞語數量最多可達八千字；而中國大陸發表的簡化字僅2,235字，包含482個獨立的簡化字(如：笔/筆、车/車、风/風等)，以及由簡化偏旁(共14個，如讠/言、饣/食、纟/糸等)、獨立簡化字所衍生之1,753個字(如轧/輓、识/識、讽/諷、绉/縐等)，



涵蓋面有限，且簡化字又「臆造新體」，破壞漢字形音義合一的特質，學者李鑒教授即指出簡化字形成「偏旁簡化不能全部類推」、「符號取代偏旁並無定則」、「個體簡化字偏旁不能類推」、「同音兼代紊亂漢字系統」、「既已簡化又有例外」、「任意省簡破壞字構之合理性」等學術研究與文字運用上的亂象，不利「古文字學」、「沿革地理學」、「歷史學」的研究，以及造成文字運用上簡繁轉換的混亂等影響。

雖然目前全球使用正體字與簡化字人口比例消長，海外華語文學習者在實際應用上需與世界接軌，但無論從提高學習效率、認識文化歷史、學習傳統文化、厚植文化底蘊、創造文化創造力、連結東亞文明、介入全球文化前景或者是一種美學欣賞的角度，正體字的學習都是非常有意義，且有其重要性與必要性。本會盼藉由「鞏固正體字，對照簡化字」之方式，以發行正簡對照教材之務實作法，順應海外教學趨勢，鼓勵先學正體字，再習兼識正簡，以正體字為載體，繼續創造最大的文化價值。



Chinese Characters

– Our Cultural Treasure

One of the main missions of the Overseas Community Affairs Council (OCAC) of the Republic of China (Taiwan) is to promote the continuing education of the Chinese language among our compatriot communities abroad. To pass on this important cultural heritage, the OCAC has long been publishing educational materials printed in traditional characters, in lieu of simplified characters, so as to facilitate the younger generation to learn and appreciate the artistic beauty and innate values of the Chinese language.

Traditional characters have evolved alongside Chinese long history, and as a result, the characters have developed into logograms through shapes, pronunciation and meaning, which closely conform to the traditional Six Principles of Character (pictograph, ideograph, compound ideograph, phono-semantic compound, phonetic loan character and derivative cognate). Approximately 80% of Chinese characters are phono-semantic compounds, also known as radical-phonetic characters, created by combining radicals on one side and phonetics on the other. Knowledge of these facts makes the learning of Chinese characters much easier, and is just half the battle!

Traditional Chinese characters have been in use for 5,000 years. Ancient classics and historical documents available nowadays are written or printed in traditional characters. Therefore, learning traditional characters can break through the limitations of time, travel through eras without the boundaries of words, as well as comprehend the treasure of civilization imbued with abundant human thoughts and wisdom. Additionally, a variety of calligraphy styles, both symmetric and aesthetic, help shape traditional characters into a unique and scholarly art.

Dr. Chin-chuan Cheng, member of the Academia Sinica, has pointed out in his research that the maximum number of words an average person may acquaint in a given language is about eight thousand. The simplified characters promulgated in Mainland China cover merely a total of 2,235 characters, including 482 independently simplified ones and 1,753 derived from simplified radicals and independently simplified ones. These limited number of characters, created without solid origin, have lost the traditional picto-phono-semantic traits sine qua non to Chinese characters.



Furthermore, another linguist, Professor Xian Li, has pointed out the limit of the simplified characters: “simplified radicals cannot be deduced and applied to all,” “symbols replacing radicals have no established rules,” “independently simplified radicals cannot be deduced,” “the use of homophonic characters in a different contexts complicates the whole character system,” “exceptions always found whenever simplification rules are applied,” and “arbitrary simplifications destroy the logic of Chinese characters.”

The intricate implications of learning simplified Chinese characters result in an inevitable imbroglio of academic research and linguistic application, jeopardizing related sciences such as paleography, historical geography and historiography.

Due to current practical need and global trend, the proportion of traditional characters users has considerably declined compared to that of simplified characters users. Yet learning traditional characters is nevertheless meaningful, important and necessary, if taken into account the following perspectives: pedagogical efficiency, cultural creativity, better understanding of Chinese traditional culture and history, cultural links to East Asian civilizations, involvement in a global cultural outlook, and an aesthetic appreciation of inherent beauty of Chinese characters.

It is our hope that by consolidating the learning of traditional characters, while providing simultaneously a comparison table scoping simplified characters, we can pragmatically provide useful teaching methodology to the overseas communities. By encouraging the study of traditional characters as a vector, and then comparing them with simplified characters in textbooks, we are convinced that this approach will create the ideal environment for the transmission of Chinese culture abroad, where both types of characters are currently prevalent.

序 言

中華文化源遠流長，更蘊含豐沛人文思想與智慧結晶，傳統文化歷經歲月的薰陶、先賢智慧的累積，文化內涵更趨豐富多元，如何忠實記載博大精深的優良內涵，推展海外僑民教育，更攸關我優質文化扎根與傳承，深具意義且任重道遠。

本會致力於海外華僑文教業務之推展，編印系列華語文教材，旨在增進僑胞對於中華文化的認識，提高華裔子弟之華語文程度，並能從歷史精髓中汲取先人智慧，跨越時空的鴻溝，習得待人處世的哲學，使中華文化歷久彌新，展現動人的光采。

僑務委員會

Preface



The Chinese have a long history and inherit abundant humanistic thoughts and wisdom. As time progresses, our culture is becoming ever richer and more diverse. Whether Chinese culture can take root and be passed down to future generations depends on whether we are faithfully writing down the vast and profound contents of the culture and promoting the education of overseas Chinese.

The OCAC has endeavored to sponsor cultural and educational activities in overseas Chinese communities. We have compiled a series of Chinese language textbooks and put them in print. These materials enable overseas Chinese to understand Chinese culture, raise their language abilities. Despite of changes in time, they can still gain ancestors' wisdom from history, and learn the Chinese philosophy of getting along with people.

OCAC ,Republic of China(Taiwan)

編者的話

我國的成語都是以四個字組成的一句話，雖然簡短，却含蘊著很深的意義。編者將最近幾年來在僑教雙週刊陸續發表的成語故事彙集了一百篇，刊印成冊，以享海外讀者。

本書所收成語的來源，大致可分為四類：

一、來自寓言故事：寓言是用比喻的方法，表現深刻的認識。一般寓言往往是一個故事，像揠苗助長，塞翁失馬、刻舟求劍、守株待兔等。

二、來自神話：神話是關於神或神和人或神化了的動物的故事，像天衣無縫。

三、來自歷史故事：中國歷史上有很多著名的歷史事件，這些事件被概括為一個成語，像臥薪嘗膽、奇貨可居等。

四、來自作品的名句：一些作品中的名句，常被廣泛引用，有的摘引，有的緊縮或改進。如「論語」道聽途說，德之棄也。濃縮成為「道聽途說」等。

本書每則故事，都根據原典，用語體文寫出，盡量兼顧趣味性和通俗化，使它不致枯燥乏味。同時，為了使讀者知道怎樣引用成語，而且能很恰當的運用，每一成語故事後面，都附有例句，以加深讀者的理解記憶，而能實際應用。

本書每則故事都以標準國語注音，非常口語化，如能在平常說話，或寫文章中適當的運用，可以使我們想要表達的意思更顯得有聲有色。



EDITOR'S PREFACE

Chinese idioms are phrases made up of four words. Although they are short, their meaning is very deep. Over the past several years our editors have collected one hundred idiom stories from the bi-weekly Magazine of Overseas Chinese Education which we have now made into a book for the enjoyment of our overseas Chinese readers.

The idioms in this book can be roughly divided into four categories:

1. Idioms from parables: Parables make use of analogy to express very profound truths. Most parables are in the form of stories, for instance: to help the shoots grow by pulling them upward; the man near the frontier loses his horse; to carve a mark in the boat and look for the sword; to stand by the tree stump and wait for a rabbit, etc.

2. Idioms from mythology: Myths are stories about deities, or about deities and people, or about animals which have been deified, for instance: heaven's clothes have no stitches.

3. Idioms from history stories: Chinese history is filled with famous events, and many idioms have been taken from these events. Some examples are: to sleep on brushwood and taste gall; to hoard as a rare commodity, etc.

4. Idioms from famous works: Many famous sayings which originated in works of literature have been quoted extensively. Some have been quoted exactly, while others have been simplified or otherwise improved. For example, the sentence "Hearing on the street and talking about it in the road is the abandonment of morality", from *The Analects*, has been shortened to "heard on the street and spoken of in the road."

All of the stories in this book are based on the original work, and are written in vernacular Chinese. Care was taken to make them as interesting and appealing to the average person as possible, to prevent them from seeming dull and dry. In addition, in order to help our readers better understand how to properly use these idioms, each story is followed by some example sentences. We hope that this will help our readers to acquire a better understanding of these idioms, and to remember longer how they are used. We also hope that our readers will be able to use these idioms in real-life situations.

All of the stories in this book are marked with standard Mandarin phonetic symbols, and are written in spoken-style language. If we can correctly use these idioms in our speech and in our writing, they will make what we say and write even more vivid and dramatic.

Chen Shu-rong

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一字千金



ONE CHARACTER IS WORTH A THOUSAND TAELS OF GOLD

Lu Bu-wei was the prime minister of the state of Ch'in during the Warring States Period. He was very powerful; even the emperor would do whatever he said.

But although Lu Bu-wei was a very capable politician, in the area of literature, he was not so talented. So he engaged over 3000 scholars in the task of writing a set of books for him, the content of which included astronomy, geography, the words and deeds of people of ancient times, etc. This set of books, called Lu-shr Chuen-chiou, was over 200,000 characters in length.

Lu Bu-wei was so pleased with these books that he had them put on the city gate of the Ch'in capital. He also put up an announcement, saying that if anyone could add or subtract one character from his books, that person would be given 1,000 taels of gold. Thus, Lu-shr Chuen-chiou became known throughout the land as the set of books in which "one character was worth 1000 taels of gold."

Today, this idiom is used to describe writings which are exceptionally well-written in terms of both content and style.

1. 政治家 statesman
2. 權力 power / authority
3. 收集 collect / gather
4. 資料 means / material
5. 內容 content / substance
6. 包括 include / cover
7. 地理 geography



戰國時期（西元公元前四〇三年～二二一年）時，有一個政治家的名字叫呂不韋。他當了秦國的丞相，權力很大，全國人都聽他的話。連當時的皇帝也是順從他的意思，國家大事他都說怎麼辦就怎麼辦。

呂不韋在政治方面很能幹，但在文學方面卻是不如別人。於是他就請了三千多名學問的人，叫他們幫他收集資料，替他寫書；內容包括天文、地理、古人的言行等。合起來編成了二部二十多萬字的大著作，書名叫「呂氏春秋」。

書編好了，呂不韋非常高興，讓人把這本書放在秦國首都的城門上，並且貼出告示。告訴大家，如果有人能在这本書上加減或刪掉一個字，就可以得到一萬兩黃金。於是「呂氏春秋」這部書就隨著「一字千金」，全國人都知道了。

說明：

這句成語出自「史記」呂不韋傳，「一字千金」是形容文章內容很有價值，辭句很精美。

舉例：

① 偉大文學家的作品，大家紛紛搶著出版，真是「一字千金」。② 大家都稱讚姐姐寫的文章好，真是「一字千金」。

一鼓作氣



春秋時代之（西元前七七〇～四七六）齊國派兵攻打魯國。魯莊公和曹劌帶著軍隊抵抗。兩國軍隊擺開陣勢以後，魯莊公打第一遍鼓，命令軍隊向前衝鋒。曹劌卻說：「等一等會兒！」等到敵人的先鋒過了三遍鼓以後，纔命令魯國軍隊打第一遍鼓。鼓聲一停，立即命令軍隊衝過去攻擊。果然，打得齊國軍隊四散奔逃。

後來魯莊公問曹劌，為什麼麼敵軍打過三遍鼓以後，曹劌纔命令魯軍打鼓。曹劌回答：「打仗最重要的就是要勇氣。打第一遍鼓，士兵勇氣旺盛，人人想向前衝鋒。打第二遍鼓，勇氣就會衰退一點兒。等到打第三遍鼓，勇氣已經消失，所以我們命令軍隊等到敵人的先鋒過了三遍鼓以後，再打鼓。這樣，敵人的勇氣由旺盛而衰退，由衰退而消失。我們卻正當是勇氣旺盛的時候，打起仗來，當然成功。」

說明：

這個故事出自「左傳」。比喻做事一氣呵成，而不可斷斷續續的。

舉例：

① 李先生一鼓作氣，在花園裡種了兩百棵玫瑰。② 這個假期，張小姐一鼓作氣學會了網球和羽毛球。

- | | |
|-------------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. 搗鼓 beat a drum | 5. 消失 to disappear |
| 2. 立即下來 come down immediately | 6. 衰退 fall back |
| 3. 勇氣 courage | 7. 奔逃 run in a hurry |
| 4. 旺盛 prosper | |

2. ONE STRIKE FIRES UP THE SPIRIT

During the Spring and Autumn Period, the state of Ch'i attacked the state of Lu. Lord Juang and Tsau Guei led the army to resist the Ch'i troops.

The soldiers of both states were lined up in battle array, and Lord Juang was preparing to strike his drum, ordering his army to advance, when Tsau Guei said, "Wait a minute!" He waited until the enemy had struck their drum three times, before ordering his army to advance. And surprisingly, they fought so well that the Ch'i army scattered in all directions.

Afterwards, Lord Juang asked Tsau Guei why he had waited until the enemy had struck their drum three times before ordering the Lu army to strike theirs once. Tsau Guei answered, "The most important thing, when fighting a war, is morale. The first time the drum is struck, the soldiers all have high morale. The second time, their morale declines some, and by the third time, their morale is already gone. Therefore, by waiting until the Ch'i army had struck their drum three times before striking ours once, our soldiers were in high spirits when their soldiers' morale was gone. Naturally we won the war."

Today, this idiom can be used to describe a situation in which a person accomplishes a task or project all in one go, as opposed to working at it gradually.

一暴十寒



孟子子是戰國時代的（西元公元前四〇三〇至二二〇年）的人。他不但有高深的學問，豐富的知識，而且很會說話，有雄辯的才能。常常用很生動的比喻勸諫當時的君王做善事。

人人都說齊王昏庸，做事沒主張，老受奸臣的愚弄。孟子子很不滿意，就直言之勸諫齊王說：「別怪我說話你不聽明啊！誰都知道植物要陽光才能長大，雖然有些植物很容易生長，一點兒也不嬌貴，但是如果你讓牠曬一天太陽，在不見陽光的地方十天，它也不長，長也不好，長不大。就像你跟我在一塊兒的時候，不長，你也許有了從善的心，可是我一離開，那些小人又來哄騙你，你受他們的欺騙，剛萌芽的善心又被摧毀了。叫我怎麼辦呢？」接著孟子子又舉了很多比喻，勸齊王專心一志，有恆心地治理國家。

舉例：

① 你不是想游泳嗎？怎麼今天又不練習了？這樣一暴十寒，怎麼學得會呢？② 林小姐除了每個星期到中文學校上課的時候說中文，回家從來不溫習。他這樣一暴十寒，永遠學不好。

3. ONE DAY OF SUNLIGHT FOLLOWED BY TEN DAYS OF COLD

Meng-tz lived during the Warring States Period. He was not only very knowledgeable but also very eloquent. He often used very vivid analogies to persuade kings of that period to do good deeds.

Everyone said that the king of Ch'i was stupid, without his own ideas, and easily influenced by his wicked ministers. This greatly displeased Meng-tz, so he went to the king and said, "Don't think I'm saying you're not intelligent. Everyone knows that plants all need sunlight to grow. If you expose them to sunlight for a day, and then keep them in the dark for ten days, even those plants which grow easily will not do well. In the same way, the time that I am here with you is not very long. You may develop the will to do good things, but then as soon as I leave, those other people come and lead you astray, and the good will which had just begun to sprout is again destroyed." Following this, Meng-tz drew several more analogies, urging the king to completely devote himself to governing his country.

This idiom is now often used to describe a situation in which a person is trying to learn a thing, but rarely practices.

1. 雄辯 vigorous debate
2. 比喻 metaphor
3. 主張 stand for
4. 愚弄 to egg on
5. 滿意 satisfy
6. 嬌貴 dainty
7. 哄 noise
8. 萌芽 to sprout



九牛一毛



漢武帝時，將軍李陵精通兵法，勇敢善戰。帶兵攻打匈奴，打得清不敵。匈奴的軍于見局勢危急，就把境內所有的騎兵調集在一起，來對付李陵。李陵的軍隊冒死奮戰，但是敵軍不敵眾寡的情形下，全軍被俘了。李陵決心為戰死的袍澤復仇，才忍辱降敵，準備等待機會反攻。消息傳到京城，平時嫉妒李陵的大臣就在皇帝面前攻擊他，皇帝一氣，就把李陵的父母親跟妻子給殺了。

司馬遷一向敬重李陵為人，相信他不會無故投降，就勸皇帝別信流言，沒想到皇帝一氣，把他也關進大牢，處了重刑。司馬遷很感慨地寫了一封長信給好友任少卿說：「我正編寫史書，如果死了，就像九頭牛身上掉下一根毛，跟死了一隻螞蟥一樣。我忍辱受刑，是為了完成史書。」司馬遷終於完成了這本名垂千古的史記。

說明：

這句成語出自司馬遷報任少卿書的一段，比喻極其微小的意思。

舉例：

① 張董事長是大企業家，捐這筆巨款對他來說，不過九牛一毛而已，損失不了什麼。② 海裡的魚是數不清的，你今天釣的也不過是九牛一毛。

4. ONE HAIR FROM NINE OXEN

Li Ling was a great general during the time of emperor Han Wu-di. He was a very good fighter, and he won every battle.

One time, however, Li Ling's troops were so hopelessly outnumbered by the Huns that although they fought bravely, the whole army was soon taken captive. Li Ling shamefully surrendered for the moment, planning to wait for an opportunity to strike back. But when news of the surrender reached the capital, the emperor's jealous ministers began to degrade Li Ling in front of the emperor. What he heard made the emperor so angry that he had Li Ling's wife and mother put to death.

Sz-ma Chian, who had always respected Li Ling, believed that he wouldn't surrender without a reason, and urged the emperor not to believe rumors. This time, the emperor grew angry at Sz-ma Chian, and locking him up, punished him severely. Sz-ma Chian then wrote a long letter to a friend, saying, "I am now in the middle of writing a history book. If I die, it will be as if one ox in a group of nine were to lose a single hair, or as if one ant were to die. I am willing to withstand punishment in order to complete this book." Sz-ma Chian finally did finish his book—the very famous Shu-Ji.

Thus, to say that something is like "one hair from nine oxen" is to say that it is very insignificant.

1. 匈奴 Huns
2. 軍隊 troops / army
3. 情形 condition / situation
4. 攻擊 attack
5. 螞蟥 ant
6. 忍辱 face insult / slander with calm / patience
7. 受刑 be tortured

三人成虎

戰國（西元前四〇三～二二一年）時代之，小國很多，又互相結；不但是你攻我，就是我攻你。相處不和睦，彼此也不信任。因此，國與國約定互換太子作爲人質。

魏國大臣龐蔥，要陪太子到趙國去當人質，臨走的時候，對魏王說：「我走了以後，如果有一個人在街上，大衛王相信嗎？」魏王說：「我不相信。」龐蔥說：「如果第二個人說大衛王相信嗎？」魏王說：「半信半疑。」龐蔥說：「如果第三個人說大衛王相信嗎？」魏王說：「我當然相信。」

龐蔥說：「大衛王不會相信，這是大衛王都應該知道的事，可是經過三個人說了又說，你就相信真有老虎。我到趙國去，離這兒很遠，如果有人不住地在你面前說我的壞話，希望大衛王不要相信。」

說明：

這句成語出自「韓非子」儲說上，「國策魏策」也都出現過，是比喻謠言很可怕，有時可以掩蓋真相。

舉例：

①這件事是不對的，不能只靠道聽途說，不然三人成虎，把謠言當作真事了。②大衛王傳說小衛王偷錢，可是誰也沒看見，這叫做做三人成虎啊！

1. 團結 unite
2. 和諧 harmonious
3. 交換 exchange
4. 人質 hostage

5. 半信半疑 half believe
6. 真正 real / true
7. 壞話 malicious words
8. 希望 hope / wish

5. THREE PEOPLE MAKE A TIGER

During the Warring States Period, China was divided into many small kingdoms which were constantly attacking each other. As an attempt to create harmony, the kingdoms agreed to exchange princes as hostages.

The prince of the kingdom of Wei was to be sent to the kingdom of Zhao, and the minister Pang Tsung wished to accompany him. As he was leaving, Pang Tsung asked the king, "If someone were to tell His Majesty that there was a tiger in the street, would His Majesty believe it?" The king replied that he would not. However, when asked if he would believe a second person, the king answered that he would half-believe, and when asked if he would believe a third person, the king replied that he would.

At this, Pang Tsung said, "Everyone ought to know that there could not possibly be a tiger in the street. However, after having heard three people say that there was one, you would believe that it was so. If after I'm gone, someone were to say something bad about me, I hope that His Majesty would not believe it."

Today, the idiom "Three People Make a Tiger" means that rumors are really frightful things, and often hide the truth.



大公無私



6. PERFECTLY FAIR AND IMPARTIAL

Chi Huang-yang lived during the Spring and Autumn Period. When the king asked him who he thought would be a suitable magistrate for Nan-yang County, Chi Huang-yang answered, "Shie Hu would definitely do a very good job." The king was very surprised at this answer, and asked him, "Isn't Shie Hu your enemy? How come you're suggesting that he do the job?" Chi Huang-yang replied, "You only asked me who would make a suitable magistrate for Nan-yang County; you didn't ask me whether or not Shie Hu was my enemy!" So the king sent Shie Hu to be the magistrate of Nan-yang County, and as expected, he did many good things for the people there.

When Confucius heard about this, he praised Chi Huang-yang highly. When recommending a person for a job, Chi Huang-yang considered only that person's ability. Even if a person was his enemy, he would still make known that person's good qualities. Chi Huang-yang was a perfectly fair and impartial person.



春秋時侯（西元公元前七二二～四八一年），有一個人名叫祈黃羊。國王問他：「南陽縣缺了一個縣長，你看應該派誰去當？比比較合適呢？」祈黃羊毫不遲疑地回答說：「解狐去的最合適了，他一定能夠做得很好。」國王驚奇地又問他：「解狐不是你的仇人嗎？你為什麼要介紹他去呢？」祈黃羊說：「你只問我甚麼人能當南陽縣長，你並沒有問我解狐是不是我的仇人！」於是國王就派解狐到南陽去當縣長。解狐果然替那裡的人民做了不少好事，大家也都稱讚他是「一個好的官員」。

孔子聽了這件好事，非常稱讚祈黃羊。他介紹的人，完全以才能為標準，就是自己的仇人，也公正地說出他的好處。祈黃羊是個大公無私的人。

說明：

這句成語是出自「說苑」的「至公」，形容做事非常公正而沒有偏私的意思。

舉例：

① 我們老師就是一個大公無私的人。② 我想如果每個人都能大公無私地做事，任何事都容易解決。

1. 合適 suitable
2. 遲疑 hesitate
3. 仇人 enemy
4. 標準 standard
5. 好處 ability
6. 大公無私 fair and impartial

口若懸河



晉朝 (西元二六五～四二〇年)

時候，有一個很喜歡讀書的人，名叫郭象。他年輕的時候，就很細心，對日常生活中的大事小事，都肯下功夫去想想。長大以後，更愛讀中國哲學的書，所以就成了當時最有名學問的人。有很多人邀他出來為政府做事，他都很客氣地告訴人家，說他最喜歡研究學問，談論事情，分析哲理，不願意再做別的事。

因為他書讀得多，知識豐富，能夠把一切道理講得清清楚楚，更喜歡發表自己的見解，所以當時丞相王衍常常誇讚他說：「郭象說起話來，好比比懸在山上上的河，一直往下流，從不會有乾枯的時候。」後來來的人把王衍的話，引中成「口若懸河」這句成語。

說明：

這句成語出自「韓愈石鼓歌」。形容能言善辯，說話像長江大河滔滔不絕。

舉例：

①張老師對國語文很有研究，當他上國文課的時候，永遠是口若懸河，滔滔不絕。②市議員李先生正在口若懸河地發表演說呢！

7. TO SPEAK LIKE A FLOWING RIVER

During the Chin dynasty, there lived a man named Guo Shiang, who loved to read. When he was young, he spent much time pondering various aspects of daily life. As an adult, he loved to read books on Chinese philosophy, and so he became the most knowledgeable person of his time. Many people asked him to work for the government, but he very politely replied that he liked to do research, discuss current affairs, and analyze philosophical theories, and was unwilling to do anything else.

Guo Shiang was knowledgeable, eloquent, and loved to state his views. Wang Yan, the prime minister of the time, used to praise him saying, "Guo Shiang's speech is just like a river flowing down a mountain; it will never, ever dry up." People of later generations expanded this statement of Wang Yan into an idiom; a person who is very eloquent is now said to "speak like a flowing river."

1. 細心 attentive
2. 生活 life
3. 哲學 philosophy
4. 研究 research
5. 談論 discuss
6. 願意 original intentions
7. 豐富 abundant
8. 清清楚楚 clearly
9. 見解 one's views
10. 誇讚 praise



才高八斗

曹丕和曹植都是三國時代的曹操的兒子，兩個人的文才都不錯。尤其曹植，更是才思敏捷，聰穎過人。

曹操去世以後，曹丕繼承了魏王的寶座。但是，他很不嫉妒曹植的才能，也擔心曹植會對他不利。因此，總想害死弟弟。有一天，他把曹植叫到面前說：「人家都說你出口成章，我要看看是不是真的。就是現在，你要在七步之內做一首詩。不然的話，小心你的性命！」

曹植心裡很難過，一面想一面走，還不到七步，詩已經完成：「煮豆燃豆其，豆在釜中泣，本是同根生，相煎何太急！」其是豆的茎，釜是鍋。他用豆和其來比喻自己和曹丕；本是兄弟，為甚麼這樣逼迫呢？

曹植聰明而好學，他有很多出色的文章，顯露出才華，很受人的敬佩。有一個學者說：「天下才共一石（十斗），子建（曹植）獨得八斗。」

說明：

這句話成語是簡化「天下才共一石，子建獨得八斗」。這兩句話而成，用來稱讚別人文才很高。

舉例：

①王先生能做詩，能畫畫兒，文章也寫得好，真是才高八斗。②今年的徵文比賽，他又得了第一名，真是才高八斗，讓人羨慕啊！

1. 嫉妒 to be jealous

2. 擔心 worry

3. 比喻 compare

4. 逼迫 compel / force

5. 顯露 appear

6. 敬佩 admire



8. EIGHT DECALITRES OF TALENT

Tsau Pi and Tsau Jr were sons of Tsau Tsau. Both were very gifted writers, and Tsau Jr was especially quick-witted.

After Tsau Tsau's death, Tsau Pi took over the throne of the kingdom of Wei. Jealous of Tsau Jr's literary ability, and afraid that he might cause problems, Tsau Pi was always looking for a way to kill his brother. One day, Tsau Pi called Tsau Jr in to see him. He ordered his brother to make up a poem within the time it took to walk seven steps, adding that if he could not, his life would be in danger.

Greatly saddened, Tsau Jr began to walk and to think. Before he had taken the seven steps, he had already finished his poem, the meaning of which was: "Brothers are of the same family, so why should they oppress each other?"

Tsau Jr was very intelligent and loved to study. He wrote many outstanding articles which showed his artistic talent and earned him the admiration of many people. One scholar said of him: "Heaven gave the world ten decalitres of talent, and Tsau Jr alone has eight of them."

Today, to say that a person "has eight decalitres of talent" is to say that he has a great aptitude for writing.

小時了了



東漢（西元二〇五～二〇〇年）時代的名臣孔融，是孔子的二十一世孫，從小就聰明過人。孔融十歲的時候，跟父親到京師洛陽去，聽說洛陽太守李元禮家中客人都是有才又有名的。除非親戚，要是沒有才沒有名的，人是不去拜訪的，守門的人就不通報。孔融想看看李元禮到底是不是甚麼樣的人，就自己去拜訪。他對守門的人說：「我是李太守的親戚。」進去以後，李元禮看看訪客是個小孩，就問：「你跟我有甚麼親戚關係呀？」孔融很有禮貌地說：「我們雖然不是親戚，但是我祖先是孔子，曾經向你的祖先老子請教過禮節問題。傳到現在，我們不還是成了世交了嗎？」李元禮的客人看見孔融小小年紀，回答得這麼好，都稱讚他聰明。只有大夫陳韌說：「小時了了，大未必佳。」孔融聽了立刻說：「我想陳大夫一定是小時了了，大未必佳。」

說明：

這句成語出自《世說新語》，原意是「小時了了，大未必佳」。使用「小時了了」這句成語，有讚誦人的意思。

舉例：

① 我看這個孩子不過小時了了，將來未必成器。② 這個小童，聽說小時了了，聽得真呢，真是小時了了。

9. VERY INTELLIGENT IN YOUTH

Kung Rung was a famous minister of the Eastern Han dynasty. He was a 20th generation descendant of Confucius, and from his youth was very intelligent.

When Kung Rung was ten years old, he went to Loyang with his father. He heard that the only guests allowed to visit the home of Loyang's prefect, Li Yuan-li, were either relatives or talented and famous people. Kung Rung wanted to find out what kind of person Li Yuan-li was, so he went to the prefect's home and told the gatekeepers that he was a relative. When Li Yuan-li saw that a child had come to see him, he asked, "How are you related to me?" Kung Rung very politely answered, "Although you and I are not related, my ancestor Confucius used to ask your ancestor Lau-tz questions regarding etiquette. Does that not make us old friends?" When Li Yuan-li's guests heard such a small child answer so well, they all praised Kung Rung's intelligence. Only the senior official Chen Wei said, "Intelligence in youth does not necessarily mean success as an adult." On hearing this, Kung Rung said, "I'll bet Official Chen was very intelligent as a youth, right?"

To say that a person is "very intelligent in youth" is to imply that though he is smart as a child, he will not have a very bright future.

1. 客人 guest
2. 通報 public notice
3. 禮貌 manners
4. 祖先 ancestor
5. 曾經 once
6. 禮節 formality



亡羊補牢

戰國時代，楚國的襄王只知道吃喝玩樂，不理國事。大臣莊辛看了十分擔憂，就向襄王說：「大王在宮裡，左邊是州侯，右邊是夏侯；出去的時候又有鄢陵君、壽陵君跟著。這四個人的專門講究奢侈淫樂，這樣下去，楚國恐怕難保了。」襄王聽了很生氣地說：「你老糊塗了嗎？說這些不吉祥的話。」莊辛很沈痛地說：「我是關心楚國，如果您一直寵信這幾個小人，楚國一定滅亡的，請允許我到趙國去住一段日子吧！」

過了不到半年，秦國攻下了很多城，襄王逃到了城陽。想起莊辛的話，後悔極了，立刻派人找莊辛來。莊辛勸楚王別擔心，他說：「丟了羊再去修補羊圈還不算太晚。」襄王在莊辛輔助下，努力振作，終於度過了難關。

說明：

這句成語出自《戰國策》中的楚策。寓意是糾正缺點，使下次不再發生錯誤。

舉例：

①王老師的錢丟了，才在抽屜上裝上鎖，他說這是「亡羊補牢」，以免再丟。②李小弟整天玩樂打鬧，不好好唸書。老師勸他，從現在起努力向上，「亡羊補牢」還不算晚。

10. TO REPAIR THE FENCE AFTER LOSING THE SHEEP

King Shiang, ruler of the Kingdom of Ch'u during the Warring States Period, was concerned only with enjoying himself, and paid no attention to the affairs of the state. His minister, Juang Shin, was very worried, and said to him, "His Majesty has four officials who are constantly at his side, keeping him comfortable and amused. If things continue in this way, I fear for Ch'u's future." King Shiang grew very angry and rebuked Juang Shin. And the minister, seeing he could not get through to the king, requested permission to go to the kingdom of Chao.

Less than six months later, the kingdom of Ch'in captured several Ch'u cities, and King Shiang fled to Chengyang. When he thought of Juang Shin, he was overcome with regret, and immediately sent someone to go find him. Juang Shin urged the king not to worry, saying, "Even after you've lost the sheep, it's still not too late to repair the fence!" So the king put all of his effort into helping his state, and with Juang Shin's guidance, Ch'u survived.

Thus, "To Repair the Fence After Losing the Sheep" is to repair a flaw or correct a shortcoming, so that one will not make the same mistake twice.



- | | |
|------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. 十分 extremely | 5. 糊塗了 confused |
| 2. 擔憂 to bear sorrow | 6. 沈痛 extremely painful |
| 3. 講究 particular about | 7. 寵 to favor |
| 4. 奢侈 extravagant | 8. 振作 to stir up |

口蜜腹劍



唐朝時（公元六六一—八七至八九〇年）天寶年間，李林甫當了宰相。他的字和畫兒都不錯，但是他的性格陰險奸詐，人人討厭。李林甫為了討好皇上，買通了周圍的太監和妃子。只要聽說皇上喜歡什麼，就立刻準備好。因此，他深得皇上的寵信。

有一次，大臣李適之得罪了他，他先表示不在意，而且對李適之特別親熱。有一天，他對李適之說：「華山那地方藏著黃金，如果開採，必能富國裕民。我最近很忙，你向皇上建議吧！」李適之是個性情剛直的人，信以為真，立刻向皇上奏請。皇上找他商量，李林甫滿臉驚駭的表示說：「華山是皇帝王爺瑞氣集中的地方，如果開採，對您不利，是大大不利的，萬萬使不得。是誰想害您呢？」

說明：

唐書李林甫傳裡記述：「世謂林甫口有蜜，腹有劍。」這句話的意思是：對人表面和善，甜言蜜語，可是內心陰險，像藏了一把劍。「口蜜腹劍」這句成語也就比喻這樣的人。

舉例：

① 張老三是個口蜜腹劍的人，很多人受了他的害，可別相信他的甜言蜜語。② 那個人口蜜腹劍陰險奸詐，可別跟他做朋友。

11. HONEY IN THE MOUTH, AND SWORDS IN THE STOMACH

Li Lin-fu was a prime minister of China during the Tang dynasty. He was good at both calligraphy and painting, but had a crafty and sinister personality which made him disliked by everyone. Li Lin-fu would bribe the palace eunuchs and concubines to tell him what the emperor liked, and then would immediately go prepare that thing for the emperor. The emperor was therefore very fond of Li Lin-fu, and trusted him unduly.

One time, the minister Li Shu-jr offended Li Lin-fu. Li Lin-fu pretended not to care, and was in fact especially nice to the minister. Then one day, he told Li Shu-jr about some gold that was hidden over in Hua Mountain, and encouraged him to suggest mining this gold to the emperor. Li Shu-jr, being of an honest and upright disposition, believed that it was true, and immediately went and told the emperor. But when the emperor began to discuss this with Li Lin-fu, Li Lin-fu acted very frightened and said, "Hua Mountain is the place where all of Your Majesty's auspicious aurora are gathered. If we were to mine that area, it could be very dangerous for you. Who is it that wants to harm you?"

Today we can describe someone who is two-faced—who is always nice on the outside and yet is mean to people behind their backs—as having "Honey in the Mouth and Swords in the Stomach."

1. 性格 disposition
2. 討厭 awful
3. 周圍 surroundings
4. 準備 prepare
5. 特別 special
6. 驚駭 terrified
7. 大大不利 very unfavorable

天衣無縫



12. HEAVEN'S CLOTHES HAVE NO STITCHES

In ancient times, there lived a man named Guo Han. One hot summer day, when he could no longer stand being in his stuffy room, he went outside to sleep in the yard. When he awoke, he looked up at the sky, and suddenly from far, far away, a beautiful girl flew down. Guo Han was very surprised, and asked the girl who she was. The girl replied, "I am the Girl Weaver." Guo Han opened his eyes wide and stared at the Girl Weaver, and discovered that not only was she herself very pretty, but the clothes she was wearing were especially beautiful. Even stranger was the fact that Guo Han could find no place where her clothes had been stitched, so he asked her, "Why can I not see any stitches in your clothes?"

At this, the Girl Weaver laughed and replied, "These are Heaven's clothes. Heaven's clothes are not sewn, so how could there be any trace of a needle and thread?"

Today, this idiom can be used to describe anything that was done very skillfully, in which no flaws can be found.

1. 氣悶 stifling
2. 遙遠 distant
3. 飄 float
4. 織女 spinning damsel
5. 針線 needle and thread
6. 痕跡 trace



古時候，有一個人名叫郭翰。有一年夏天，天氣很熱，他忍不住了屋中的氣悶，就躺在院子裏睡著了。當郭翰一覺醒來，睜開眼睛望著天空，忽然在不遠處的遠處，有一個美女飄飄的飛下來了。郭翰驚奇地問她是誰，她說：「我是織女啊！」郭翰睜大眼睛一看，看著織女，發現織女不但很美麗，身上穿的衣-服更是漂亮。更奇怪的是她那身衣-服，竟找不出有針線縫過的痕跡。於是郭翰好奇地問她說：「為什麼你的衣-服找不出針線的痕跡呢？」

織女笑著說：「這件衣-服是天衣，天衣本來就不需要用針線縫成的，怎麼會有針線的痕跡呢？」

說明：

這句成語出自《世說新語》，形容做事精巧，無隙可尋，也可以讚美文章做得好。

舉例：

① 常常聽說的小華，每次都編個天衣無縫的故事，欺騙大家。② 小偷雖然編話編得天衣無縫，還是騙不了警察。

月下老人

唐朝的（西元六〇六——八七〇～九〇七）人韋固，到宋城去旅行。晚上，他在街上閒逛，看見有個老人，靠著大布袋，在月光下看一本厚厚的書。他好奇地問：「老先生，這是甚麼書？」老人回答：「這是記載男女婚姻的书。你看！袋子里這些紅繩子，我只要把一男一女的腳繫住，即使他們相隔千里，甚至有仇，最後也會結為夫妻。」說著，老人站起來向米市走去。韋固沒事，也就跟著往米市走。街上來來往往的人很多，有個老太婆，抱著小女孩兒走過來。老人用手一指，說：「這就是你將來要的兒子。」韋固很生氣，心想：這小孩黃毛丫頭怎麼能做自己的妻子呢？就吩咐兩個僕人殺掉這女孩兒。僕人就用小刀在孩子眉間劃了一刀。十四年後，刺史王泰把女兒嫁給韋固。新娘十分美麗，只是眉間有一道疤痕，據說是十四年前，保姆抱著她經過宋城米市，被一個瘋子砍的。韋固這時纔對月下老人的話深信不疑。

說明：

這個故事出自「續幽怪錄」。「月下老人」指介紹男女婚姻的媒人，也稱「月老」。

舉例：

① 王老先生和李小姐要結婚了，張太太是他們的月下老人。② 王老先生，李小姐，你們怎麼樣謝我這月下老人哪？

- | | |
|------------------------|-----------------|
| 1. 旅行 travel | 5. 婚姻 marriage |
| 2. 閒逛 quiet strolling | 6. 紅繩子 red rope |
| 3. 大布袋 big sack | 7. 吩咐 instruct |
| 4. 記載 record (written) | 8. 疤痕 scar |



13. THE OLD MAN UNDER THE MOON

Wei Gu, of the Tang dynasty, took a trip to the city of Sung. In the evening, he came upon an old man leaning against a large cloth bag and reading a big, thick book. He asked the old man what book he was reading, and the old man replied, "This book records marriages. I need only use one of the red ropes in this bag to tie a man's foot to a woman's, and the two are sure to become man and wife." Then the old man stood up and began walking toward the rice market, followed by Wei Gu. The old man pointed to a small girl who was being carried by an old woman, and said, "This is your future wife." Wei Gu grew very angry, wondering how this silly little girl could ever possibly be his wife, and ordered his servant to kill her. But the servant merely made a small cut between the girl's eyebrows.

Fourteen years later, the provincial governor gave his daughter to Wei Gu as a wife. The bride was extremely beautiful, except that she had a scar between her eyebrows. It was said that it had been made fourteen years earlier, when she was passing by the rice market in the city of Sung with her nanny. Upon hearing this, Wei Gu finally believed what the old man had said.

Today, "The Old Man Under the Moon" can refer to anyone who acts as a matchmaker between a man and a woman.

毛遂自薦



兩千多年前，秦國想征服趙國，大兵壓境，人馬把趙國都城邯鄲圍住，情勢很危急。趙王命令平原君到楚國求救，並且商量聯合抗秦的事。平原君決定帶二十個文武全才的人一同去，結果在幾千個門客裡挑選。選來選去，只能選出十九個。毛遂就自己跑到平原君面前，說他願意跟隨前往楚國。平原君對他毫無印象，就說：「一個有才能幹的人，在團體裡，就像針子放在袋裡，針子尖馬上會穿破袋子露出來。你在我家三年，我怎麼都不知道你有甚麼長處呢？」毛遂回答說：「我今天就是來求您把我放進袋子裡啊！假如早放進袋子裡，針子尖早就穿破袋子伸出來了。」

平原君帶毛遂去了楚國，果然憑毛遂的機智、勇敢和口才，楚王纔跟趙國訂立盟約，共同抗秦。並且立即派兵解救了趙國。

說明：

毛遂是戰國時代趙國公子平原君的門客，因為他自薦，把事辦得很成功，以後比喻自薦。就叫「毛遂自薦」。

舉例：

① 這次聚會，很多人彼此都不熟，我們先來介紹毛遂自薦吧！② 王先生是毛遂自薦進入公司的。

14. MAU SUEI RECOMMENDS HIMSELF

Over 2000 years ago, the kingdom of Ch'in surrounded the kingdom of Chao. The king of Chao sent Lord Ping Yuan to the kingdom of Ch'u to ask for assistance, and to see about forming an alliance against Ch'in. Lord Ping Yuan wanted to take with him twenty men who were well-versed in both the letters and the martial arts, but he could find only nineteen that were suitable. Then Mau Sui came and offered to accompany him. Lord Ping Yuan did not know Mau Sui at all, and said to him, "Such a capable person in a group is like an awl in a cloth bag; the awl will immediately pierce the bag and reveal itself. How come I didn't know before this what your capabilities were?" Mau Sui answered, "I am asking you to put me in the bag today! If you had done so before, the awl would've come through the bag before!"

Lord Ping Yuan took Mau Sui with him, and as expected, due to Mau Sui's quick-wittedness, bravery and eloquence, the king of Ch'u signed a treaty with Chao.

Today, this idiom can be used whenever a person recommends himself for a job or position, or makes his abilities or strong points known to other people.

1. 征服 subdue
2. 命令 order
3. 求救 cry for help
4. 商量 consult / confer
5. 袋子 bag
6. 針子 awl
7. 盟約 treaty of alliance
8. 共同 common
9. 解救 save / rescue / deliver
10. 長處 strong point

巧取豪奪



15. TO TAKE BY TRICKERY AND SEIZE BY BULLYING

Mi You-ren was a Sung Dynasty calligrapher and painter. He especially liked to copy the works of ancient artists, and his copies were almost exactly like the real thing. One time, after having borrowed and copied an old painting, he took the original along with his copy to the owner, and asked him which was which. Because Mi You-ren was so skilled at his work, the owner could not tell the two paintings apart, and took the copy home, thinking that it was the original. By replacing original masterpieces with his own copies in this way, Mi You-ren obtained many famous old paintings.

Although Mi You-ren was very clever, in the end, he was discovered. And because of this, he was looked down on by all of the people of his time.

"To Take by Trickery and Seize by Bullying" is now a four-character idiom in Chinese which refers to using dishonest means to obtain what one doesn't deserve.

1. 尤其 particularly
2. 觀賞 to see and enjoy
3. 臨摹 imitate
4. 技巧 ingenuity, skill
5. 一次又一次 again and again
6. 換取 exchange
7. 巧妙 clever
8. 被發現了 discovered

宋徽宗朝（西元一一一一年至一一二五年）有位書法家米芾，不但字寫得好，更會畫畫兒，尤其喜歡觀賞古人的書畫作品。

米芾最愛臨摹古人的畫兒，他臨摹得和真品幾乎一樣，有一次，他借了一幅古畫兒來臨摹，畫完了以後，拿著自己畫的和真品一齊送到主人面前，請主人分辨那件是真品，因為他臨摹古畫兒的技巧太好了，主人也分辨不出來，就把它當作真品收回去。就這樣，一次又一次地臨摹，換取真品，米芾得到了許多名貴的真正古畫。

米芾雖然巧妙地換取了很多古畫真本，最後還是被發現了，所以當時的人都很瞧不起他。

說明：

這句成語見於「清波雜志」，是形容用欺騙的不正當手段，去得到自己不應該得到的東西。

舉例：

① 有些人以辭做幌子，騙人民的錢財，等於巧取豪奪。② 聰明人用巧取豪奪的方法騙別人的財物，更讓人看不起。



打草驚蛇



唐朝時（西元六—八～九〇七〇年）時候，有個名叫王魯的人。他在當塗縣當縣長的時候，從來不想怎樣愛護人民，替人民做事，整天都是盤算著怎樣纔能多弄點兒錢。

有一天，當塗縣的人民大家聯合起來寫了一個狀子，檢舉他的部下拿了許多不該拿的錢，並且把他部的部下怎樣拿錢的事，一條一條寫得清清楚楚，請縣長處罰他。

王魯一看，狀子上寫的那些事，簡直和他自己做的、那些違法的事差不多。

他一面看狀子，嚇得兩手不停地發抖，等他看完，已經是一身大汗，癱倒在椅子上。更想不到無法來處理這件事，不由自主地在狀子上寫著：「你們的目的雖然只是打草，卻嚇到草裡的蛇了。」

說明：

這句成語出自「西陽雜俎」，譬喻做事不機密，使別人有了防備，叫「打草驚蛇」。

舉例：

① 有一件偷盜的案子，查到今天已經有了線索，為了不打草驚蛇，還是不公報案情。② 這件事先不要告訴他，免得打草驚蛇，讓他逃跑了。



16. TO MOW THE GRASS AND SCARE THE SNAKE

Wang Lu was one of the magistrates of Dang-tu County during the Tang dynasty. He was never concerned with how he could best serve the people; all he cared about was making money.

One day, the people of Dang-tu County got together and wrote up a complaint against Wang Lu's subordinate. They described very clearly how the subordinate had taken money that didn't belong to him, and then submitted the report to their magistrate, asking him to punish the subordinate.

When Wang Lu read what was written in the report, he began to shake, as he realized that he himself had done almost the exact same illegal things. By the time he finished it, he was sweating all over, and paralyzed with fright in his chair. He didn't know what to do about this, and he couldn't help writing on the report, "Although your goal was to mow the grass, you wound up scaring the snake."

Thus, "To Mow the Grass and Scare the Snake" is to fail to keep one's actions secret, thereby allowing others to take precautions.

1. 愛護 take good care of
2. 盤算 calculate / plan
3. 發抖 tremble / shiver
4. 嚇到 frighten
5. 檢舉 report
6. 處罰 punish
7. 簡直 simply



井底之蛙

17. THE FROG AT THE BOTTOM OF THE WELL

There once was a frog who lived at the bottom of a well. He lived a very leisurely and carefree life -- jumping, sleeping, swimming or rolling about as he wished. The tadpoles and crabs who lived in the water all respectfully called him Master. The frog felt very satisfied, and very proud.

Then one day, a green turtle came to the side of the well and looked in at the frog. Feeling very pleased with himself, the frog called out, "Hello! Look at how comfortable I am in here! Come in and sit! This is the best place in the world!" The turtle felt that the well was too small and narrow, and he said to the frog, "I come from the ocean. Have you ever seen the ocean? Its depth is immeasurable and its vastness is indescribable. Life in the ocean is boundless and unrestrained; that's real happiness." Upon hearing this, the frog was so taken-aback that he couldn't say a word.

Today, a person with limited knowledge of the world around him can be referred to as a "Frog at the Bottom of the Well"



有一口廢井裡，住著一隻青蛙。高興的時候就在井邊兒跳躍一陣；疲倦了，就在磚洞裡睡一覺。有時在水裡游一會兒泳，泡泡水，或是在泥漿裡打個滾兒。生活過得自由自在。水裡的小蝌蚪和螃蟹都尊稱他是主人。青蛙抬頭看看井口的藍天，滿足極了。也驕傲了。

有一天，井邊兒來了一隻大海龜。大海龜低頭看的時候，正好和青蛙抬頭往上看。青蛙得意地打了聲招呼：「喂！你看我這兒多舒服哇！進來坐坐吧！這是世界上最好的地方。」海龜覺得井裡頭太狹小了，就告訴青蛙說：「我是從大海裡來的。你看過海嗎？海的深度無法測量，海的廣度也沒法兒說。住在大海裡真是海闊天空，那才快樂呢！」這隻井底之蛙聽了，吃驚得說不出一句話來。

說明：

「井底之蛙」比喻見聞偏僻的人。這句成語出自莊子《秋水》篇。後漢馬援傳也有「子陽井底蛙耳」的用法。

舉例：

① 老王剛從鄉下來，大都會裡什麼事都新鮮，真是個井底之蛙。② 我從來沒出過國，你們可別笑我是井底之蛙，得多多指導哇！

1. 跳躍 jump/leap

2. 蝌蚪 tadpole

3. 海龜 turtle

4. 世界 world

5. 測量 measure

6. 天空 sky

7. 青蛙 frog

瓜田李下



唐朝的（公元六〇一—八〇〇年）文宗皇帝，是個很民主的國君，每做一件事都要問問大臣的意見。有一次他問工部侍郎柳公權，人民對政府有甚麼意見。柳公權很恭敬地說：「你派郭皎到那裏去當主官，有的人贊成，有的人不滿。」唐文宗顯出不太高興的樣子說：「郭皎是個又清廉又守法的好官員，到那裏去當一個小小主官，當然能勝任。」柳公權說：「郭皎對國家有功績、有貢獻，派他做主官原是合情合理的；不過批評的人認為他是進獻了兩個美麗的女兒給他，才得到這份官職的。」唐文宗搖搖頭說：「他們誤會了，郭皎的女兒進宮是參見太后，並不是給我做兒女。」柳公權說：「雖然這是這樣，但是瓜田李下的嫌疑，怎麼能使得天下的人都明白呢？」

說明：

古樂府裡有兩句詩：「瓜田不納履，李下不正冠」，是說在瓜田裡提鞋，容易讓人誤會偷了瓜；在李樹下扶帽，會讓人懷疑摘了李子。後來柳公權把它縮減成：「瓜田李下」。

舉例：

① 考試的時候左顧右盼，雖然沒有抄別人的，也難免瓜田李下之嫌。② 這間屋子的主人不在，咱們最好先別進去，以免瓜田李下之嫌。

18. PULLING ON ONE'S SHOE IN A MELON PATCH, OR ADJUSTING ONE'S CAP UNDER A PLUM TREE

Emperor Wen of the Tang dynasty was a very democratic ruler. Before doing anything, he would always ask the opinion of his ministers. Once he asked Liou Gung-chuan how the people felt about the government. Liou Gung-chuan respectfully answered, "Concerning your sending Guo Min to be in charge of Bin-ning, some people are in favor and others are not." Emperor Wen appeared very unhappy, and said, "Guo Min is an upright and law-abiding official; of course he is qualified for the job." Liou Gung-chuan agreed, but added, "The people who are criticizing you think that he bribed you with his two beautiful daughters in order to get the job." The emperor shook his head and said, "They've misunderstood. Guo Min's daughters came to the palace to pay their respects to the empress dowager, not to act as my concubines." Liou Gung-chuan replied, "Yes, but this is like the suspicion aroused by pulling on one's shoe in a melon patch or adjusting one's cap under a plum tree. How can you make all the people understand?"

This original two-phrase saying was later shortened to "In a Melon Patch, or Under a Plum Tree." It means that if a person pulls on his shoe in a melon patch, other people are likely to think he is stealing melons; and if he adjusts his cap under a plum tree, other people are likely to think he is picking plums. Thus, it refers to being in suspicious circumstances or surroundings.

1. 民主 democratic
2. 意見 suggestion / view
3. 贊成 favor
4. 滿意 satisfied
5. 清廉 clean / honest / capable
6. 貢獻 contribute
7. 批評 criticize
8. 認為 consider



四面楚歌

秦朝（公元前二二一—二〇六年）末年，天下大亂，有雄心的人紛紛起來想奪取中原。互相爭戰以後，剩下兩個勢力最大的人，就是劉邦和項羽。他們兩人合作，終於滅了秦國，平分天下。但是每個人都心有皇室的野心，彼此還是常有戰爭；一直連續了好幾年，誰也消滅不了誰。

項羽向劉邦建議：以鴻溝為界，互不侵犯。劉邦因為怕項羽勇猛善戰，表面上就答應了。可是暗地裡調兵遣將，增強勢力。最後起兵打項羽，把項羽的兵逼到城下，重重圍住。項羽雖然很危急，劉邦還是怕他的勇猛，不敢貿然捉拿他。就採納了張良的計謀，改用心理攻勢；讓兵士唱楚國的歌，以激起項羽的思鄉之情。當晚項羽聽到四面都是熟悉的鄉音，也不覺氣餒了，兵士都無心作戰。一世英雄，終於在烏江自刎了。

說明：

四面楚歌這句成語出自史記項羽本紀。比喻四周圍攻都是反對者和仇敵，處於極困難的地步。

舉例：

① 大家都反對張先生的意見，張先生真是四面楚歌。② 他平日任性做事，到處得罪人，弄得四面楚歌。

19. SONGS OF CH'U ON ALL FOUR SIDES

In the final years of the Ch'in dynasty, China was in turmoil, with many ambitious people fighting for control of the Central Plains. When the fighting was over, two people were left—Liou Bang and Shiang Yu. The two cooperated, overthrew the Ch'in government and divided up China. But both of them wanted to become emperor, and still often fought wars between themselves.

Several years later, Shiang Yu suggested that they divide China up, each take half, and each promise not to invade the other's territory anymore. Liou Bang agreed, because he was afraid of Shiang Yu, but secretly began to strengthen his forces. Finally he attacked Shiang Yu, drove him to Gai Shia, and surrounded him. Although Shiang Yu was in imminent danger, Liou Bang was still afraid, and didn't dare to hastily go in and capture him. So he ordered his troops to begin singing Ch'u folksongs, in order to arouse feelings of homesickness among Shiang Yu's troops. That night Shiang Yu heard all around him familiar songs of his homeland. He felt discouraged, and his troops no longer had the heart to fight. In the end, this hero committed suicide at Wujiang.

Today, this idiom refers to being in a difficult situation, opposed by many people.

1. 天下大亂 great disorder within the country
2. 雄心 lofty ambition
3. 互相 mutual
4. 野心 wild ambition
5. 連續 successive/ continuous
6. 危急 critical
7. 勇猛 brave/ fearless

半途而廢



戰國時代，中國南方的那個地方，有一個叫樂羊子的人，他的太太非常賢慧。有一次他撿了一塊金子帶回家，他的太太一定要他送回去。後來樂羊子到很遠的地方去拜師求學，過了一年，覺得太苦，就回家來了。太太正在織布呢，見他突然回來，就問他學業完成沒有？他回答得太辛苦了，不想求學了。他太太一聽，立刻拿了一把剪刀，走到織布機前，把機上的布全剪斷了，然後對樂羊子說：「這布不在織布機上，是由一絲一絲累積成的寸、尺、丈，是我日夜辛苦換來的。」樂羊子說：「你把這布剪斷了，不是白白浪費了很多時間嗎？太太可憐了！」他太太說：「是啊！這情形正跟你求學一樣；日積月累的努力才能有成，如果半途而廢，就跟我的布一樣。」

說明：

這句成語出自「中庸」這本書，故事是出自「漢書烈女傳」，指求學、創業或幫助別人，做到一半停止，就前功盡棄了。

舉例：

① 你不是立志要在暑假裡學會游泳嗎？怎麼練了兩個禮拜就停了？這樣半途而廢怎麼能學會呢？② 做任何事都要有恆心，如果半途而廢，什麼事也做不成。

20. TO QUIT HALF-WAY DOWN THE ROAD

During the Warring States Period, there lived a man named Yue Yang-tz, who had a very virtuous wife. Once, when he took home a piece of gold that he had found, his wife made him take it back to the place where he had found it.

Another time, he went away to study, but feeling it was too difficult, returned home after only a year. When he told his wife why he had come home, she immediately took a pair of scissors and cut the cloth which she had just been weaving from the loom. Then she said to him, "This cloth is made from thread after thread, woven together. I have toiled over it day and night." Yue Yang-tz then asked, "Didn't you just waste a lot of time, then, by cutting it off like that? It's really a pity." To which his wife replied, "Yes! This is just like your studying! Success comes only from working hard over a long period of time; if you quit halfway down the road, your studies will be just like this cloth."

This idiom can refer to any situation in which a person starts something, and stops before completing what he has started.

1. 織布 to weave cloth
2. 突然 suddenly
3. 辛苦 toilsome
4. 立刻 at once
5. 剪刀 scissors
6. 浪費 waste
7. 日積月累 day after day / month after month



老馬識途



春秋（西元前七七二～四八三——年）

時代之，齊桓公和魯國打仗，魯國國王命令黃花元帥向齊桓公假裝投降。

黃花元帥帶著軍隊，假裝追趕敵軍，卻把齊桓公的軍隊引誘到一個瀟灑的海邊。這瀟灑的海是——一大片看不到邊兒的沙灘，沒有水，也不長草。正好好遇到颶風起一陣大風，沙子石頭亂飛，又是風，又是沙，根本沒辦法辨別東南西北。這時侯，齊桓公的軍隊，進也不對，退也不對，繞知道受騙了。

正在危急的時候，齊國的管仲忽然想起來了，馬如果離開原來來的地方，不管走多少遠，還能按著原來來的路走回去。於是管仲叫人挑幾匹老馬，隨便牠們自己走，軍隊跟在老馬後頭。這些老馬轉來轉去，果然把軍隊帶出了瀟灑的海。

說明：

這句成語出自「韓非子」，凡是做事經驗豐富的人，處理事情熟習，就可採用「老馬識途」來形容，也有人寫作「識途老馬」。

舉例：

①王先生真是老馬識途，帶大家暢遊寶島的名勝。②李先生常常到美國去，遊歷美國，真是老馬識途。

21. THE OLD HORSE KNOWS THE WAY

During the Spring and Autumn Period, Duke Huan of the Kingdom of Ch'i was at war with the Kingdom of Gu-ju. The king of Gu-ju ordered his supreme commander to pretend to surrender to Duke Huan.

So the commander of the Gu-ju army, while pretending to let Duke Huan's troops catch up to him, actually led them into a great desert known as Han-hai. Right at that time, there was a strong wind which blew the sand and stones all around and made it impossible to distinguish which direction was which. Duke Huan's troops, unable to go anywhere, realized that they had been tricked.

Just then, Guan Jung of Ch'i remembered that horses are always able to find their way home, no matter how far they have strayed. So at his suggestion, the army let a few of the old horses go, and then followed where they went. And as expected, the horses led the army out of Han-hai.

Today, a person who is very experienced at any given thing may be referred to as "the old horse who knows the way."

1. 命令 order
2. 軍隊 army
3. 假裝 pretend
4. 追趕 chase
5. 引誘 induce / lure
6. 沙漠 desert
7. 長草 long grass



如坐針氈

晉朝（西元二六五～四二〇年）有個人名叫杜錫，從小就聰明好學，後來成了第一個很有學問的人。因為他有學問，有才幹，做事又負責任，當時的太子愍懷就請他到宮廷中做事。

愍懷太子是個不求上進的人，性情暴躁，常常做出些不合合理的事。杜錫天天在太子身邊，對他這種作風很不贊成，常常勸告他甚麼事都不能做，甚麼事都不合理。雖然杜錫說話的態度很誠懇，可是太子還是覺得他愛管閒事，很不高興。有一次，太子派人悄悄地在杜錫平常坐的墊子上插很多針，杜錫一坐下去就被刺得流血。過了幾天，太子故意問他：「你前幾天做了甚麼事？」杜錫說：「我喝醉了酒，甚麼都不記得了。」太子又說：「你不是喜歡責備別人嗎？為甚麼自己也會做錯事呢？」杜錫不敢回答，又不能走，哭笑不得。

說明：

這句成語見於「晉書杜錫傳」。「如坐針氈」就是這個故事引伸來的，形容所處的情境困難，一會兒都無法忍受。

舉例：

① 王小明做了很多壞事，老師對大家說他做錯事的時侯，他真是如坐針氈。② 小強如坐針氈地彈了一會兒琴，就跑出去玩兒了。

1. 負責任 pay responsibility
2. 暴躁 hottempered
3. 合理 rational

4. 墊子 chair cushion
5. 針 needle
6. 流血 shed blood



22. TO BE AS IF SITTING ON A BED OF NEEDLES

During the Chin dynasty there lived a man named Du Shi, who from his youth was hard working and intelligent. As an adult, he was very knowledgeable and capable, and so he went to work in the palace.

Min Huai, the crown prince of the time, did not strive for progress. He had an irritable disposition, and often did irrational things. Du Shi was by his side everyday, criticizing his ways, saying that he was irrational and knew nothing. This made Min Huai very unhappy, as he felt that this was none of Du Shi's business. So one day, he sent someone to fill the cushion that Du Shi usually sat on full of needles. When Du Shi sat down, he was stuck so badly that he began to bleed. Several days later, the crown prince asked him, "So, what have you been doing these past few days?" Du Shi answered, "I've been drunk, and don't remember a thing." To which Min Huai replied, "Don't you like to reproach other people? How come you also do wrong things?" Du Shi had no reply, and yet he couldn't leave. He did not know whether to laugh or to cry.

Today, a person who finds himself in a difficult situation can be said to be "as if sitting on a bed of needles."

曲突徙薪



從前在一個小村子裡，有戶人家，廚房的煙筒是直著向上的，灶旁還放了一堆柴火。有一個路過的客人看了，立刻跑進去說：「你們這個直的煙筒很容易冒火，起火來，應該把它改成彎曲的。這堆柴火，最好搬遠一點兒，不然火起兒跳出來，容易著火啊！」主人聽了，並不以為然，也沒改煙筒，也沒搬柴火。

不久，那家果然因為煙筒裡冒出的火起兒，噴到柴火上，著火了。幸好鄰居都來幫忙，一會兒就把火撲滅了。主人為了表示感謝，殺雞備酒請客。還論出力多寡來排座次，出力最多的坐上座。可是他卻沒有請勸他改煙筒、搬柴火的人。有一個客人就說：「你怎麼沒請勸你改煙筒、搬柴火的人？要是你早聽了他的話，今天也不會著火了。」主人覺得有道理，立刻把那個客人也請來了。

說明：

這個故事出自《漢書·霍光傳》。「突」是煙筒的意思，「薪」是柴火，這句成語的意思是預先防範比事後補救好。

舉例：

① 張先生把地下室都鋪上厚厚的地毯，他說這是曲突徙薪，等將來孩子會走路的時候可以在那兒玩。② 老李每天把羊圈加高一點兒，因為山裡有狼，他說這是曲突徙薪的措施。

23 TO BEND THE CHIMNEY AND MOVE THE FIREWOOD

There once lived a family whose chimney was straight up and down, and who kept a pile of firewood next to their stove. One day, a passerby noticed this, and immediately ran in and suggested to the family that they curve their chimney and move their woodpile. Otherwise, he said, the wood could easily catch fire. The owner of the house did not agree and therefore did not take the man's advice.

Not long afterwards, the family's woodpile really did catch fire. Fortunately, their neighbors all came to help, and before long they had put the fire out. In order to express his gratitude, the owner of the house invited all of his neighbors over for a large feast. One of the guests asked him why he hadn't invited the man who had suggested curving the chimney and moving the firewood, reminding him that if he had taken this man's advice in the first place, there would've been no fire. The owner agreed, and immediately invited this man to join the feast.

Today, taking measures to prevent disaster can be referred to as "bending the chimney and moving the firewood".

1. 廚房 kitchen
2. 煙筒 chimney
3. 灶 kitchen range
4. 鄰居 neighbor
5. 幫忙 assistance
6. 請客 to give a party



名落孫山



宋朝的（西元九六〇年到一一二七）九百年）的孫山，是一個很聰明、讀書的人，他很喜欢說笑話，朋友們就給他起了了一個綽號，叫他「滑稽才子」。

有一次，孫山要去投考舉人，一個同鄉就來拜託他說：「我的兒子平常很用功，也想去投考。您能不能帶他一塊兒去？」孫山很爽快答應了。

放榜了，同鄉的兒子沒考上，孫山也只考到最後一名。他無精打采地先回家鄉。同鄉知道孫山回來，立刻跑來看他，想打听一下自己兒子的考得怎麼樣。孫山不慌不忙地唸了兩句詩：「解名盡處是孫山，賢郎更在孫山外。」

當時的考試制度，第一名叫「解元」，「解名」指考取的人的名單。因此這兩句詩的意思，是「榜上最後一名是孫山，您的兒子還在孫山的後面呢！」

說明：

這句成語出自《過庭錄》這本書。後來的人根據這個故事，凡是考試不中，或是榜上無名，就叫「名落孫山」。

舉例：

① 今年大學考試，他不幸名落孫山，只好明年再考了。② 李小姐參加歌唱選拔，沒想到名落孫山了。

24. TO BE BEHIND SUN SHAN

Sun Shan, of the Sung dynasty, was a very intelligent scholar. He liked to tell jokes, and so his friends gave him the nickname, "the comical genius". When Sun Shan was on his way to take the government service exam, a neighbor came and asked if he would take his son along too, as the son was also interested in serving as a government official. Sun Shan readily agreed.

When the test results were posted, Sun Shan found that his neighbor's son had not passed, and that he himself was the last on the list. As soon as he arrived at home, his neighbor came to ask how his son had done. Sun Shan read the neighbor two lines from a poem, the meaning of which was, "The last name on the list was Sun Shan; your son's name is behind Sun Shan!"

Today, this idiom can be used to describe a person who has not passed an exam, or who has been unsuccessful at some kind of competition.

1. 聰明 clever
2. 笑話 jokes
3. 拜託 request as a favor
4. 爽快 brisk, in good spirits
5. 答應 answer assent to
6. 無精打采 dispirited / listless

安步當車

戰國時候（西元前四〇三～二二一年），齊國有一個有名的人叫做顏蠋。齊王召見他的時候，向他招手說：「顏蠋，你過來。」顏蠋聽了，不但沒走過去，反而對齊王說：「大王，你過來吧！」

齊王很不高興。當時在旁邊的大臣就說：「大王是國君，你只是個臣子，你怎麼可以這樣沒禮貌呢？」顏蠋說：「話不是這樣說，如果我去到大王面前，表示我仰慕權勢。如果大王走到我面前，表示大王尊重賢士。你們是希望我仰慕權勢呢？還是希望大王有尊重賢士的美譽呢？」

後來齊王下令對待顏蠋要特別客氣，並且賞給他很多很好的東西，還對他說：「以後我會讓你吃得穿得好，住得舒服。」顏蠋卻回答說：「我是一個喜歡穿布衣服，不喜歡吃肉的人，我要以走路代替坐車，回家去過自己養活自己的日子。」

說明：

這故事載於「戰國策」裡的「齊策」。安步當車就是以走路代替坐車，譬喻勤儉不貪慕富貴。

舉例：

①王先生一生安步當車，非常節儉。②李老伯布衣素食，安步當車，過著隱居的生活。



25. TO WALK RATHER THAN RIDE

Yan Ju was a very famous person who lived during the Warring States Period in the Kingdom of Ch'i. One time, the king of Ch'i said to him, "Yan Ju, come here." Yan Ju not only refused to go, but said to the king, "King, you come here!" The king was very displeased, and the other ministers all asked Yan Ju how he could speak so rudely to their monarch. Yan Ju replied, "If I were to go over to see the king, this would show that I admired power. But if the king comes to see me, this will show that he respects men of virtue. Which would you prefer?"

Later, the king issued an order for everyone to be especially polite to Yan Ju, and promised him good things to eat and to wear, as well as a comfortable place to live. But Yan Ju said, "I am a person who prefers to wear simple cotton garments and does not like to eat meat. I wish to walk rather than ride, and go home to support myself."

Today, a person who is thrifty and not greedy can be said to prefer to "walk rather than ride."

1. 招手 to beckon with the hand
2. 仰慕 to admire
3. 尊重 to respect

危如累卵

春秋時代，晉靈公為了自己享樂，花了很多錢，奴役人民，要建造一座九層的高臺。他下了一道命令，不許有人來勸阻。忠臣荀息知道，立刻帶了奏呈來見他。晉靈公身旁的人張開弓，搭上前箭，如果荀息談到興建高臺的事，就用箭把他射死。荀息發現情勢很緊張，卻裝做輕鬆的樣子說：「我今天要來表演一個小技藝，我可以把十二個棋子堆起來，上面再落九個鴨蛋。」

靈公很有興趣，就命令弓箭手退下，靜心觀看。荀息很專心地把十二個棋子堆起來，再把鴨蛋一個一個落上去。大家擔心蛋會掉下來，都說「危險哪！」荀息說：「這不算危險，還有比這更危險的呢。為了建九層的高臺，國庫已經空了，沒有男人耕種，沒有女人織布，鄰國要來打我們，整個國家都要保不住了。」靈公深受感動，立刻下令停止建九層的高臺。

說明：

這句成語的來源是出自史記。依詞意解釋是「危險如同堆起的鴨蛋」。比喻非常危急的情勢。

舉例：

① 這座樓房破舊歪斜，真是危如累卵，好像隨時都會倒塌。② 這個工廠每天受債務催逼，隨時有關閉的可能，真是危如累卵。

1. 奴役 slavery
2. 建造 build
3. 累張 nervous
4. 表演 perform

5. 技藝 technique
6. 鴨蛋 duck egg
7. 棋子 chessmen

26. AS PRECARIOUS AS A PILE OF EGGS

During the Spring and Autumn Period, Duke Ling of the Kingdom of Jin ordered a nine-level platform built for himself, and issued an order prohibiting people from dissuading him. When the minister Shiun Shi heard about this, he immediately went to see the duke with a petition. Surrounding Shiun Shi were men armed with bows and arrows, ready to shoot should he mention the platform. But Shiun Shi simply said to the duke, "I've come today to demonstrate a little skill of mine; I can pile nine duck eggs on top of a stack of twelve chessmen."

Feeling that this would be very interesting indeed, Duke Ling ordered the armed men to retreat. As Shiun Shi piled up first the chessmen and then the eggs, the people watching all exclaimed how dangerous it was. To which Shiun Shi replied, "This is not dangerous. In order to build a nine-level platform, our national treasury has been emptied and there is no one left to cultivate the land or weave cloth. Neighboring countries are planning to attack us, and we have no way to protect ourselves." Duke Ling was deeply moved, and issued an order to cease construction of the platform.

Today, a dangerous situation can be described as being "as precarious as a pile of eggs."



江郎才盡



江淹是南北朝（西元四〇二～五〇八）時的人，梁朝時考中城（現在河南省）人。年輕的時候，家裡很窮，但是他不怕貧苦，努力用功讀書，通過很多次次的考試，最後做了光祿大夫，是當時地位很高的文官。

江淹在文學上很有天才，詩和文章都寫得很好，當時的讀書人，幾乎沒有不知道江淹的。

有一次江淹住在冶亭，不知不覺地睡着了。忽然有一個人向他走過來，說：「我叫郭璞。我有一隻筆，寄放在你那兒很多年了，請你還給我吧！」江淹伸手一摸，果然衣袋裡有一隻五彩筆，就把那隻筆還給郭璞了。後來他昏昏沉沉地睡去，原來是作了一個夢。江淹漸漸年紀大了，詩和文章都不如年輕時寫得好。大家說江淹在夢中失去了五彩筆，所以「江郎才盡」已經用完了。

說明：

這個故事出自「南史」江淹傳。比喻因為驕傲自滿而不繼續努力，成績反而落後。有嘲諷的意思。

舉例：

①張先生自從從那篇文得獎以後，就再也沒有好作品了，恐怕是「江郎才盡」了。②他的作品越來越差，我看是「江郎才盡」了。

27. OFFICIAL JIANG USES UP HIS TALENT

Jiang Yan lived during the Liang dynasty of the Northern and Southern Dynasties Period, in the area now known as Henan province. Although he came from a poor family, he was extremely hardworking, and so became a high-level civil official. Jiang Yan was very talented in the area of literature. Both his poems and his essays were outstanding, and he was known by nearly all the scholars of his time.

Jiang Yan once had a dream that a man came to him and said, "My name is Guo Pu. One of my pens has been here with you for several years; please give it back to me now." In his pocket, Jiang Yan found a multi-colored pen, which he returned to Guo Pu.

As Jiang Yan grew older, the poems and essays that he wrote were not as good as those he had written when he was younger. Everyone said that when Jiang Yan gave away his multi-colored pen, he used up the last of his talent.

When a person today is so satisfied with himself that he ceases striving to improve, and therefore beings to regress, we can say that "Official Jiang has used up his talent."

1. 窮 impoverished
2. 貧苦 bitterly poor
3. 努力 to put forth effort
4. 天才 genius
5. 不知不覺 unconscious
6. 忽然 suddenly



杞人憂天



兩千多年以前，杞國有個人，常常擔心「天」會掉下來，見人就說：「你們快看哪！天總有一天會掉下來來的。天要是掉下來，我們往哪兒跑哇？那可怎麼辦哪？」沒有人相信他的話，也沒人理他。他天天發愁，愁得飯也吃不下去，覺也睡不着。有一個朋友勸他說：「天不像屋頂，天上面只有空氣跟雲彩，天是不會掉下來的。」他搖搖頭說：「唉！天雖然不像屋頂，可是你看，天上有太陽、月亮，還有那麼多星星，它們總有一天會掉下來的，怎麼辦哪！」朋友看他還是成天憂慮，總是愁眉苦臉的樣子，就說：「世界上的人那麼多，別人都快快樂樂地過日子，你何必自尋煩惱呢？」他沒話可說，心裡卻仍舊擔心「天」會掉下來。

說明：

春秋時代（西元前七七二到四八一一年），有一位叫列禦寇的學者，在他寫的書「列子」天瑞篇裡，說了這麼一個寓言故事，提醒人們不要做不切實際的憂慮。

舉例：

① 你的孩子又沒病，為什麼天天量體溫呢？真是杞人憂天。② 你別杞人憂天了，現在坐飛機旅行是很安全的。

28. THE MAN OF CH'I FEARS THAT THE SKY WILL FALL

Over 2000 years ago, in the kingdom of Ch'i, there lived a man who feared that the sky would fall. Whenever he came upon another person, he would say, "Look! One of these days, the sky is going to fall! If that happens, where can we go? What can we do?" He worried so much that he could neither eat nor sleep. One of his friends told him that the sky was not like a roof, and could not fall, but the man just shook his head and said, "Although the sky is not like a roof, still, it has the sun and the moon, and many, many stars. One of these days, they will fall down, and then what will we do?" His friend saw that he was still very anxious, and said to him, "There are so many people in this world, all living very happily. Why must you cause trouble for yourself?" The man didn't know what more he could say, and yet in his heart he still worried that the sky was going to fall.

Today, this idiom is used to remind people not to worry needlessly.

1. 擔心 worry / heavy heart
2. 發愁 to be anxious
3. 憂慮 worried
4. 苦臉 sour face
5. 煩惱 feel annoyed

自相矛盾

古時侯，有一個製造武器的商人，
拿著矛和盾到街上去賣。他又敲鑼
又打鼓，一會兒就吸引了很多看熱鬧
的人。

他拿起一枝矛向大家說：「我的
矛是天下最銳利的武器，沒有它
刺不透的東西。」說完以後，拿到
四圍觀眾面前，請大家仔細看。接
著他又拿起一塊盾牌向大家說：「
你們瞧，我的這一塊盾牌是用
最好的皮革做的。它是天下最堅固
的盾，不管多麼鋒利的武器，要
想把它刺透，那是絕對不可能的。」
說完又把盾牌拿給大家仔細看。

這時侯，有一個老人提高嗓
子問他：「如果你用你的矛
刺你的盾，結果是怎麼樣呢？」

這個賣矛和盾的人，被觀眾這麼
一問，一時張口結舌，答不出話
來了。

說明：

這個故事出自韓非子這本書裡。比喻一個人
說的話和做的事，前後不能一致，或是言行自
相抵觸的，就批評他「自相矛盾」。

舉例：

① 他昨天還告訴我說吸煙容易得肺癌，今天又
說吸煙好，真是自相矛盾。② 那個人的最愛信口
胡說，誇大事實，因此他的話常常前後不符，
自相矛盾。

29. TO CONTRADICT ONESELF

In ancient times there lived a
weapons manufacturer who took
some of the spears and shields he
had made out into the street to sell.
He held up a spear, and said to the
crowd surrounding him, "My spears
are the sharpest in all the world.
There is nothing they cannot
pierce." He handed a spear to the
people so they could have a closer
look, and then held up a shield,
saying, "Look! These shields of mine
are made from the finest leather.
They are the strongest shields in
all the world; there is nothing that
can pierce them." And he handed a
shield to the people for them to
observe.

Just then an old man raised his
voice and asked, "And if one were
to use one of your spears to try to
pierce one of your shields--what
would happen then?"

At this question, the weapons
manufacturer was completely at a
loss for words; he did not know
what to say.

The Chinese word for "contradiction"
-- "mau-dun" -- literally means
"spear-shield".



1. 製造 to make
2. 武器 weapon
3. 矛 spear

4. 盾 shield
5. 吸引 attract
6. 熱鬧 busy

囫圇吞棗



30. TO SWALLOW DATES WHOLE

In ancient times there lived a doctor who was introducing people to the nutrition found in pears and dates. He said, "Pears are good for the teeth but bad for the spleen. Dates, by contrast, are good for the spleen but bad for the teeth."

One of the people listening to the lecture then said, "I have an idea. When eating pears, why don't we chew them with our teeth, but then spit them out instead of swallowing them? And when eating dates, why don't we swallow them whole instead of chewing them? That way, we can absorb the nutrition of both fruits, and yet avoid their adverse effects." For awhile the doctor did not know what to say. And so the people began to refer to this method of eating dates as "swallowing dates whole".

Today, the idiom "Swallowing Dates Whole" refers to studying some subject or doing some thing without really seeking to understand it.

1. 醫生 doctor
2. 介紹 introduce
3. 營養 nutrition
4. 牙齒 teeth
5. 脾 spleen
6. 吸收 absorb
7. 避免 avoid

古時候，有一個醫生向大家介紹梨和棗兒的營養，他說：「梨對人的牙齒很有幫助，但是對脾臟卻有害處。棗兒正好相反，對人的脾臟很有幫助，但是對牙齒卻有害處。」

有一個聽講的人就說：「我倒有一個好的方法，能吸收棗兒和梨的營養，也能避免它們的害處。」

那位醫生很感興趣地問他：「你有什么甚麼好的方法呢？」

這個人不慌不忙地說：「吃梨的時候用牙齒嚼一嚼，可是別別嚥到肚裡去，這樣不但是可以保護牙齒有益，而免得妨礙脾臟嗎？等到吃棗兒的時候，就不必用牙齒嚼，一口吞一個吞下去，這樣不但是可以保護棗兒對脾臟有益，又免得妨礙牙齒嗎？」

醫生一時無話可說。人們因此把這個吃棗兒的方法叫做「囫圇吞棗」。

說明：

這句成語出自《朱子語類》，譬喻人們讀書不求甚解，或理解事物不求深入，彷彿一口把棗兒吞下肚，並沒嘗到品嘗棗兒的味道的。

舉例：

① 我們用囫圇吞棗的方法讀書，是沒有收穫的。② 小明做事一向都是囫圇吞棗，不仔細思考。



門庭若市



31. THE COURTYARD IS AS CROWDED AS A MARKETPLACE

During the Warring States Period, there was a very handsome government official named Tzou Ji who lived in the kingdom of Ch'i. One day, he said to his wife, "Everyone says that Mr. Shu, from the Northern City, is very handsome. Who is better-looking, he or me?" His wife answered, "Of course you are." Tzou Ji posed the same question to his maidservant, and then to a guest who came to his house. Both the maidservant and the guest answered that he was the better-looking of the two.

Sometime later, Tzou Ji saw Mr. Shu in person, and discovered that Mr. Shu was indeed more handsome than himself. Tzou Ji then realized that his wife, his maidservant, and his guest had all lied to him—his wife because she loved him, his maidservant because she was afraid of him, and his guest because he needed his help. When he went into court, he reported his findings to the king, and suggested that he think of a way to get people to tell the truth. The king agreed, and immediately issued a proclamation stating that anyone who could point out his faults would be rewarded. As expected, everyone came to offer an opinion, and from morning till night, the courtyard was as crowded as a marketplace.

Today, this idiom is used to describe any crowded, busy place or circumstances.

1. 發覺 be aware
2. 確實 true / reliable
3. 偏心 partiality
4. 畏懼 dread
5. 英俊 handsome
6. 賞賜 to bestow money

戰國時代，齊國有一個大夫叫鄒忌，長得很英俊。有一天，他問妻子說：「大家說住在北城的徐先生是美男子，我跟他比起來，你說誰更美？」「當然你是更美。」妻子回答。他又問妾，妾也說：「當然你是更美。」家裡來了一個客人，他又用同樣的問題問客人，客人也說：「徐先生怎麼能跟你比呢？」

後來，鄒忌終於親自見到徐先生，發覺徐先生確實比他漂亮。他這纔深深體會到，妻子、妾、客人，因為偏心或是畏懼或是有求於他，纔不說真話。上朝的時候，他把自己的想法報告齊王，請他擁有廣大土地和至高無上的權威。齊王聽了，多聽聽真話。齊王同意他的看法，立刻下令：「無論任何人的意見，只要能指出齊王的過失，都有賞賜。」果然，人人都提出意見，從早到晚，大門門口來來去去的客人像市場一樣多。

說明：

這個故事出自「戰國策」齊策，本來是記鄒忌用巧妙的方法比喻規勸齊王。現在大都用來形容擁擠熱鬧的情景。

舉例：

① 新開的那家商店物美價廉，所以經常門庭若市。② 每逢週末，中國城的商店，家家門庭若市。

門可羅雀



漢朝（西元前二〇六年到西元八七年）時候，下都郡地方有一個翟公，是當時的廷尉。廷尉的地位很高，很有權威，相當於現在的司法院長。因此，除了親戚朋友跟他往來密切以外，凡是跟他有一點兒關係的人，都常常去拜訪他。所以他的家門口每天從早到晚排滿了車馬，真是門庭若市。（見第四十八期《成語故事》）

非常不幸的是，翟公被革職了。親戚朋友漸漸都不再去看他，即使經過他家門口，也趕著馬快點兒過去，生怕遇見他。因此他家門口越來越冷清，只有成羣的麻雀在那兒飛飛停停。如果張個網，一定可以捕到很多鳥兒。

不久，翟公復職了，仍舊當廷尉。親友們聽說後，又坐車或騎馬去探望他。翟公卻不願意見他們，只寫了幾句話貼在大門口：——死，乃知交情；——貧，乃知交情；——貴，乃知交情。乃知交情。

說明：

這個故事出自「史記」汲鄭列傳。原意是失勢的人門前冷落。現在也用來單純指門前冷清。

舉例：

① 今天生意不好，真是門可羅雀。② 學校放假，學生都回家了，校門前冷冷清清，門可羅雀。

32. TO BE ABLE TO CATCH SPARROWS ON THE DOORSTEP

Duke Jai was a Han dynasty government official. Because he held a very high-ranking and powerful position, many of his friends, relatives, and even acquaintances whom he barely knew often went to call on him. So all day long, horses and chariots were lined up in front of his house; it was really as if "the courtyard was as crowded as a marketplace." (see story number 31)

Later, however, Duke Jai had the sad misfortune of being removed from office. His friends and relatives slowly stopped going to see him, and soon the only ones left in front of his house were a flock of sparrows which would fly about and stop to rest on his doorstep. If he had had a net, Duke Jai certainly could have caught quite a few birds.

Not long afterwards, Duke Jai was reinstated. As soon as his friends and relatives heard the news, they all once again began to ride their horses or drive their chariots back to visit him. Duke Jai, however, was now unwilling to see them, and he put up a sign in front of his door reproving those who would only associate with people of wealth and status. Today, we can use this idiom to describe anyplace which has been deserted, or where people are few.

1. 門庭若市 the courtyard is as crowded as a market place
2. 冷清 desolate
3. 革職 to fire
4. 捕捉 to hunt down
5. 探望 look about

完璧

歸趙



戰國時侯，趙王得到了一塊稀世寶玉和氏璧。秦王聽說到這一個消息，就寫了一封信用給趙王，願意用十座城交換和氏璧。秦國是強國，趙王不敢拒絕，就派蔣相如帶了和氏璧去見秦王。秦王見到和氏璧，愛不釋手，仔細觀賞；一邊讚美，一邊讓左右的人傳聞，對交換十座城的事，卻一字不提。蔣相如發現秦王存心吞沒，就說：「大王，那塊璧有一點兒瑕。」說著，假裝要指出瑕的地點，給秦王看，上前接過和氏璧，退到石柱旁，毫不畏懼地說：「這璧並沒有瑕，大王如果沒有誠意用十座城交換，是得不到這塊璧的。」秦王冷笑著說：「你還能把這塊璧帶回國去嗎？」蔣相如堅定地回答：「大王如果果強迫，我的頭跟這塊璧就一塊兒撞碎在柱子上。」說著走向柱子。蔣相如這樣堅定勇敢，秦王只好讓他把玉帶回趙國。

說明：

這個故事出自「史記」蔣相如傳。這句成語是指原物歸還的意思。

舉例：

- ① 您這本書我已經看完了，現在在完璧歸趙。
② 這個在機場搶來的提箱，終於找到了失主，完璧歸趙。

33. TO RETURN THE JADE INTACT TO CHAO

During the Warring States Period, the king of Chao received a very rare, very valuable piece of jade. When the king of Ch'in heard about this, he offered him fifteen cities in exchange for the jade. As Ch'in was a very strong state, the king of Chao did not dare refuse, and so sent Lin Shiang-ru to Ch'in with the jade.

As soon as he set eyes on it, the king of Ch'in loved the jade. He looked it over carefully, and then passed it around among his attendants, praising it all the while. He did not mention the fifteen cities, and Lin Shiang-ru soon realized that he had no intention of making the exchange at all. So Lin said to the king, "Your Majesty, this jade has a small flaw in it." Reaching out as if to point out the flaw to the king he instead took the jade and stood with it next to a stone pillar. He told the king that unless he was still planning to offer Chao the cities in exchange, he would not receive the jade, but the king just laughed and asked Lin how he intended to get the jade out of Ch'in. Lin then said, "If the king forces me, I will smash this jade along with my head against this pillar." Seeing that he was serious, the king had no choice but to let him return to Chao with the jade.

Now, when we return a thing intact to its owner, we can say that we are "returning the jade intact to Chao".

1. 稀世寶玉和氏璧 extremely rare
2. 愛不釋手 love something too much to part with
3. 仔細 careful
4. 傳聞 circulate
5. 卻一字不提 refuse to bring up
6. 吞沒 appropriate

沈魚落雁

春秋時（西元前七七二～四八二年），越國有一個美女，名字叫西施，西施每天和一群女孩子在河邊洗兒，洗的妙。河裡的魚看見西施這麼漂亮，覺得自己太醜，很不好的意思，就趕快沉到水底躲起來了。後來因為西施漂亮，越國就把她送給吳國的國王。西施整天陪着吳王吃、喝、玩、樂，使吳王不專心管理國家大事，吳國後來果然就滅亡了。

漢朝（西元二〇六～八二年）也有個美女，叫王昭君。漢朝皇帝為了不打仗，和敵人的講和，就把昭君送給敵人的國王。在送昭君去北方的路上，被天空飛的大雁看見了，大雁只顧著看漂亮的王昭君，一不小心就掉在樹林裡了。

說明：

「沈魚落雁」這句成語出自「莊子」齊物論，宋之問「浣紗篇」。是稱讚女人容貌美麗。

舉例：

① 李家的女兒天生沈魚落雁的容貌，不知選上那位男士為東床快婿。② 王人美有沈魚落雁的容貌，但是心腸卻不太好。



1. 漂亮 beautiful
2. 大雁 wild goose
3. 掉 fall / drop



34. TO MAKE THE FISH SINK AND THE GOOSE FALL

During the Spring and Autumn Period, there lived in the state of Yue a beautiful girl named Shi Shr. Everyday, Shi Shr would go to the river with a group of girls to wash yarn. When the fish in the river saw how beautiful Shi Shr was, they felt themselves to be very ugly in comparison, and swam down to the bottom of the water, ashamed. Later, the king of Yue gave Shi Shr to the king of Wu, who made her his constant companion. Because she was so beautiful, the king was unable to concentrate on the affairs of the state, and the state of Wu was soon destroyed.

Wang Jau-jun was another beautiful girl, who lived during the Han dynasty. In order to avoid going to war, the Han emperor sent Wang Jau-jun to the king who wanted to fight him. Wang Jau-jun was on her way to the enemy state, when she was spotted by a goose which was flying overhead. The goose was staring so intently at Wang Jau-jun that it was not watching where it was flying, and fell into a forest.

Today, a girl who is very beautiful can be said to "make the fish sink and the goose fall".

夜郎自大



漢朝（西元公元前二〇六年～二〇二〇年）的時候，中國西南方，有一個很小的國叫夜郎。

在夜郎的鄉下有了一個女孩子，天天在河邊洗衣服。有一天，她在河邊洗衣服的時候，忽然發現遠處飄來一段大竹子，竹子裡還傳出小孩兒的哭聲。等到那根竹子飄到她面前，就趕快把它撈起來，打開一看，裡邊兒是一個可愛的男娃兒。她就很高興地把他抱回家去了。

這孩子長大後，又不會讀書又不會中國功夫，大家就推他做夜郎的國王。

夜郎國土地很小，人口也很少，可是他國國王卻非常驕傲自大。有一次他問中國使者的使者說：「你們中國和我們夜郎國那個大呢？」中國使者不但不由得哈哈大笑。

說明：

這句成語出自「漢書」西南夷傳，形容沒有什麼見識，自己認為自己了不起的人，就是夜郎自大。

舉例：

① 小李遇到事情不自量力，妄自尊大，簡直是夜郎自大。② 小高自己說他跑百米只要十秒鐘，其實只是夜郎自大，他真能跑那麼快嗎？

35. THE CONCEIT OF THE KING OF YELANG

During the Han dynasty, there was situated in the southwest part of China a very tiny kingdom known as Yelang. In the countryside of Yelang, there lived a girl who went to the river each day to wash clothes. One day while at the riverside, she suddenly noticed a large piece of bamboo blowing towards her, from inside of which came the sound of a child crying. The girl opened up the bamboo and found inside a baby boy, which she very happily took home with her.

After the little boy grew up, he became the king of Yelang. Although Yelang was very small, the king was extremely arrogant. He once asked an envoy from China, "Which country is bigger—China or Yelang?" The Chinese envoy could not help laughing at him.

Today, a person who is very arrogant can be said to be "as conceited as the king of Yelang."

1. 飄 flutter
2. 撈起 to recover from water
3. 中國功夫 Chinese martial arts
4. 人口 population
5. 驕傲 proud

刮目相看



三國時代（西元二〇〇年～二八〇年），吳國有一位將軍叫呂蒙。他小時候家裡很窮，沒錢讀書，就苦練武功，終於成了吳國的將軍。

有一天，吳帝孫權對呂蒙說：「漢朝的光武帝，打仗的時候也帶著書，魏國曹操也常說他是『老而好學』，你可是國家的第一大官，應該找時間看看歷史之類的書。」

呂蒙從此發憤讀書，越讀越有興趣，學識也越來越豐富。有一次，大臣魯肅找他商量軍事，發現他的理論高超，見解精闢，非常驚訝。魯肅撫胸嘆息，對呂蒙說：「沒想到如今你的學識這麼淵博，已經不是以前吳國的阿蒙了！」呂蒙笑著回答說：「只要和一個人分別三天，就應該對他另眼看待了！」

說明：

這個故事見於「三國志」的吳志「呂蒙傳」。「士別三日、刮目相看」或「另眼看待」意思是「一樣的人，指與以前大不相同」。

舉例：

① 李連哲先生得了諾貝爾獎，親友都對他刮目相看。② 王華的小店，經過十年的努力經營，現在已是大百貨公司了，真是令人刮目相看。

36. TO LOOK AT SOMEONE WITH NEW EYES

Lu Meng was a general of the kingdom of Wu during the Three Kingdoms Period. His family was poor and had no money to send him to school, so instead he drilled very hard in military techniques, and in the end, became a general.

One time, Emperor Sun Chuan told Lu Meng that both Emperor Guang Wu of the Han dynasty and Tsau Tsau of the kingdom of Wei were very learned people, and suggested that he, too, being a high-level government official, ought to find some time to study.

From then on, Lu Meng put all his efforts into studying, and he soon became extremely knowledgeable. The minister Lu Su came to him one day to discuss military affairs, and was greatly surprised to discover that the general's theories and ideas were brilliant. He said to Lu Meng, "I never thought you would become as learned as you are today; you're not the same person you were before!" Lu Meng laughed and said, "You need only be separated from a person for three days, and you will see him with new eyes!"

Today, when a person does something that causes others to see him differently, we can say that people "look at him with new eyes."

1. 老而好學 still like to study in old age
2. 經史 a history of the classics
3. 發憤 to be roused to action
4. 理論 theory
5. 見解 view
6. 驚訝 surprised



東窗事發



宋朝（西元九六〇～一二七九年）末年，北方的人來侵犯，將軍岳飛率領軍隊勇敢抵抗，終於把敵人打敗。正想乘勝追擊敵人的時候，忽然皇帝下了十二道金牌，命令岳飛和軍隊立刻回去。原來這是私人通敵的人的太師秦檜的詭計，假冒皇帝的意思來陷害岳飛。秦檜的這些詭計，都是他和妻子王氏在家裏的東窗下秘密商量出來的。

後來秦檜和他的兒子秦熺相繼死亡，王氏請了幾個研究鬼神靈魂的人來，想知道他們父子死後的情狀。來的人在做法以後告訴王氏說：「我先見到了公子秦熺，他告訴我說秦太師在鄧州城，我到鄧州城，看不見太師，正戴著鐵枷做苦工呢。他讓我轉告你，你們在東窗下商量的那件事已經被揭發了。」

說明：

這句成語出自「西湖遊覽志餘」，是後人痛恨秦檜而編造的，但是自宋以來流傳很廣。現在指事情敗露。

舉例：

① 那件國庫販毒案子，因為內訌，以致東窗事發了。② 千萬別做壞事！一旦東窗事發，就得坐牢。

- | | |
|---------------------|--------------|
| 1. 侵犯 encroach upon | 4. 秘密 secret |
| 2. 詭計 wiles / craft | 5. 商量 confer |
| 3. 陷害 to frame | |

37. THE AFFAIR OF THE EAST WINDOW IS EXPOSED

During the final years of the Sung dynasty, China was invaded by Jin people from the north. General Yue Fei led the army in resistance, and defeated the enemy. Just as he was about to take advantage of his victory and attack the Jin army, he received word that the emperor had ordered him to return. As it turned out, this was actually a plot of Chin Hui, a Sung dynasty official who was conspiring with the enemy. In order to frame Yue Fei, Chin Hui had tricked him into returning early. Chin Hui had thought this plot up together with his wife, under the east window of their house.

Sometime later, Chin Hui and his son Chin Shi died, one right after the other. Chin Hui's wife hired someone who could communicate with ghosts and spirits to come and find out how her husband and son were doing after death. After he had finished, the man said to her, "I first went to see your son, who told me that your husband was in the city of Feng-du. So I went there and found him doing hard labor, wearing iron cangue. He asked me to tell you that the thing which you two discussed under the east window has already been exposed."

Now, when a wrong-doing is brought to light, it may be said that "the affair of the east window has been exposed."

刻舟求劍



38. TO CARVE A MARK IN THE BOAT AND LOOK FOR THE SWORD

During the Spring and Autumn Period, there was a man who hired a small boat to take him from the north end of the Yangtze river to the south end. As the boat got out into the middle of the river, the man was admiring the beautiful scenery. He began to sing a song and beat time with the sword he was carrying in his hand. Suddenly a strong wind came up and created a wave which rocked the boat so hard that the man's sword fell into the river. This was the man's most treasured sword. He was about to jump in after it, when he decided that he should first make a mark on the side of the boat at the place where the sword had fallen in. That way, he reasoned, he would be sure to find it. Having made the mark, he ordered the boatman to stop, took off his shoes and long coat, and jumped in the water. He looked all around, but couldn't find his sword. Utterly exasperated, he said to the boatman, "Do you see this mark on the side of the boat? This is where my sword fell into the river! So how come I can't find it?"

Today, a person who refuses to listen to logic, but stubbornly adheres to his own opinions, can be said to "carve a mark in the boat and look for the sword."

1. 周圍 all around
2. 風景 scenery
3. 欣賞 appreciate
4. 浪 wave
5. 記號 mark

春秋時代（西元前七七二—二二〇到四八三——年），有個住在江以北的楚國人，要到江以南去看朋友。他雇了一條小船，一個坐船夫。船夫一下一下地搖著槳，船慢慢向前行，漸漸離開岸，到了江心。周圍風景如畫，他一連兒欣賞美景，不由自得唱起歌兒來，還用手中的寶劍打著拍子。忽然一陣風吹過來，一個浪頭把船衝得搖晃了。一下。他的手裡的劍就掉到水里去了。這是他心愛的寶劍，他想馬上跳下去去撿劍，可是他又想，還是先做個記號吧！免得找不到。想著，就用小刀在船舷上劍掉下去的地方，刻了一個記號。刻好了記號才叫船夫把船停住。他脫了長袍跳下水去，找來找去，怎麼也找不到那把劍。他急得滿頭是汗，氣極敗壞地跟船夫說：「你看船舷上這個記號！我的劍就是從這兒掉下去的。怎麼會不見了呢？」

說明：

這句成語出自「呂氏春秋」。這個人只知劍掉下水的地方刻記號找劍，並不明白劍掉下去不動，而船繼續向前行的道理。用來比喻固執己見的人。

舉例：

① 告訴他到紐約去這條路最近，他就是不信，一定要繞著路走，真是刻舟求劍。② 李先生是個非常固執的人，做事就像刻舟求劍，不能接受新的意見。



東道主人

春秋時代之，晉國與秦國約，秦國一一起出兵攻打鄭國。鄭文公聽到這個消息，想自自己沒有辦法抵抗兩個大國，非常恐懼。鄭國的位大夫侯之，就建議：「派老臣去勸之，武去遊說秦穆公，因為為之，武口才好。鄭文公很誠懇地請之，武為國家效力，終於感動了之，武，整裝前往秦國。」

之武被守將攔阻，見不到秦王。眼看落日落在西山，他就放聲大哭。兵士把他帶到秦王面前，問他哭的原因。他說：「鄭國在晉國東邊，秦國在晉國西邊。如果晉國佔領了鄭國，疆土擴展，秦國也就很危險了。所以我為鄭秦兩國而哭。」秦王點點頭，覺得很有道理。他接著說：「如果秦國不攻打鄭國，鄭國願意做東邊道上的主人，招待來鄭國的秦人。」秦王終於被說動，撤兵，解除了鄭國的危機。

說明：

這句成語出自左傳僖公三十三年，謂之武見秦伯所說的話。因為鄭國在秦國東邊，所以自稱東道上的主人。現在引申指主人；如房東、店東、做東等。

舉例：

① 今天小張做東道主人，請大家吃飯。② 各位同學如果來美國，讓我做個東道主人，招待大家。



39. THE HOST OF THE EAST

During the Spring and Autumn Period, the kingdom of Chin was planning to collaborate with the kingdom of Ch'in to attack the kingdom of Cheng. Duke Wen of Cheng was sure that he didn't have a chance against these two large kingdoms, and was very afraid. So, at the suggestion of one of his officials, the duke sent his minister Ju Jr-wu to Ch'in to try to convince the king not to attack Cheng.

Upon arriving in Ch'in, Ju Jr-wu was stopped by a soldier on duty and not allowed into court. When he saw the sun set in the west, he began to cry, at which point he was taken to see the king to find out why he was so upset. Ju replied, "Cheng is to the east of Chin, and Ch'in is to its west. If Chin were to take over Cheng and expand its border, Ch'in would also be in danger. I am crying for the kingdoms of Cheng and Ch'in." The king agreed that Ju Jr-wu had a point, and Ju Jr-wu continued, "If Ch'in does not attack Cheng, Cheng will be the host of the east, willing to entertain anyone from Ch'in who goes there." The king of Ch'in was finally persuaded. He withdrew his troops, and relieved Cheng's crisis.

Today, anyone who acts as a host can be referred to as "the host of the east."

1. 恐懼 fear
2. 佔領 to occupy
3. 撤軍 pull soldiers out

青出

於藍



40. INDIGO BLUE IS EXTRACTED FROM THE INDIGO PLANT

During the Northern Dynasties Period, there lived a man named Li Mi, who from his youth studied under Kung Fan. Kung Fan was both very knowledgeable and morally upright. He taught his students to be conscientious and responsible. Before each lecture, he would first thoroughly research his subject, and then teach his students everything that he knew. He had very high hopes for his students, especially in the area of morality, and controlled them very rigidly. So his students all had high respect for him. Li Mi was an extremely intelligent and hardworking student. He not only memorized everything the teacher taught him, but because he studied very intensively, he learned many new things. Several years later, he knew even more than his teacher.

From then on, whenever Kung Fan had a problem, he would go ask Li Mi for advice. This made Li Mi very uncomfortable, so his teacher used a phrase of Shun-tz: "Indigo blue is extracted from the indigo plant"—as a metaphor for a student surpassing his teacher. (This is because the color, indigo blue, is a more beautiful shade of blue than the plant from which it is extracted.)

The meaning of this idiom, then, is that "the student has become better than the teacher."

1. 品德 moral character
2. 期望 look forward to
3. 敬重 honor
4. 鑽研 scrutinize thoroughly
5. 謙虛 modest
6. 觀察 observe

北朝（公元三九六～五三四年）時，代有——個人名叫李謐，他從小就跟著孔璠讀書。孔璠是——個又很有學問，品德又高尚的人。他教學生認真負責，每次講書以前，自己一定先熟讀，再仔細研究完，然後把自己所知道的全量教給學生。他對學生的期望很高，尤其是在品德方面，管束得更嚴。因此，學生都非常敬重他。李謐是個又聰明又肯努力上進的學生，他不但把老師教的都牢牢记住，而且由於他努力鑽研，又得到了很多新知識。幾年之後，他懂得比老師還要多。孔璠是個很謙虛的人，他發現學生李謐觀察力和領悟力比自己強，遇到困難或問題，就去請教李謐。李謐見老師來問他，心中很不安心。孔璠就用《荀子》勸學篇裡的一句說話「青出於藍」來比喻學生比老師強。

說明：

荀子勸學篇有——句話「青出於藍勝於藍」，是說青色出自藍色，可是比藍色好。經過孔璠的比喻，這句成語的意思是指「學生比老師好」。

舉例

① 我是一個小學老師，我有很多學生都當了大學教授，他們都是「青出於藍」呀！② 張教授對學生，這次發表了一篇很精采的論文，真是「青出於藍」。

拋磚引玉



唐朝（西元六—八～九〇〇七〇年）時候，有一個叫趙嘏的。他做的詩很好，連當時的大詩人杜甫都喜歡看他寫的詩。他做了很多詩，有一首詩裡的「長笛一聲人倚樓」更是受到大家的讚美。他也因此得了「倚樓」的綽號。

那時候，有一個喜歡做詩的人叫常建，很仰慕趙嘏的才氣，但是他不認識趙嘏。有一天，聽說趙嘏要到他住的這個地方（吳）來遊玩。當地的有一處名勝靈巖寺，凡是到吳的人，一定會先到靈巖寺去遊玩。他就先在靈巖寺讓客人題詩的牆上，寫了兩句詩。

趙嘏到吳以後，果然和小朋友一起遊覽靈巖寺。當他看見常建題的兩句詩，不由得順手又寫了兩句。因為我們中國詩，最少是四句。常建達到目的，他說：「我的詩是磚，趙嘏的詩是玉，我這是拋磚引玉呀！」

說明：

這句成語出自《傳燈錄》。比喻用不好的引出好的，是謙虛的客氣話。

舉例：

①『各位，我先說吧！我這是拋磚引玉，希望大家多多指教。』②張老師為孤兒院先捐了五十元，目的是拋磚引玉，希望大家共襄盛舉。

1. 綽號 a nickname

41. TO ATTRACT JADE BY LAYING BRICKS

During the Tang dynasty, there lived a man named Jau Gu, who was a very talented poet. Jau Gu's poems were so well-written that even famous poets of his time enjoyed reading them.

At that time, in a place called Wu, there lived a man named Chang Jian, who also liked to write poems. Chang Jian greatly admired Jau Gu's literary talent, and longed to know him personally. One day, Chang Jian heard that Jau Gu would be travelling to Wu. He knew that Jau Gu would definitely go visit Ling Yan Temple during his trip, because this was a very famous place which everyone who came to Wu went to see. So Chang Jian went first to the temple, and on the wall which was set aside for guests' comments and ideas, wrote two lines of a poem.

When Jau Gu saw the two lines of poetry on the temple wall, he could not help adding another two lines, because Chinese poems are always composed of at least four lines. And so Chang Jian achieved his goal. He said, "My poem is a brick, and Jau Gu's poem is jade. I layed a brick, and attracted jade!"

This idiom is now a polite expression often used when giving an opinion or delivering a speech. It means that what one is offering is somehow lacking, and one is in hopes that others will, seeing it, offer something that is better.

狐假虎威



從前有一隻老虎，他想到找各種各樣的野獸來吃，找來找去什麼也找不到。有一天，他終於找到了一隻狐狸。

「你不能吃我，」老虎對狐狸說：「你如果要吃我，那我就是你的頭兒了。」老虎說：「你？你這小東西，還想做我的頭兒呢？誰相信你？」

「你不相信我？好，我們就這麼辦：你讓我走在前面，你跟在後面。看那些動物見了我，敢不敢不逃走？如果敢，我就是你的頭兒；如果不敢，你才是。」老虎覺得這主意不錯，就跟着他走。那些動物一看見他們，都嚇得跑了。老虎不知道，那些動物是怕他，還是怕那隻狐狸。

說明：

戰國的時分（西元前四〇三到二二二年），北方各國都害怕楚國的大將昭奚恤，楚宣王覺得很奇怪。當時有一位大臣江乙，明知其中原由，卻不敢坦白地向楚王說出，就編了「狐假虎威」的故事來比喻昭奚恤「借別人的權勢恐嚇人，欺侮人」。

舉例：

① 他爸爸是老闆，他就到處「狐假虎威」，欺負員工。② 那個大流氓手下的人，經常「狐假虎威」，欺負這附近的人家。

42. THE FOX BORROWS THE TIGER'S POWER

There once was a tiger who was very hungry. He searched and he searched for some kind of animal to eat, but he could find nothing. Finally, he caught a fox. But before the tiger could eat him, the fox said, "You can't eat me! Heaven has made me King of the Beasts, and if you eat me, you will be breaking Heaven's law!" The tiger did not believe that an animal as small as the fox could be King of the Beasts, and so the fox continued, "If you don't believe me, just walk behind me, and see how many of the animals dare not to run when they see me coming!" The tiger agreed, and began to follow the fox. And when the animals saw them coming, they all fled in fright. The tiger did not know that it was actually himself, and not the fox, that the animals were afraid of.

Today, this idiom is used to describe a person who uses another's influence to frighten or bully people.

1. 狐狸 fox
2. 老虎 tiger
3. 嚇跑 frightened away



杯弓蛇影



晉朝（西元二六五～四三九年）有一個人名叫樂廣。他不但好喝酒，也好友朋友。有一天，他想起一個朋友很久不見了，就託人去問候。那個朋友說：「前些日子，我在樂廣家喝酒，忽然發現酒杯裡有一條小蛇。當時我心裡很不安，勉強把酒喝下去，果然回到家就病了，到現在還沒好呢，一定是酒杯裡的那條蛇在肚子裡作怪。」樂廣聽了來人回的話，以後，立刻想到酒杯中的小蛇，可能是牆上的弓。樂廣家中牆上掛了一張弓，弓上畫了花紋。弓的影子要是映在酒杯裡，酒一見動，弓影不就像一條游動的蛇嗎？樂廣想到這兒，恍然大悟。立刻把那個朋友請到家裡來，把想法告訴他。朋友聽了，心中如釋重負，心病馬上就好了。

說明：

這句成語出自晉書樂廣傳。比喻把虛幻的、懷疑的事當成真的，心中不安而疑慮。

舉例：

①李太太自從健康檢查，發現體重減輕了點兒以後，整天杯弓蛇影，認為有大病了。②算命先生說老王今年運氣不好，老王就成天杯弓蛇影，連過馬路都左顧右看，好半天也過不去。

43. TO MISTAKE THE REFLECTION OF THE BOW FOR A SNAKE

During the Chin dynasty, there lived a man named Yue Guang. One day, he realized that there was one of his friends whom he hadn't seen in awhile, and sent someone to call on him. The friend said to his visitor, "A few days ago, I was drinking wine at Yue Guang's house, when suddenly I noticed a snake in my glass! I felt very uncomfortable, and barely finished the wine. Ever since I got home that day I've been sick, and I just know it's that snake acting up in my stomach!" When word of this got back to Yue Guang, he immediately thought of the bow that was hanging on his wall. If this bow were reflected in a glass of wine, when the wine moved, wouldn't the reflection resemble a small snake? Yue Guang quickly invited his friend over and explained this theory to him. When the friend heard this, he was very relieved, and suddenly his illness disappeared.

Now, when a person needlessly worries about some small or imaginary thing, we can say that that person is "mistaking the reflection of the bow for a snake."

1. 勉強 reluctantly
2. 肚子 stomach
3. 小蛇 small
4. 花紋 decorative design
5. 恍然大悟 to come to understand suddenly
6. 如釋重負 to feel greatly relieved

歧路亡羊



44. TO LOSE THE SHEEP ON A FORKED ROAD

Yang-tz was a great scholar of the Warring States Period. One day, his neighbor lost a sheep, and asked many of his friends and relatives to come help him look for it. Yang-tz asked his neighbor why he needed so many people to look for a single lost sheep. The neighbor replied that it was because there were many forks in the road, and without many people, it would be impossible to find the sheep.

After awhile, all of the people who had been out looking for the sheep returned, none of them having had any luck. Yang-tz again asked his neighbor why, with so many people looking for the sheep, none of them had been able to find it. The neighbor answered that it was because each of the forks in the road had yet another fork, so the people looking for the sheep all ran back and forth several times. When his students asked him why he was so concerned about one little lost sheep, that wasn't even his own, Yang-tz replied, "I have learned something from this. When studying, if we don't take the right road, we'll wind up just like the people looking for the sheep. We'll waste time and energy, and yet never get anywhere."

Today, a person who does not concentrate on the subject he is studying or the task he is performing, and therefore achieves nothing, can be said to have "lost the sheep on a forked road."

楊子¹是戰國時代²的人（西元³前⁴四〇〇⁵三⁶到⁷二〇二⁸二〇二年⁹）的大學¹⁰問家¹¹。有一¹²天¹³，鄰居¹⁴丟¹⁵了¹⁶一¹⁷隻¹⁸羊¹⁹，請²⁰了²¹很²²多²³親戚²⁴朋友²⁵吵吵嚷嚷²⁶地²⁷去²⁸找²⁹羊³⁰。楊子³¹見³²了³³就³⁴問³⁵：「只³⁶不³⁷過³⁸丟³⁹了⁴⁰一⁴¹隻⁴²羊⁴³，為⁴⁴什⁴⁵麼⁴⁶要⁴⁷麻⁴⁸煩⁴⁹那⁵⁰麼⁵¹多⁵²人⁵³去⁵⁴找⁵⁵呢⁵⁶？」鄰居⁵⁷回⁵⁸答⁵⁹：「村⁶⁰外⁶¹那⁶²條⁶³路⁶⁴岔⁶⁵路⁶⁶太⁶⁷多⁶⁸了⁶⁹，不⁷⁰多⁷¹請⁷²些⁷³人⁷⁴就⁷⁵沒⁷⁶辦⁷⁷法⁷⁸分⁷⁹頭⁸⁰去⁸¹找⁸²。」

過⁸³了⁸⁴一⁸⁵會⁸⁶兒⁸⁷，找⁸⁸羊⁸⁹的⁹⁰人⁹¹都⁹²回⁹³來⁹⁴了⁹⁵，誰⁹⁶也⁹⁷沒⁹⁸找⁹⁹著¹⁰⁰羊¹⁰¹。楊子¹⁰²又¹⁰³問¹⁰⁴：「這¹⁰⁵麼¹⁰⁶多¹⁰⁷人¹⁰⁸，分¹⁰⁹頭¹¹⁰沿¹¹¹著¹¹²岔¹¹³路¹¹⁴找¹¹⁵，怎¹¹⁶麼¹¹⁷還¹¹⁸是¹¹⁹不¹²⁰到¹²¹呢¹²²？」鄰居¹²³嘆¹²⁴了¹²⁵口¹²⁶氣¹²⁷說¹²⁸：「那¹²⁹條¹³⁰路¹³¹不¹³²僅¹³³岔¹³⁴路¹³⁵多¹³⁶，每¹³⁷條¹³⁸岔¹³⁹路¹⁴⁰上¹⁴¹又¹⁴²有¹⁴³岔¹⁴⁴路¹⁴⁵，所¹⁴⁶以¹⁴⁷找¹⁴⁸羊¹⁴⁹的¹⁵⁰人¹⁵¹來¹⁵²回¹⁵³空¹⁵⁴跑¹⁵⁵了¹⁵⁶好¹⁵⁷幾¹⁵⁸趟¹⁵⁹。」楊子¹⁶⁰聽¹⁶¹了¹⁶²以¹⁶³後¹⁶⁴，很¹⁶⁵久¹⁶⁶沒¹⁶⁷說¹⁶⁸話¹⁶⁹。他¹⁷⁰的¹⁷¹學¹⁷²生¹⁷³勸¹⁷⁴他¹⁷⁵說¹⁷⁶：「老¹⁷⁷師¹⁷⁸！丟¹⁷⁹一¹⁸⁰隻¹⁸¹羊¹⁸²是¹⁸³小¹⁸⁴事¹⁸⁵，何¹⁸⁶況¹⁸⁷羊¹⁸⁸又¹⁸⁹不¹⁹⁰是¹⁹¹您¹⁹²的¹⁹³，您¹⁹⁴為¹⁹⁵什¹⁹⁶麼¹⁹⁷問¹⁹⁸問¹⁹⁹不²⁰⁰樂²⁰¹呢²⁰²？」楊子²⁰³回²⁰⁴答²⁰⁵：「從²⁰⁶找²⁰⁷羊²⁰⁸這²⁰⁹件²¹⁰事²¹¹，我²¹²領²¹³悟²¹⁴了²¹⁵一²¹⁶個²¹⁷道²¹⁸理²¹⁹。我²²⁰們²²¹求²²²學²²³如²²⁴果²²⁵不²²⁶走²²⁷正²²⁸路²²⁹，就²³⁰會²³¹像²³²找²³³羊²³⁴一²³⁵樣²³⁶，費²³⁷時²³⁸費²³⁹力²⁴⁰，卻²⁴¹沒²⁴²有²⁴³收²⁴⁴穫²⁴⁵。」

說 明：

這句²⁴⁶成²⁴⁷語²⁴⁸是²⁴⁹戰²⁵⁰國²⁵¹時²⁵²代²⁵³楊²⁵⁴子²⁵⁵所²⁵⁶說²⁵⁷的²⁵⁸寓²⁵⁹言²⁶⁰。比²⁶¹喻²⁶²讀²⁶³書²⁶⁴做²⁶⁵事²⁶⁶要²⁶⁷是²⁶⁸不²⁶⁹專²⁷⁰心²⁷¹一²⁷²致²⁷³，就²⁷⁴像²⁷⁵在²⁷⁶岔²⁷⁷路²⁷⁸上²⁷⁹找²⁸⁰羊²⁸¹，結²⁸²果²⁸³一²⁸⁴事²⁸⁵無²⁸⁶成²⁸⁷。

舉 例：

① 美²⁸⁸華²⁸⁹學²⁹⁰了²⁹¹半²⁹²年²⁹³小²⁹⁴提²⁹⁵琴²⁹⁶，後²⁹⁷來²⁹⁸改²⁹⁹學³⁰⁰鋼³⁰¹琴³⁰²，現³⁰³在³⁰⁴又³⁰⁵要³⁰⁶改³⁰⁷學³⁰⁸吹³⁰⁹豎³¹⁰笛³¹¹了³¹²。簡³¹³直³¹⁴就³¹⁵像³¹⁶歧³¹⁷路³¹⁸亡³¹⁹羊³²⁰，永³²¹遠³²²成³²³不³²⁴了³²⁵音³²⁶樂³²⁷家³²⁸。② 你³²⁹要³³⁰環³³¹遊³³²世³³³界³³⁴嗎³³⁵？應³³⁶該³³⁷好³³⁸兒³³⁹地³⁴⁰計³⁴¹劃³⁴²一³⁴³下³⁴⁴，否³⁴⁵則³⁴⁶這³⁴⁷兒³⁴⁸走³⁴⁹走³⁵⁰，那³⁵¹兒³⁵²走³⁵³走³⁵⁴，歧³⁵⁵路³⁵⁶亡³⁵⁷羊³⁵⁸的³⁵⁹做³⁶⁰法³⁶¹，沒³⁶²辦³⁶³法³⁶⁴走³⁶⁵遍³⁶⁶每³⁶⁷個³⁶⁸地³⁶⁹方³⁷⁰。

- | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. 吵吵嚷嚷地 loud quarreling | 4. 悶悶不樂 unhappy |
| 2. 麻煩 trouble | 5. 費時費力 waste time and energy |
| 3. 岔路 lost | 6. 收穫 fruit of efforts |

殃及池魚



春秋（西元公元前七二二～四八三年）

時代，有一個名叫桓司馬的，他有一顆又大又圓的寶珠。後來，國王知道了，一心想一試要得到這顆天下少有的寶珠。有一天，國王派人去問桓司馬：「你那顆寶珠到底藏在甚麼地方？」桓司馬回答：「我把它扔到城牆外的護城河裡去了。」

貪心的國王為了得到這顆寶珠，就命令很多人，把護城河的水淘乾，在污泥裡翻來翻去地找。河那麼大，珠子那麼小，找了很久也沒有找到。可是因為人多，在河裡踩來踩去，河水乾了，河裡的魚也都死了。

說明：

這句成語出自「呂氏春秋」「必曰」篇。東漢杜預「橫梁」文也有「城門失火，殃及池魚」的句子。意思是無緣無故受到禍害的牽連。

舉例：

① 這件事大明無緣無故地受到牽連，真是城門失火、殃及池魚。② 我勸你最好不要隨便答應別人做保證，如果被你保證的人出了事，你就要受到池魚之殃。

45. TO BRING DISASTER UPON THE FISH

During the Spring and Autumn Period, there lived a man named Huan Sz-ma who had a very big, very precious jewel. When the king found out about this, he wanted very much to obtain this treasure for himself, and sent someone to ask Huan Sz-ma just where he kept his jewel hidden. Huan Sz-ma replied, "I threw it into the moat outside the city wall."

And so the greedy king ordered that all of the water be emptied from the moat, and that the mud be searched until this jewel was found. The moat was so big and the jewel so small that although the people searched for a long time, they never found it. But because the moat had been drained dry, and there were so many people walking through the mud, all of the fish that lived in the moat died.

Today, this idiom can be used to describe a situation in which an innocent person becomes involved in a harmful situation.

1. 又大又圓 big and round
2. 寶 treasure
3. 貪心 greedy
4. 污泥 mud



南轅北轍



戰國時代（西元公元前四〇三年～二二一年），魏王想前去攻打趙國的國都邯鄲。有一個叫季梁的人，在半路上聽到了這個消息，他就前去勸阻魏王。他說：「我剛才在路上遇到一個人的馬，說要去南方，可是他却趕著車向北走。我問他為什麼？他說他的馬很好，旅費又多，車夫趕車的技巧也很好。大王，你看他這樣繞路走，不是離趙國更遠了嗎？」「我以前常常聽大王說，老是要做一個霸王，要大家家都服從你，可是現在你仗著兵強馬壯去侵犯趙國，來擴大國土和威名，這樣兒下去，你的作法和你理想就越來越遠了。就好像像那個想要到楚國的人，反而趕著車往北走一樣。永遠達不到目的。」魏王聽了他的話，覺得有道理，就不去打趙國了。

說明：

這個故事出自「申鑒」。「南轅北轍」是比喻人的行動和心裡想的完全相反。

舉例：

- ① 張大宇很想將來做大事，可是他從來不好好讀書，他的行為和願望簡直是南轅北轍。
- ② 小明和大華的意見永遠是南轅北轍，不會一致。

46. TO ATTEMPT TO GO SOUTH BY DRIVING THE CHARIOT NORTH

During the Warring States Period, the king of Wei was planning to attack the kingdom of Chao. A man named Ji Liang heard of this plan, and immediately went to call on the king, to urge him not to attack. He said, "I just met a man who said that he was going to Ch'u, in the south, but he was heading north. When I asked him why, he said that he had a strong horse, a lot of money to spend on the trip, and a skilled driver. Your Majesty, do you not think that by going this way, this man was heading away from, instead of towards, the kingdom of Ch'u? I also once heard His Majesty say that he hoped to become a great ruler, whom everyone would obey. And yet now, you plan to invade the kingdom of Chao in order to expand your territory and glorify your own name. Do you not feel that by acting in this way, you are moving farther and farther from your goal?" The king agreed with what Ji Liang had said, and agreed not to attack Chao.

Today, we can say that a person whose actions hinder, rather than help, the completion of his goal is "attempting to go south by driving the chariot north."

1. 消息 news
2. 作法 method
3. 理想 imagination
4. 越來越 more and more
5. 永遠 forever
6. 目的地 destination
7. 道理 reason

枯魚之肆



戰國時代，莊子家裡很窮，簡直就沒飯吃了。他就到藍河侯家去借錢。莊子到了藍河侯家，表示要向他借錢，沒想到藍河侯說：「你要借錢沒問題，不過要等我收到租金以後。」

莊子很氣，就對藍河侯說：「昨天我在路旁的乾水溝裡看見一條鯽魚，他說他是從東海來的，今天不幸掉在乾水溝裡，眼看就要乾死了，快點兒給他一桶水救救他。」我點頭說：「好的，我正要到南方去，那裡到處都有水，我一定把西江的水放出來救你。」不料鯽魚很氣，忿忿地說：「等到你把西江的水放出來，那時我早已不在這兒了，你只能到鹹魚灘兒上找我。」

說明：

這句成語出自「莊子」的「外物篇」，說明魚得不到水立刻會乾死，譬喻遠水解不了近渴的意思。

舉例：

① 李明出去旅行回來，看不到自己心愛的魚，姐姐告訴他，你的魚已成枯魚之肆了。② 大漢在沙漠旅行，帶來的水和乾糧都沒了，他想自己現在的情況好比枯魚之肆。

47. A DRIED FISH STORE

During the Warring States Period, Juang-tz's family was very poor. When they had nothing left to eat, Juang-tz went to borrow some money from a local official. However, the official told Juang-tz that he would not be able to loan him any money until after he had collected the rent.

Juang-tz was very angry, and he said to the official, "Yesterday I saw a crucian carp in a ditch that had dried up. He looked as if he were about to die, and asked me to quickly fetch a bucket of water to save his life. I told him that I was on my way south, where there is a lot of water, and that I would certainly bring some back for him. But the carp grew very angry and said, 'By the time you've gotten back with that water, I won't be here anymore! You'll have to go look for me at a dried fish store!'"

This idiom is now used to mean that a promise of help later is of no use in an immediate crisis.

1. 借錢 borrow money
2. 租金 rent
3. 氣忿 furious
4. 鯽魚 gold carp
5. 救 save



前車之鑑



48. A WARNING TAKEN FROM THE OVERTURNED CART AHEAD

During the Western Han dynasty, there lived in Loyang a man named Jia Yi. Jia Yi was very knowledgeable, and even the emperor engaged him as a teacher. One day, he was teaching the emperor about the proper way to govern a country. He said, "During the Ch'in dynasty, there was an evil minister named Jau Gau, who was the teacher of Hu Hai, the emperor's second son. He often taught Hu Hai how to destroy one's political opponents, and often talked of how to execute prisoners."

"After his father's death, Hu Hai became emperor. On the second day of his reign, he began to kill people, and would not listen to those who tried to give him advice. In reality, Hu Hai was not a bad person, but in the end, he was overthrown."

Jia Yi continued, "Knowing the mistakes made by our elders, we should be careful not to make the same ones ourselves. It's the same as if we are out driving and see that the poor road ahead of us has caused a cart to overturn. We should learn from this, and not take the same road."

Thus, "A Warning Taken From the Overturned Cart Ahead" means seeing the mistake that someone else has made, and not making the same mistake ourselves.

西漢（西元公元前二〇六～八三年）時候，洛陽地方有兩個人名叫賈誼。他是個很有才學的問世的人，連皇帝都請他當老師。有一次他給皇帝上課，講治國的道理，他說：「秦朝有個奸臣叫趙高，是秦始皇第二個兒子胡亥的老師，常常告訴胡亥消滅政敵的方方法，也常常說怎麼樣處決囚犯的罪行。」

「秦始皇死後，胡亥做了皇帝，第二天就開始殺人。有人勸他，他就認為那個人說他不對，簡直不像皇帝。其實胡亥的本性並不壞，後來他就被推翻了。」

賈誼又說：「我們知道了以前的人犯的錯誤，就應該別再犯那樣的錯誤。就好比看見前面的路不好，車翻了，就不要再去走那條路。」

說明：

這句成語出自「漢書」的「賈誼傳」。譬喻我們做事不要犯與以前同樣的錯誤。

舉例：

① 社會上那些不努力做事最後一事無成的人，就是「前車之鑑」。② 小英有了「前車之鑑」，這次犯錯，就是「明知故犯」了。

1. 處決 to decide
2. 囚犯 prisoner
3. 事情 matter
4. 其實 in fact
5. 本性 nature
6. 壞 bad
7. 推翻 overthrow

負荊請罪



戰國時代，蘭相如因為把和氏璧完好地帶回趙國，趙王封他做「上卿」，是當時最高的官。大將軍廉頗曾為趙國出生入死，立過不少功勞。見蘭相如的官位比自己還高，很不佩服。就對部下說，如果果遇到蘭相如，一定要羞辱他。蘭相如知道這件事，就處處迴避廉頗。有一次，蘭相如坐在車上，遠遠看見廉頗，就讓車夫伏轡進小巷，等廉頗走了，纔再趕路。部下看不過他這種畏怯的樣子，紛紛表示要離開他。蘭相如說：「秦王我都不怕，怎麼會怕廉將軍呢？因為有了我和廉將軍，秦國就不敢來侵犯。如果我跟廉將軍不和睦，就像兩隻老虎相鬥，總有一個死傷，到那時，秦國就會來攻打我們了。」這話傳到廉頗耳中，他很慚愧地脫了上衣，背著荊條去請蘭相如責罰他，原諒他。

說明：

這個成語的故事在「史記」廉頗藺相如列傳上。現在比喻自己知道錯，主動請求對方責罰。叫做「負荊請罪」。

舉例：

① 張老師，我昨天喝多了酒，說錯了話，今天特來負荊請罪，請您原諒！② 小王，你得罪了李小姐，李小姐生氣了，趕快向她負荊請罪吧！

49. TO PROFFER A BIRCH AND ASK FOR A FLOGGING

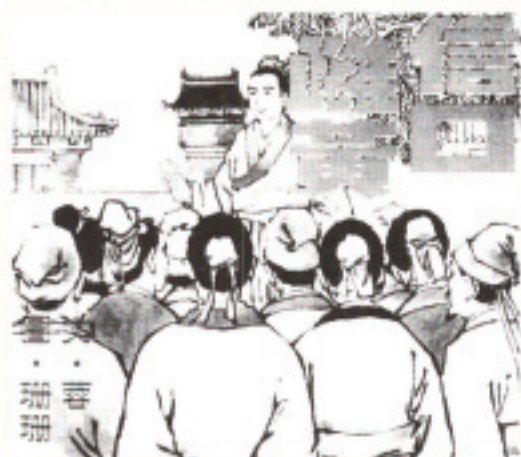
Because Lin Shiang-ru returned the jade intact to Chao (see story #33), the king of Chao made him an official of the very highest rank. General Lian Po had greatly served his country in battle, and believed it was unjust that Lin Shiang-ru should have a higher rank than his own. So the general told his troops that he was going to put Lin Shiang-ru to shame if he ever met up with him. After Lin Shiang-ru heard about this, he went out of his way to avoid Lian Po at all costs. Lin Shiang-ru's subordinates felt that he was being very cowardly, and thereafter wanted nothing to do with him. But Lin Shiang-ru said to them, "I'm not even afraid of the king of Ch'in, so why should I be afraid of General Lian Po? It's because of the two of us that Ch'in does not invade Chao. If we were to disagree, it would be just like two tigers fighting; in the end, one of us would be killed, and then Ch'in would attack." When Lian Po heard about this, he was so ashamed that he took off his shirt, and with a birch branch in hand, asked Lin Shiang-ru to flog and forgive him.

Today, this idiom can be used to describe any situation in which a person knows he has done wrong, and asks the person whom he has wronged to punish him.

1. 和氏璧 ceremonial jade disk
2. 功勞 merit
3. 服氣 yield
4. 羞辱 humiliate
5. 迴避 avoid
6. 畏怯 nervous
7. 紛紛 and disorderly
8. 侵犯 invade



信口雌黃



50. RANDOMLY SPEAKING OUT ORPIMENT

"Orpiment" is a kind of reddish-yellow mineral which was used in ancient times to paint over mistakes one made when writing.

During the Chin dynasty, there lived a man named Wang Yan, who was very eloquent. Wang Yan worked for the government, and would often travel from place to place lecturing about the affairs of the county. His lectures were very thorough, and he also added in his own opinions, so his audience always understood him. Wang Yan was a very well-known lecturer, admired by everyone.

Whenever Wang Yan gave a lecture, he was always at ease and unhurried. If he made a slip of the tongue, he would calmly go back and correct himself. Therefore people said that he "had orpiment in his mouth."

People of later generations expanded this idiom. Randomly saying things for which one has no proof is now known as "randomly speaking out orpiment."

1. 礦物 mineral
2. 黃色 yellow
3. 紙 paper
4. 口才 eloquence
5. 詳細 detailed
6. 看法 point of view
7. 佩服 respect

「雌黃」是一種黃紅色的礦物。古時候的人寫字用黃色的紙，寫錯了都用雌黃塗抹。

晉朝（西元二六六～四二〇年）時候，有一個叫王衍的人，他年輕的時候，口才就很很好。後來他在政府機關做事，更是非常常用他讀過的「老子」、「莊子」中的道理，到處講演，講國家大事。因為他講得很詳細，又隨時加上自己的看法，所以人人都聽得懂。在那個時候，他已經是很有名的演說家了，大家都佩服他。

王衍在很多人面前講演的時候，總是不慌不忙，有時時候把內容講錯了，就很從容地隨口改正，於是人們說他是「口中雌黃」。

說明：

這句成語最初見於「晉書」，後來的人從此引申，把人口中說出的沒有根據的話，叫做「信口雌黃」。

舉例：

① 李四說自己精通天文，但是當別人向他請問有關天王的星情時，他却信口雌黃。② 老張不認識李四，也沒見過面，可是當別人提起李四的做事態度時，他却信口雌黃，大加批評、譏笑，說了一些沒有根據的話。



臥薪嘗膽

春秋時候，吳王闔閭攻打越國，被越王勾踐的大將砍去右腳而死。吳國太子夫差繼承了王位。過了三年，夫差帶兵往越國報仇，打敗了越國，還把勾踐押了回來，要他住在闔閭的基旁，做守基和飼馬的低下工作。

勾踐雖然被俘了，卻從沒有忘記復國報仇的大志。反而處處極力表現對夫差的忠心，和順從；每次夫差出遊，他都高興地拿著馬鞭走在前面，終於獲得夫差的信任，把他放回去了。

勾踐回到越國以後，每天睡在柴草堆上，懸掛著一個苦膽。吃飯或睡覺之前，都先嘗嘗苦膽的苦味兒，用來提醒自已別忘記失敗被俘的恥辱。經過十年的準備，訓練軍隊，培養國力，終於打敗了吳國，重新建立越國，使越國成為當時強盛的國家之一。

說明：

這個故事，「史記」越王勾踐世家和「吳越春秋」都曾記載。比喻刻苦自勵，奮發圖強。

舉例：

① 李先生開了一家餐廳，從早到晚，甚麼事都自己做了；他用臥薪嘗膽的精神，發展事業。

② 王教授生活很節儉，把錢都用在研究實驗上，他這樣臥薪嘗膽，刻苦努力，終於成功了。

1. 培養 nourish
2. 訓練 training
3. 恥辱 shame
4. 苦味 a bitter flavor

5. 順從 obey
6. 忠心 faithful
7. 忘記 forget



51. TO SLEEP ON BRUSHWOOD AND TASTE GALL

During the Spring and Autumn Period, He Liu, the king of Wu, attacked the kingdom of Yue. During the battle, his right foot was cut off by the general of Yue, and he died. Fu Cha, the crown prince of Wu, took over the throne, and later led the Wu army back into Yue to retaliate. Fu Cha defeated Yue, captured their king, Gou Jian, and took him back to Wu, where he was forced to guard He Liu's tomb and care for the king's horses.

Although Gou Jian had been captured, he never forgot his great aspiration of rebuilding his country and avenging himself. During his time in captivity, he acted very faithful and obedient to Fu Cha, so that finally he earned Fu Cha's trust and was released.

After returning to Yue, Gou Jian slept every night on brushwood. And before eating or going to sleep, he would taste a bit of gall from the gallbladder of an animal which he always kept nearby. This was to remind himself of the imprisonment. After ten years of preparation, Gou Jian attacked and defeated Wu, rebuilt Yue, and made it one of the strongest and most prosperous kingdoms of the time.

Today, "To Sleep On Brushwood and Taste Gall" means to take whatever measures are necessary to achieve one's goal—usually indicating hard work and self-denial.



指鹿為馬



52. TO CALL A STAG A HORSE

When Ch'in Shih-huang (the first emperor of the Ch'in dynasty) was on his deathbed, his eldest son, Fu Su, was in the army. And so it was his second son, Hu Hai, Prime Minister Li Si, and military commander Jau Gau who were with him at the time. After the emperor died, these three collaborated and sent a false edict to Fu Su, which caused him to commit suicide. Hu Hai then took over the throne and gave himself the title "Junior". Junior was incapable of doing anything without first seeking the advice of Jau Gau, who thus became more and more powerful. Before long he had framed Li Si, had his whole family killed, and himself taken over the position of prime minister.

It soon became obvious that Jau Gau planned to usurp the throne as well. One day, he presented the emperor with a spotted deer, telling him that it was actually a winged steed. When Junior corrected him, saying that it was a deer and not a horse, Jau Gau announced very authoritatively to all the officials nearby, "This is clearly a horse!" And the officials, afraid to disagree with Jau Gau, obediently replied, "This is a horse."

Today, someone who often and intentionally says things that aren't true can be said to "call a stag a horse."

秦始皇在位三十七年，臨死的時候，大兒子扶蘇正在軍中；二兒子胡亥、丞相李斯、軍中府令趙高三人即在他旁邊兒。李斯和趙高串通胡亥，傳假詔令，讓扶蘇自盡。胡亥繼皇帝位，號稱二世。二世既無才又無能，甚麼事都聽從奸臣趙高的話，趙高的權力越來越大。朝中大臣若要保住自己名位，每樣事也都得依趙高的意思。過了些日子，趙高借機會誣陷李斯。說他跟強盜相通，李斯全家都被殺了。趙高當了丞相。

趙高當了丞相以後，企圖篡奪帝位的野心，漸漸暴露出來。有一天，他牽了一隻梅花鹿獻給二世，說：「這是匹名駒，能日行千里。」二世糾正他說：「丞相，這是鹿，不是馬。」趙高猛然站起來大聲說：「這是馬。」然後向文武百官大聲說：「你們看清楚！這分明是馬。」大家被趙高嚇住了，齊聲說：「這是馬。」

說明：

這句成語出自史記。比喻是非顛倒，黑白不分，叫做「指鹿為馬」。

舉例：

① 那個人一向不辨是非，指鹿為馬，別跟他談了。② 你怎麼胡言亂語，指鹿為馬，是喝醉了嗎？

- | | | | |
|---------|-----------------------|-------|------------------|
| 1. 無才無能 | no talent, no ability | 5. 漸漸 | little by little |
| 2. 誣陷 | incriminate falsely | 6. 露出 | appear |
| 3. 強盜 | robber | 7. 梅花 | plum |
| 4. 野心 | wild ambition | | |

前倨後恭

戰國時代，有一個政治學家叫蘇秦。他起初拜鬼谷子為師，後來到各處求官，都沒成功。穿著破舊的衣服，精神頹喪地回到家裡。父母、兄嫂都看不起他。尤其是他嫂子的時候，常譏笑他沒出息，並且說他這輩子永遠沒有出頭的一天天。

蘇秦非常傷心，但是並不氣餒；每天發憤讀書。終於研究出「縱橫」的道理來。

蘇秦把自己理想的政治大計劃說給各國的君主聽，卻遭到拒絕。到了燕國和趙國的時代，蘇秦建議他們聯合齊、楚、魏、韓，六國共同抗秦。燕、趙兩國非常贊成他的主張，並請他到另外四國去遊說。後來蘇秦當了六國的丞相。成了受人尊敬的名人。有一次經過家鄉，父母、兄嫂都到三十里外去歡迎他。蘇秦笑著對他的嫂子說：「你為甚麼以前那麼驕傲，現在不這樣謙虛了？」他的嫂子很難為情。

說明：

這句成語出自國策的蘇策。後來人們就把「前倨後恭」比喻勢力眼；先驕傲，後來知道別人的地位又謙卑的態度。

舉例：

① 他看張先生穿舊衣服，就露出看不起的樣子，後來知道張先生的地位，馬上改變態度，真是前倨後恭。② 店員對顧客態度一致，不要前倨後恭，引人不愉快。

5. 縱橫 two opposing principles of confederacy against and under Ch'in

1. 精神 spirit

2. 看不起 to hold in disregard

3. 傷心 grieved

4. 氣餒 discouraged

6. 尊敬 respect

7. 謙虛 humble / modest

8. 很難為情 very embarrassing



53. FIRST ARROGANT, THEN RESPECTFUL

During the Warring States Period, there lived a politician named Su Chin who tried to get a job as a government official, but to no avail. His parents, his sister-in-law, and his wife were all ashamed of him, but it was his sister-in-law who treated him worst. She would often mock him, saying that he would never amount to anything.

Su Chin felt very hurt, but he did not lose hope. He studied hard every day, and finally discovered what he called the "zong-heng" principle.

Su Chin travelled to many kingdoms explaining his ideas, and at first he was rejected everywhere he went. But his suggestion that the kingdoms of Yan, Chao, Ch'i, Ch'u, Wei, and Han all unite to fight against Ch'in was heartily accepted in both Yan and Chao. What's more, the leaders of these two kingdoms asked him to go persuade the other four leaders to go along with the plan. Later, these six kingdoms were united, and Su Chin became their very well-known and highly respected prime minister. One time, he was passing through his home town, and his parents and sister-in-law all came out to welcome him. Su Chin laughed and said to his sister-in-law, "You were always so arrogant; why is it that you've suddenly become humble?" His sister-in-law felt very ashamed.

Today, this idiom can be used to describe anyone who acts haughtily towards another person, but then becomes respectful upon learning that that person is someone of high status.

洛陽紙貴



西晉（公元二六五～三〇一～六〇五年）的時候，有一個文學家名叫左思。左思的外貌不好，也不大會說話。他決定要寫一篇「三都賦」，內容是描寫三國時代魏、蜀、吳三國首都的風土人情和山川形勢。當時有一個作家陸機知道了，就譏笑他說：「等這篇三都賦寫好了，拿來蓋酒罈子吧！」

左思並不在乎別人的譏笑，細心地找資料，家中到處都放著紙筆，每當靈感來了，立刻寫下來。他苦心構思了十年，終於完成了「三都賦」。大的文學家皇甫謐、張載、劉逵、張華等都看了「三都賦」都紛紛讚美。有的給他寫序，有的為他注解。左思的「三都賦」因此身价百倍，愛好文章的人都爭相閱讀。那時候如果要看一本新書，都得到自己買紙抄寫。人人買紙抄「三都賦」，西晉首都洛陽的紙都漲價了。

說明：

這句成語出自晉書，比喻文章寫得好，大家爭相閱讀；也常做稱他人作品傑出的稱讚話。

舉例：

① 王先生的新書還沒有出版，讀者就紛紛預約，真是洛陽紙貴。② 那本小說暢銷各地，已經再版無數次，真是洛陽紙貴。

54. PAPER IS EXPENSIVE IN LOYANG

During the Western Chin dynasty, there lived a writer named Tzuo Si, who was neither very handsome nor very eloquent. He once decided to write a book on the local customs and landscape of the capitals of Wei, Shu and Wu of the Three Kingdoms Period, which he would call San Du Fu, or The Story of the Three Capitals.

Other writers of the time mocked him, but Tzuo Si was undaunted by their criticism. Painstakingly he gathered information. After ten years of hard work, researching and writing, San Du Fu was finished. It was highly praised by many great writers, some of whom wrote a preface for it, and some of whom wrote annotations. With the contributions of these well-known writers, San Du Fu's value increased greatly, and people of the time all rushed to read it. At that time, when one wanted to read a book, one had to buy paper and copy it oneself. Because everyone wanted to buy paper on which to copy Tzuo Si's book, paper in Loyang became very expensive.

Today, this idiom can be used to describe a situation in which many people all want to read a particular book, or to praise a book or paper which is very well-written.

1. 文學家 literati
2. 外貌 outward appearance
3. 描寫 to describe
4. 資料 resource material
5. 靈感 inspiration
3. 苦心 distressed in mind
1. 注解 explanatory notes
3. 閱讀 read



食指大動



55. WHEN ONE'S FOREFINGER JUMPS

During the Spring and Autumn Period, there lived two young aristocrats who worked as officials in the court of Duke Jeng Ling, one named Sung and the other named Jia. One morning, the two were on their way to court, when suddenly Sung's forefinger jumped up all by itself. He said to Jia, "Whenever my forefinger jumps, it means that I'm going to have something really good to eat that day. I wonder what it'll be today." (The Chinese word for "forefinger" is "food finger".)

When the two young men reached the court, they heard that someone had just sent over a soft-shelled turtle, and that in a little while, the duke was going to invite everyone to have some. Jia and Sung could not help laughing to themselves. When the duke heard the story, he also laughed and said, "Whether or not that forefinger is accurate depends on me!" And sure enough, when the turtle soup was brought out, the last bowl was given to the person right before Sung. Feeling very pleased with himself, the duke laughed and said, "Well?" But Sung reached into the duke's bowl, pulled out a piece of meat, and popped it into his mouth, saying, "Who said my forefinger wasn't accurate?"

Today, when a person has a strong craving for a certain kind of food, we can say that "his forefinger is jumping."

春秋時代之（西元前七七二～四八〇一年），有兩個貴族的公子；一個叫宋、一個叫家，都在鄭靈公的朝中當大夫（官名）。有一天早晨，他們的一個兒子去朝見鄭靈公，宋的食指忽然自己跳動起來。他就告訴家說：「每次我的食指一跳動，那天就會吃到好吃的。又特別的東西。前兩次我出差到楚國，就嚐到了石花魚和天鵝的美味。今天不知道可以嚐到甚麼？」

他們倆一進大門，就聽說有客人送了隻大龜，鄭靈公正讓廚師烹調，等會兒要請大家吃。他們倆不覺相視而笑。鄭靈公知道這件事，不以為然地說：「靈公不靈，主權在我。」後來一碗碗的龜羹端上來，分到宋的面前，剛好沒有了。鄭靈公得意地大笑說：「怎麼樣？」宋走到鄭靈公面前，從他碗裡拿了一塊肉放進口中說：「誰說不靈？」

說明：

這個故事出自「左傳」，食指大動比喻胃口開得預兆。現在一般人都指胃口大開，想吃東西了。

舉例：

① 媽媽在廚房做菜，陣陣香味飄來，我不由得食指大動。② 哥哥看見弟弟吃冰淇淋，食指大動，也吃了一碗。

1. 貴族 nobility
2. 早晨 early morning
3. 食指 forefinger
4. 烹調 cook (verb)

5. 大龜 soft-shelled turtle
6. 廚師 cook (noun)
7. 碗 bowl

破鏡重圓

徐德言是南朝（西元四〇二～五八九年）時侯皇帝左右的官員。他的妻子樂昌公主是皇帝的妹妹；才學、容貌沒有人能比。皇帝整天喝酒、作詩，不管國家大事，全國各地亂得不得得了。徐德言擔心國家不保，就跟妻子說：「像你這樣才貌雙全的人，如果國家亡了，一定被有權勢的人收去，我們就永遠無法相見了。」說著，把一面鏡子摔成兩半，各保存一半。並且約定，如果真有那一天夫妻不幸失散，就在第二年正月十五日的晚上，到貴州破鏡子，尋找對方。

不久，國家果然滅亡，樂昌公主被新皇帝收去。到了約定的日子，徐德言發現一個老人在賣破鏡子。他過去拿出自己的鏡子一對，完全吻合。原來是樂昌公主不便自外，出賣破鏡子，所以託這老人拿著半面破鏡子，替她尋找丈夫。楊素知道這件事，很受感動。不但讓他們的夫妻團聚，還送了很多禮物。

說明：

這個故事出自唐朝孟棣的「本事詩」。比喻夫妻感情分離以後又復合。

舉例：

①張先生、張太太分離二十二年，現在總算破鏡重圓了。②李小姐和王先生這對未婚夫妻，因為戰亂失散，如今破鏡重圓了，大家為他們慶賀。

- | | |
|------------------|--------------------|
| 1. 容貌 appearance | 5. 摔 smash / break |
| 2. 永遠 forever | 6. 約定 appointment |
| 3. 無法 no way | 7. 失散 lost |
| 4. 鏡子 mirror | 8. 尋找 search for |



56. THE BROKEN MIRROR IS PUT BACK TOGETHER

Shiu De-yan was an attendant of the emperor during the Southern Dynasties Period. The emperor of the time paid no attention to the affairs of the state, and so Shiu De-yan feared for their kingdom's future. He also feared for his wife, Le-chang, who was the younger sister of the emperor, because she was very beautiful and very talented, and sure to be taken away from him if the kingdom were overthrown. So Shiu De-yan took a mirror and broke it in half, giving one half to his wife and keeping the other for himself. The two then agreed on a day on which they would meet, should they ever become separated.

And sure enough, not long after, their kingdom was destroyed, and Le-chang was taken away by a new court official named Yang Su. When the appointed day arrived, Shiu De-yan went out to look for his wife, but found instead an old woman with his wife's half of the mirror. As it turned out, Le-chang had been unable to come out that day, and so had asked this woman to take her half of the mirror and go in her place. When Yang Su heard this story, he was so moved that he not only allowed this couple to be reunited, but gave them many gifts as well.

And so today, when a man and woman who have been separated for along time are finally reunited, we can say that "the broken mirror has been put back together."

高枕無憂

戰國時代（西元公元前四〇〇年～二二一年），齊國宰相孟嘗君家裏，經常有非常多有才幹的客人，其中有一個叫馮諼的人。

有一次孟嘗君派馮諼到薛（山東省境內）那個地方去收田租。他不但沒有把租金收回來，反而把租田的契約全燒了。因此薛地的人非常感謝孟嘗君。後來孟嘗君不做宰相了，到薛去居住，受到當地人民的熱烈歡迎。馮諼對孟嘗君說：「聰明的人免子有三個窩，纔能保住性命。現在你只有一個窩，還不能把枕頭墊得高高，放心睡覺，我願意再為你預備兩個窩。」馮諼先對魏王說，孟嘗君很有才幹，等魏王想聘請孟嘗君時，他卻勸孟嘗君別去。而齊王知道了，怕孟嘗君去為魏國做事，就請孟嘗君留在齊國。馮諼對孟嘗君說：「現在有三個窩都做好了，你可以高枕無憂了。」

說明：

這個故事出於「國策」，意思是「可以安安心心地過快樂日子了」。

舉例：

① 現在大家有好吃的，有好穿的，過著高枕無憂的生活。② 張先生新請來了三個非常有才幹的助手，從此他就可以高枕無憂了。



1. 才幹 talents
2. 契約 written agreement
3. 燒 burn
4. 預備 prepare



57. TO FLUFF UP THE PILLOW AND HAVE A GOOD REST

Feng Shuiian lived at the home of Meng Chang-jun, prime minister of the state Ch'i during the Warring States Period.

One day, Meng Chang-jun sent Feng Shuiian to a place called Shue to collect the rent owed to him by the people there. But Feng Shuiian not only did not collect the rent; he also burned all of the contracts. The people of Shue were therefore very grateful to Meng Chang-jun.

Sometime later, when he was no longer prime minister, Meng Chang-jun went to live in Shue, and was warmly welcomed by all of the people there. However, Feng Shuiian believed that this was not quite enough. So he went and told the king of Wei what a talented person Meng Chang-jun was, and before long Meng Chang-jun was offered a position in the Wei Court. On Feng Shuiian's advice, Meng Chang-jun refused the position, but the king of Ch'i, afraid that he would accept, then asked Meng Chang-jun to stay in Ch'i. At this, Feng Shuiian said to Meng Chang-jun, "You now have a choice of three places where you could live. You can fluff up the pillows and have a good rest."

Thus, "To Fluff Up the Pillows and Have a Good Rest" means to live a happy and worry-free life.

狼狽 爲奸



狼和狼狽都是野獸。狼的前腳長，後腿短；狼狽的前腳短，後腿長。這兩種動物常常同進同出，去偷吃農夫養的牛羊。

有一天，狼和狼狽肚子餓了，一起出去找吃的東西。當他們走到一個羊圈的後面，知道裡面有很多羊，可是抬頭一看，羊圈的牆又高又結實，跳也跳不進去，撞也撞不倒。他們倆想了個主意，狼說：「讓我騎在你的脖子上，你把後腿伸直，站起來，把我驮得高高的，我伸出前腳就可以抓住小羊了。」

這次，狼和狼狽合作偷羊，他們一隻用長的前腳，一隻用長的後腿，互相利用，纔成功。後來人就把它們兩個互相合作做壞事，稱為「狼狽爲奸」。

說明：

根據「西園雜俎」記載，「狼狽爲奸」譬喻兩個人或是幾個人聚在一起，彼此勾結，互相勾結做壞事。

舉例：

① 你看張三和李四天天在一起，鬼鬼祟祟的，一定是「狼狽爲奸」，要做壞事。② 銀行職員和盜匪聯絡，狼狽爲奸，想搶運鈔車。

58. THE WOLF AND THE BEI MAKE MISCHIEF

The "bei" is an animal much like the wolf. The major difference between these two animals is that the wolf has long front legs and short hind legs, while the bei has short front legs and long hind legs. The wolf and the bei often work together to catch sheep or cows.

One day, a wolf and a bei who were out looking for something to eat came across a sheep pen which was surrounded by a very high, very sturdy wall. They tried and they tried, but could neither jump over the wall nor knock it down. Finally, the wolf thought of a plan. He said, "You let me climb up on your shoulders, and stretch out your long hind legs, pushing me up high. Then if I stretch out my long front legs, I'll be able to reach us a lamb." And so by cooperating in this way, the wolf and the bei got their lamb.

Today, when two people work together to accomplish something bad, we can say that "the wolf and the bei are making mischief."

1. 狼 wolf
2. 狼狽 bei
3. 野獸 wild animal
4. 動物 animal
5. 農夫 farmer
6. 肚子 stomach
7. 餓 hungry
8. 主意 idea



袒腹東床

晉朝（西元二六五～四二〇年）的王羲之，很聰明；文章寫得好，毛筆字寫得更好。

當時的大官都鑒，有一個女兒，人長得很漂亮，又有才華。都鑒想為女兒物色一個女婿，他知道有一個王老先生的家裏子弟很多，就派人到王老先生的家去看。王老先生就說，你自個已到東廂房去選吧！

王氏的子弟個個長得眉清目秀，他們聽說都家派人來相親，個個裝模作樣，態度很不自然。只有一個年輕人，絲毫沒有把這件大事放在心上，和平時一樣，自個袒露著肚子，盤腿坐在東廂房的床上，正在吃東西呢。

那個代表來相親的人，回去把所看到的王家子弟，一個一個描述給都鑒先生聽。都鑒先生聽了之後說：「那個神態自如的，袒腹東床的年輕人，正是我心目中的好女婿。」於是就把女兒嫁給那個年輕人一我國有名的書法家王羲之。

說明：

這個故事出自「晉書」王羲之傳，後人稱女婿為東床快婿。

舉例：

① 他的東床快婿是個很有名的。② 張先生正在為女兒挑選東床快婿呢！

1. 才華 brilliant
2. 描述 describe

59. ON THE EASTERN BED WITH HIS STOMACH EXPOSED

Shi Jian, a high official of the Chin dynasty, was looking for a suitable husband for his daughter. He heard that there was an old Mr. Wang, who had many sons, and sent someone to Mr. Wang's for a look. Mr. Wang told the visitor he was welcome to go to the eastern wing of the house, where his sons lived, and take his choice from among them.

When Mr. Wang's sons heard that someone was coming from Official Shi's house to check them out, they all began to put on an act, and their attitudes were very unnatural. Only one young man appeared to be unconcerned with the whole thing, and lay on his bed with his stomach exposed, eating.

After his representative's description of each of the sons, Shi Jian announced that the natural one—the one lying on his bed with his stomach exposed—was the kind of person he had in mind for his son-in-law. And so his daughter married this young man—the very famous writer and calligrapher Wang Shi-ji.

People of later generations still often refer to their son-in-laws as the "son-in-law of the eastern bed", or simply as the "eastern bed."



唇亡齒寒

春秋時代之（西元公元前七七二年至二八二）到四八一年），虞國跟虢國都是弱小的國家，兩國疆界相連，關係非常密切。有一天，晉國通知虞國，要求借道，讓晉軍通過去攻打虢國，並且說明：如果虞國答應，就給用屈產（今山西省石樓縣東南）的良馬跟垂棘（今山西省臨汾縣）的玉璧做為報酬。

大夫宮之奇知道這件事，立刻進宮見虞國國王說：「您千萬別借道給晉國，我們跟虢國的利害是相同的。虢國要是滅亡了，虞國的命運也就危在旦夕了。就像一個人沒有了嘴唇，牙齒就會暴露出來，孤立無援一樣。我們不但不能借道給晉國，還應該派兵幫助虢國。」虞王被晉國的財物迷感，哪兒聽得進宮之奇的勸告？當年冬天，晉國大軍通過虞國，滅了虢國，回程時見虞國毫無防備，也順便滅了虞國。

說明：

這句成語是春秋時代虞國大夫宮之奇勸諫國王的話。比喻關係密切，要共禍福的意思。

舉例：

① 那兩個相鄰的國家，可以說是「唇亡齒之邦」。如果其中一國滅亡，另外一國就陷入唇亡齒寒孤立的境況。② 他們兩個人就像唇齒相似，一個人走了，另一人就感到唇亡齒寒，不知如何是好。

- | | |
|------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. 關係 relationship | 4. 暴露 left uncovered |
| 2. 密切 close / intimate | 5. 嘴唇 lips |
| 3. 命運 destiny | |

60. IF THE LIPS ARE GONE, THE TEETH WILL BE COLD

During the Spring and Autumn Period, there were two very small kingdoms known as Yu and Guo. These two kingdoms shared a border, and had a very close relationship. One day, the king of Chin asked the king of Yu to let his army pass through Yu to attack Guo, offering the king a large reward of horses and jade if he agreed.

When the official Gung Jr-chi heard about this, he immediately went to see the king, to urge him not to agree. He said, "If Guo is destroyed, Yu is sure to follow! It's just like if a person loses his lips, his teeth will be left exposed, alone and helpless. We must not only refuse to let the Chin army pass through Yu, but must send troops to help Guo." But the king had already been entranced by the treasures he had been promised, and heard nothing that Official Gung said to him. That winter, the Chin troops passed through Yu, destroyed Guo, and on the way back, destroyed Yu as well.

Today, this idiom can still be used to describe two countries whose relationship is such that one would be in danger if the other were destroyed. In addition, it can describe two people who are very close, so that when one is away, the other seems lost.



胸有成竹

宋朝的（西元九九六〇年到一一二七）九十年），有一個讀書人，姓文名同，字與可。他平常常得很喜歡畫畫兒；花、鳥、蟲、魚，都畫得很好。

文同特別愛竹子，就在他自己家門口種了很多青色的竹子。他細心地照顧這些竹子，無論春夏秋冬。無論晴天、雨天。天天仔細觀察竹子的生長情形，研究竹葉、竹枝在四季中的變化。時間久了，竹子的各種姿態、各種變化，就在他閉著眼睛也能畫得出來。每幅作品都跟真的沒兩樣。有一天，他的朋友晁補之來拜訪，看他正巧畫竹子呢，就做了兩句詩：「與可畫竹時，胸中已有成竹。」意思是他說，他在畫竹子以前，心中已經有了竹子的形象。

說明：

這句「胸有成竹」就是出自晁補之讚美文同的詩。大文豪蘇東坡在「畫竹記」中，也有「畫竹必先有成竹於胸」的句。所以「胸有成竹」和「成竹在胸」，都是指做事前已有把握，有定見。

舉例：

① 你們放心吧！王先生的做事一向是胸有成竹。
② 看他不愧不忙的樣子，一定是成竹在胸了。



61. TO HAVE AN IMAGE OF BAMBOO IN ONE'S MIND

During the Sung dynasty, there lived a scholar named Wen Tung, who loved to paint. He painted many kinds of plants, animals and insects, but his favorite subject was bamboo. Wen Tung planted some bamboo in front of his house, and cared for it very carefully. Every day, no matter what the weather, he would observe the way his bamboo was growing, and study the way its leaves and branches changed with the seasons. After having studied his bamboo for a long time, Wen Tung could paint it with his eyes closed. All of his works were just as vivid as the real thing. One day, his friend Chau Bu-jr went to visit Wen Tung, and found him right in the middle of painting bamboo. Watching Wen Tung work, Chau Bu-jr wrote a poem about him, the meaning of which was, "When Wen Tung paints, he has an image of bamboo in his mind."

Today, when a person is very sure of whatever he is doing, one can say that he "has an image of bamboo in his mind."

1. 照顧 take care of
2. 觀察 observe
3. 情形 circumstances
4. 四季 four seasons
5. 變化 transform
6. 竹子 bamboo



後來居上

西漢（西元前二〇六年至西元八七年）景帝的時候，汲黯當太子洗馬的官。他為人正直，做事認真負責。景帝死了，武帝繼位，汲黯當中大夫，這個官不很大也不很小。因為汲黯清廉耿直，武帝有不對他的地方，他就大膽勸諫，因此，他就被調到東海去當太守。他是一個盡職的好官，東海的老百姓人人讚美。武帝又把他的官調回京城，當「九卿」之內的大官。他的性格依舊，還是一如既往直言勸諫武帝。因為他的話都是對的；愛國又愛民，武帝不得不尊重他。

朝中有兩個小官員，史丹和張湯，這兩個人都很會文，文章上要花樣，為了討武帝的歡心，常常不惜用手段，陷害無辜，汲黯很看不起他們。沒多久，史丹當了丞相，張湯也當了御史大夫。汲黯很不客氣地對武帝說：「您用人就像好火堆木柴，把後來居上的放在上面。」

說明：

這句成語出自《史記·汲黯傳》，原來是「一旬之國刺之」的話，時間久了，「後來居上」有時也有「稱讚」的意思。

舉例：

① 那個跳班的學生，這次考了最高分，真是後來居上。② 新主管帶來的人，都拿了高薪，每個都是後來居上。

1. 正直 straightforward
2. 廉潔 incorrupt



62. THE LATE-COMERS ARE PLACED AT THE TOP

During the Western Han dynasty, there lived a man named Ji An. Ji An began his career as government official in a very low-level position. His frank and straightforward manner displeased the emperor, and caused him to be demoted and sent away from the capital for a time, but because he was such a responsible and conscientious worker, he was later called back again and given a very high-ranking position. His personality was the same as ever, and he still often admonished the emperor. But because his criticisms were always well-founded, and were for the good of the people, the emperor had high respect for him.

At that time, there were two low-level officials in the court named Gung Sun-hung and Jang Tang. These two men were very good at flattering the emperor, and would often frame innocent people in order to benefit themselves. Before long, Gung Sun-hung was made prime minister, and Jang Tang was also given a very high-ranking position. Mincing no words, Ji An said to the emperor, "You give out jobs the same way you pile up firewood; you put that which came last on top!"

This idiom was originally meant to criticize a situation in which a newcomer was given a higher-level position than someone who had been there a long time. Now, however, it can also be used to praise someone who is very young, or who arrived late, and yet has already achieved great things.

破釜 沈舟



戰國時代，秦國得到了地理上的優勢，邊境的天險要塞很多。又得到了人力，文化的有智囊集團，武力的有猛將，因此此國勢力一天比一天強大。秦國有一個勇武善戰的大將章邯，有一次在定陶把楚國項梁將軍的軍隊打得七零八落，潰不成軍。項梁也戰死了。

章邯又不乘勝派兵去攻打趙國，一下下子就把趙國的鉅鹿城圍住，萬分危急。項梁的侄兒項羽知道了，立刻派兵去支援，可是仍然不能解圍。項羽的脾氣很急，馬上親自率兵要跟秦國決一死戰。當軍隊過河以後，他命令部下把所帶有的船都鑿破，讓船沉到河底。又把所帶有的飯鍋都打碎，不能再煮飯，然後趕往鉅鹿和秦兵交戰。他這樣做，是表示寧願戰死也不肯敗退回來的決心。那一次戰爭，項羽果然勝了，從此威名滿天下。

說明：

「破釜沈舟」的來源出自史記項羽本紀，是形容一個人做事時，下定決心，不顧一切地求勝利。

舉例：

① 林先生把房子、股票都賣了，他要破釜沈舟地用所有的錢來投資這筆生意。② 李先生辭了工作，變賣了財產，他破釜沈舟地要到外國去打天下。

63. TO BREAK THE CAULDRONS AND SINK THE BOATS

The most powerful kingdom in China during the Warring States Period was the kingdom of Ch'in. Ch'in was in a very favorable geographic position, and had many intelligent and skilled citizens, one of the greatest of whom was a general named Jang Han.

During one battle against the kingdom of Ch'u, Jang Han not only defeated the Ch'u army but also killed their general, Shiang Liang. He then took advantage of his victory to attack the kingdom of Chao, surrounding the Chao city of Jiu-lu. When Shiang Liang's nephew, Shiang Yu, heard about this, he immediately led troops in to assist the Chao army. Shiang Yu was determined to fight to the end, and so as soon as his troops had crossed the Jang River, he ordered them to sink all the boats and smash all the cauldrons, so that they could neither re-cross the river nor cook any more food. This showed that he would rather die than retreat. And powered by this determination, Shiang Yu won that battle, and became known throughout China.

Today, this idiom can be used to describe a person who, like Shiang Yu, risks everything in order to achieve his goal.

1. 解圍 raise a siege
2. 脾氣 temper
3. 打碎 break
4. 寧願 prefer

班門弄斧



唐朝的著名詩人李白，天資聰穎，文才橫溢，所做的詩都是飄逸而奔放的，人人都稱他為詩仙。李白的性情豪爽，浪漫，常常跟朋友飲酒作樂。有一次跟朋友一會兒泛舟，一會兒飲酒，喝得酩酊大醉，一不小心掉進江裡淹死了。他的好朋友當堂塗墓，令李陽冰，就安葬在當塗附近的名山石磯畔。

後來很多自命是李白的詩人，就在李白的墓前題了不少詩句。到了明朝萬曆年間，有一位學者名叫梅丘之漢，覺得這些題詩的人太不自量了，就在他們的詩句後面題了一首絕句來諷刺他們：「來石磯江邊一堆土，李白之名高千古，來往來往一首詩，魯班門前弄大斧。」這首詩的意思：來石磯江邊的，一個墳墓，躺著名垂千古的李白，來往的人在這兒題詩，就像在魯班的門前賣弄大斧一樣。

說明：

公輸班是魯國人，所以人都稱他為公輸班。他是春秋時代極有名的工匠，一把斧頭在他手裡，就能把不成材的木頭做成精美的器具。

「班門弄斧」是比喻在專家面前炫耀自己本事，是不自量而可笑的，但是有時也可以做為自謙的客氣話。

舉例：

① 你在那幾位老師面前談教學法，真是班門弄斧。② 您是大畫家，我還在学习，可不敢在您面前班門弄斧哇！

- | | |
|--------------------------|----------------|
| 1. 天資 natural endowments | 4. 浪漫 romantic |
| 2. 飄 whirl | 5. 諷刺 ridicule |
| 3. 豪爽 straightforward | |

64. TO SHOW OFF ONE'S SKILL WITH THE AXE IN FRONT OF LU BAN'S DOOR

The great Tang dynasty poet, Li Bo, was an outspoken and romantic type of person. He loved a good time, and he often went out drinking with his friends. One time, when he and some friends were out boating, Li Bo got dead drunk, fell into the river, and drowned.

After Li Bo's death, many people who felt themselves to be geniuses would go and inscribe poems in front of his tomb. The scholar Mei Jir-huan felt that these people were highly overrating their own abilities. So, after all of their poems, he added another one, the meaning of which was: "Here lies Li Bo, a poet who will go down in history. Inscribing one's poem in front of his tomb is the same as showing off one's skill with the axe in front of Lu Ban's door."

This "Lu Ban" that Mei Jir-huan mentioned was a famous craftsman of the Spring and Autumn Period who was very skilled with the axe. So, "to show off one's skill with the axe in front of Lu Ban's door" means to flaunt one's ability in front of an expert, proving that one doesn't know one's own limitations. Sometimes, we can also use this idiom as a polite expression, indicating that the people to whom we are speaking are much more talented than ourselves.

掩耳盜鈴



春₁秋₂（西₃元₄前₅七₆二₇二₈～四₉八₀一₁年₂）
時₃候₄，有₅一₆個₇小₈偷₉，又₁₀笨₁₁膽₁₂子₁₃；又₁₄小₁₅。
有₁₆一₁₇天₁₈晚₁₉上₂₀，他₂₁悄₂₂悄₂₃地₂₄溜₂₅到₂₆范₂₇氏₂₈家₂₉去₃₀偷₃₁東₃₂西₃₃。好₃₄不₃₅容₃₆易₃₇爬₃₈進₃₉去₄₀了₄₁，
卻₄₂找₄₃不₄₄到₄₅貴₄₆重₄₇的₄₈東₄₉西₅₀。忽₅₁然₅₂發₅₃現₅₄院₅₅水₅₆
子₅₇裡₅₈有₅₉一₆₀座₆₁大₆₂鐘₆₃，他₆₄高₆₅興₆₆得₆₇自₆₈言₆₉自₇₀自₇₁
語₇₂說₇₃：「我₇₄就₇₅把₇₆這₇₇座₇₈大₇₉鐘₈₀偷₈₁走₈₂吧₈₃！
總₈₄比₈₅空₈₆手₈₇回₈₈去₈₉的₉₀好₉₁，這₉₂座₉₃大₉₄鐘₉₅有₉₆好₉₇幾₉₈
百₉₉斤₁₀₀鐵₁₀₁，還₁₀₂滿₁₀₃值₁₀₄錢₁₀₅呢₁₀₆！」

於₁是₂他₃開₄始₅動₆手₇搬₈大₉鐘₁₀，他₁₁就₁₂用₁₃大₁₄鐘₁₅子₁₆敲₁₇，當₁₈他₁₉敲₂₀的₂₁時₂₂候₂₃，鐘₂₄發₂₅出₂₆
「噲₂₇」的₂₈一₂₉聲₃₀。他₃₁想₃₂：「如₃₃果₃₄被₃₅人₃₆聽₃₇見₃₈，一₃₉定₄₀把₄₁他₄₂捉₄₃住₄₄，這₄₅不₄₆是₄₇自₄₈己₄₉投₅₀羅₅₁網₅₂嗎₅₃？我₅₄一₅₅定₅₆要₅₇想₅₈個₅₉法₆₀子₆₁，能₆₂把₆₃鐘₆₄敲₆₅碎₆₆，又₆₇聽₆₈不₆₉到₇₀聲₇₁音₇₂才₇₃能₇₄搬₇₅走₇₆。」
想₇₇來₇₈想₇₉去₈₀，忽₈₁然₈₂想₈₃起₈₄來₈₅了₈₆：「我₈₇為₈₈甚₈₉麼₉₀不₉₁把₉₂耳₉₃朵₉₄摀₉₅起₉₆來₉₇呢₉₈？」於₉₉是₁₀₀他₁₀₁笨₁₀₂賊₁₀₃就₁₀₄把₁₀₅自₁₀₆己₁₀₇的₁₀₈耳₁₀₉朵₁₁₀塞₁₁₁起₁₁₂來₁₁₃，然₁₁₄後₁₁₅用₁₁₆大₁₁₇鐘₁₁₈子₁₁₉用₁₂₀力₁₂₁敲₁₂₂，宏₁₂₃亮₁₂₄的₁₂₅鐘₁₂₆聲₁₂₇把₁₂₈范₁₂₉氏₁₃₀一₁₃₁家₁₃₂人₁₃₃都₁₃₄驚₁₃₅醒₁₃₆了₁₃₇，最₁₃₈後₁₃₉笨₁₄₀賊₁₄₁被₁₄₂捉₁₄₃住₁₄₄了₁₄₅。

說 明：

這₁句₂成₃語₄出₅自₆「呂₇氏₈春₉秋₁₀」「自₁₁知₁₂簡₁₃」。原₁₄為₁₅掩₁₆耳₁₇盜₁₈鐘₁₉，後₂₀人₂₁改₂₂成₂₃掩₂₄耳₂₅盜₂₆鈴₂₇，比₂₈喻₂₉自₃₀作₃₁聰₃₂明₃₃、自₃₄己₃₅騙₃₆自₃₇己₃₈。

舉 例：

① 他₁們₂的₃裁₄判₅以₆掩₇耳₈盜₉鈴₁₀的₁₁手₁₂法₁₃，製₁₄造₁₅體₁₆育₁₇成₁₈績₁₉。② 你₂₀這₂₁不₂₂是₂₃掩₂₄耳₂₅盜₂₆鈴₂₇自₂₈欺₂₉欺₃₀人₃₁嗎₃₂？

1. 小 偷 thief
2. 貴 重 valuable
3. 空 手 empty-handed

4. 耳 朵 ear
5. 驚 醒 startled awake

65. TO PLUG ONE'S EARS WHILE STEALING A BELL

During the Spring and Autumn Period, there lived a thief who was both stupid and cowardly. One night, he sneaked into the home of a family named Fan, intending to steal something. But then after having worked so hard to get in, the thief found nothing worth stealing. Suddenly he noticed a large bell out in the yard. He was very happy, and said to himself, "Well, I guess I'll steal that. It's better than going away empty-handed, and it must be worth a lot of money!"

This bell was so big and heavy, however, that the thief could not budge it. He then tried hitting it with a big hammer, hoping to be able to break it into pieces, but it made such a loud noise that he was sure he would get caught. Suddenly he thought of a plan. He said to himself, "Why don't I just cover my ears?" So this stupid thief plugged his own ears, and began to hammer away at the bell with all his weight. The loud clear noise it made woke up the entire Fan household, and in the end, the thief was caught.

Today, "to plug one's ears while stealing a bell" means to deceive oneself.

欲蓋彌彰



「欲」是「希望」的意思；「蓋」是「掩飾」的意思；「彌」是「更加」的意思；「彰」是「明顯」的意思。「欲蓋彌彰」就是「一個人做錯了事，越想掩飾，結果越錯越明顯」。

春秋時代（西元公元前七二二年～四八一年），魯國有一個人名叫黑肱，為魯國家做事，他偷偷地將魯國一塊土地送給齊國，希望齊國收留他。他以為為自己做事這件事沒有人知道，就悄悄地搬到齊國去了，沒想到齊國卻把這件事清清楚楚地記錄下來。

後來，魯國人發覺黑肱搬走了，紛紛打聽，才知道黑肱做了對魯國不利的事。黑肱本來想不讓別人知道，沒想到很多人知道了。

說明：

這句成語出自《左傳》，「欲蓋彌彰」就是「一個人做錯了事，為了使自已過錯不被別人發覺，故意遮掩，轉移別人的注意力，結果反而引起別人的懷疑」。

舉例：

① 朱小弟把花瓶打破了，媽媽回來他對媽媽說，他只是踢球，沒有打破花瓶，結果是欲蓋彌彰。② 張先生編了很多理由，結果欲蓋彌彰，他背叛國家的事情，人人都知道了。

66. THE MORE ONE TRIES TO HIDE A MISTAKE, THE MORE IT IS EXPOSED

During the Spring and Autumn Period, there lived a man named Hei Gung, who worked for the government of the kingdom of Ju. Hei Gung once secretly gave a piece of Ju's territory to the kingdom of Lu, in the hopes that Lu would take him in. Thinking that no one knew what he had done, he very quietly moved to Lu, never dreaming that Lu would record this incident in great detail.

Later, when the people of Ju realized that Hei Gung had moved, they began to ask questions, and only then did they learn of the great dishonor he had brought to his country. Hei Gung never imagined that so many people would find out about this thing which he didn't want anyone to know.

Today, this idiom is often used in situations in which a person tries to cover up a thing which he has done, but in doing so only makes his wrongdoing more obvious.

1. 掩飾 whitewash
2. 明顯 obvious
3. 結果 result
4. 記錄 record

強詞奪理



戰國時（西元前四〇〇年～二二一年）時候，宋國有一個叫高陽應的人，很喜欢和人辯論，明明沒有理的事，他一定硬編出理由來強辯。

有一次，高陽應要蓋一棟房子，有一個有經驗的木匠對他說：「我勸你現在不要動工，因為木頭還沒乾，如果濕木頭做柱子，等乾了就會裂縫，木頭如果裂縫，就支持不住，將來房子可能會倒，還是等木頭乾了再動工吧！」

高陽應聽了，說：「我的經驗用濕木材做柱子，房子不但會倒，反而更結實。現在木頭還濕，加上屋頂，還能支撐得住，過些時候，磚瓦的壓力減少，木頭也乾了，不是更支撐得住了嗎？怎麼會倒呢？」

木匠被他說得這麼一辯，無話可說，只好照他的意思開始動工。房子蓋好沒多久，果然倒倒了。

說明：

這個故事出自「呂氏春秋」，後人把高陽應這種強辯，引申為強詞奪理。意思是本來沒理，卻蠻橫狡辯。

舉例：

① 老王說話常常強詞奪理。② 這件事是你不對，又何必強詞奪理呢？

67. TO STRIVE FOR WORDS AND STRUGGLE FOR REASON

During the Warring States Period, there lived in the kingdom of Sung a man named Gau Yang-ying. Gau Yang-ying loved to debate, and would find a way to quibble about even the most insignificant topics.

One day, Gau Yang-ying decided to build a house. A very experienced carpenter advised him against beginning work on it just then, saying that the wood was still wet, and therefore would be likely to crack, and later, to fall.

But Gau Yang-ying disagreed, saying, "In my experience, a house built with wet wood will not only not fall, but will be especially strong. Right now the wood is wet, but if we add a roof on top, it will hold just the same. After a while, the pressure of the bricks will decrease, and the wood will also be dry, so shouldn't the house be even stronger?"

The carpenter had no answer for this, and so had no choice but to begin work on the house. And not long after it was finished, as the carpenter had predicted, the house fell to the ground.

Thus, we can say that a person who, like Gau Yang-ying insists on quibbling over unreasonable or insignificant things, is "striving for words and struggling for reason."

1. 辯論 argue / debate
2. 經驗 experience
3. 裂縫 a crack

鹿死誰手



東晉（西元二八六～四二〇年）的時候，有個商人名字叫石勒。他住的地方，因為天災，很多人都沒飯吃，也無法做生意。他到處找不到工作，整天沒吃、沒飯，餓得實在受不了，就把自己賣給有錢人家當奴隸。

石勒的主人看他儀表很不平凡，過了一兩日，就還給他自由。他後來就投效到另外一個酋長劉淵的部下。劉淵建立了漢國。多年以後，石勒背叛了漢國，自己做了皇帝，他建立的國家是當時十六國中最強大的。石勒非常得意。有一次他在很多人的面前誇口說：「假如如我和漢國的皇帝出生在同一時代，我一定可以和他在中原比一比高低，成功奪得王位的還不知道是誰呢。」

說明：

這個成語出自「晉書」的「石勒載記」，譬喻人們在雙方爭取一個共同目標，還沒分勝負的時候，引用「鹿死誰手」這句話，顯示自己力量的量。

舉例：

① 如果我要參加圍棋比賽，還不知鹿死誰手呢！
② 上屆奧運金牌選手都來參加比賽，鹿死誰手很難預料。

1. 天災 natural disaster
2. 奴隸 slave
3. 平凡 common

68. AT WHOSE HAND WILL THE DEER DIE

During the Eastern Chin dynasty, there lived a merchant named Shr Le. When the area in which he lived was struck by natural disaster, Shr Le was forced out of business. Unable to find work, he had nothing to eat, and when he was so hungry that he could stand it no longer, he sold himself as a slave to a wealthy family.

Shr Le's master, seeing that his appearance was not like that of an ordinary man, soon let him go free. Shr Le then went and offered his services to another man, named Liou Yuan, who established the kingdom of Han. Several years later, Shr Le betrayed the kingdom of Han, and himself became the emperor of the most powerful kingdom of his time. Shr Le was extremely proud of himself, and once boasted in front of many people, "If I had been born at the same time as the emperor of Han, I most certainly would've had it out with him to see who was the real man. And we all know who would've wound up on throne!"

Today, when two parties are competing and it is still unclear who will win, one of the two competing parties may use the idiom "At Whose Hand Will the Deer Die" to express confidence in his own ability.

樑上君子

後漢（西元九十四～九五四）時，有一個有名氣的學者叫陳實。他為人正直，生活儉樸，又有學問，很受人們敬重。有一天傍晚，剛進家門，就發現屋梁上躲著一個人。他假裝沒發現，先整理了一下衣服，就坐下，並把兒孫們叫到面前教訓說：「你們要好好兒讀書，認真作事，自己努力做個有用的人。社會上有些做壞事的，本性並不壞，只因貪圖享受，不願勞動，最後成了習慣。」說著，指著上梁面說：「你們看！那個梁上君子就是這種人。」

躲在梁上的小偷嚇了一跳，又慚愧又驚慌地爬了下來，跪在陳實面前求饒。陳實拍拍小偷的肩膀說：「看你這樣，不像壞人，一定非要改過向善。我本想替你大概家是窮困，我送你一些錢，去做個生意吧！」小偷千恩萬謝地走了。

說明：

這個故事在「後漢書」陳實傳上。現在「梁上君子」是指小偷。

舉例：

①大門怎麼開著，是不？是梁上君子來了？②王先生家，昨晚遭梁上君子光顧，損失不少。



69. THE GENTLEMAN ON THE BEAM

During the Later Han dynasty, there lived a very famous scholar named Chen Shr. One day, Chen Shr came home and discovered a man hiding on one of the beams of his house. He first pretended that he didn't see this man, and went about his business straightening up his clothes. He then sat down and called his grandsons to him, saying, "You must all study very hard, and work conscientiously at whatever you do, so that later you will be useful people. There are some people in our society who do bad things—not because they're naturally bad people, but because they are unwilling to work." He then pointed up above his head, and continued, "Look! That gentleman up there on the beam is just this sort of person."

The thief hiding on the beam was quite alarmed. He climbed down, knelt in front of Chen Shr, and begged for forgiveness. Chen Shr patted the thief on the shoulder, and said to him, "You don't look like a bad person; I'm sure that you must come from a very poor family. Here, I'll give you some money, go start a business!" And with that, the thief very gratefully left.

Even today, people sometimes refer to a thief as "the gentleman on the beam."

1. 生活儉樸 simple life



望梅 止渴



西元二百年多的時候，古老的中國由蜀漢、魏、吳三國分立。歷史稱那個時代為「三國時代」。

魏王曹操是個聰明、狡詐的人，有一次，他帶了十幾萬大軍，浩浩蕩蕩向前進發。越走人越稀，一眼望過去是一片無邊的曠野。那時正是五六月，氣候乾燥，熱。一陣熱風吹來，只見黃沙滾滾。兵士們手裡拿著長槍、矛、盾等武器，身上穿著笨重的盔甲，連續走了十幾個小時，人人都是又累又熱又渴，快要支持不住了。

曹操的軍紀是很嚴格的，但是眼看著兵士們相繼昏倒，他就大聲說：「好了！前面有個梅樹林，梅子又酸又甜，最能解渴。」兵士們聽到梅子，想到梅子的酸味兒，不由得流出口水來，終於振作起來，到了目的地。

說明：

這個故事出自「世說新語」假託篇，比喻以一個假想來滿足自己的願望，常與「畫餅充飢」並用。

舉例：

① 王爺年很喜歡跑車，可是他纔十歲，不能開車，他就每天畫跑車來望梅止渴。② 李太太沒有孩子，她把很多嬰兒圖片貼在牆上，李太太先生說她是望梅止渴。

70. TO QUENCH ONE'S THIRST BY THINKING OF PLUMS

Tsau Tsau was king of the kingdom of Wei during the Three Kingdoms Period. He was intelligent, quick-witted, and also very crafty. One time, he led an army of over 100,000 men on a great march into the wilderness. At that time, summer was just beginning, and the weather was very hot and dry. The hot summer wind blew yellow sand all around them. The soldiers, carrying all of their weapons and dressed in their heavy and cumbersome suits of armor, marched on for several hours. They were tired, hot, and thirsty, and unable to hold out much longer.

Tsau Tsau disciplined his troops very severely, but when he saw his soldiers begin to pass out one after another, he called out to them loudly, "Up there ahead is a plum tree forest. The plums there are the best for quenching thirst." As the soldiers thought about the plums, their mouths began to water. Finally, their energy was restored, and they reached their destination.

Thus, "to quench one's thirst by thinking of plums" means to satisfy one's desire with an image of whatever it is one longs for.

1. 機智 ready-witted
2. 稀少 very few
3. 支持 support
4. 嚴格 strict
5. 梅樹林 plum tree forest
6. 酸 acid
7. 甜 sweet

望塵莫及

南北朝時 (西元四〇二~五八一年)

的時候，有一個人名叫吳慶之，他是一個很能幹的人。那個時候揚州太守 (官名) 名叫王羲之，請他做秘書。像現在在秘書處的工。後來王羲之犯錯被皇帝殺了，他覺得自己沒盡到責任，從此再也不肯出來做官了。

因為他很有才幹，下一位太守王琨也邀請吳慶之幫忙。可是無論怎麼說，他都不肯答應，並且故意對人家說：「我本來就很笨，什麼都不懂，只因為前任太守看得起我，所以我才為他做事。假如再有人再要我用，我就直是把他像魚養在樹上，把鳥放在水里。」說完，轉身上马就走。王琨連忙追趕，只見前面揚起的灰塵，怎麼也追趕不上。

說明：

這個故事記載在「南史」上。後來的人根據故事的最後一句，引申成爲「望塵莫及」。意思是表示永遠趕不上別人。

舉例：

① 聰明又努力的李武成績特別好。那些不用功的同學是望塵莫及的。② 美國在太空科技上特別發達，落後的家真是望塵莫及。



71. TO WATCH THE DUST SETTLE AND BE UNABLE TO CATCH UP

During the Northern and Southern Dynasties Period, there lived a very capable man named Wu Ching-jr, who worked as a secretary for the government official Wang Yi-gung. When Wang Yi-gung was executed by the emperor for a mistake that he had made, Wu Ching-jr blamed himself, and resolved that he would never again work for the government.

Because Wu Ching-jr was so talented, the next person to fill Wang Yi-gung's position, a man named Wang Kung, also asked for his help. But Wu Ching-jr refused, saying, "I really don't understand anything; Wang Yi-gung only asked for my help because he liked me. If anyone else were to hire me, it would be like raising a fish in a tree, or putting a bird in water." And with this, he turned and rode away on his horse. Wang Kung raced after him, but saw only the dust stirred up by his horse galloping on ahead. No matter how fast his horse ran, Wang Kung could not catch up.

Today, "to watch the dust settle and be unable to catch up" means to be too far behind another person to be able to catch up, or too inferior to bear comparison.

1. 秘書 secretary
2. 責任 responsibility
3. 難過 sad
4. 幫忙 help
5. 本來 original



猶豫不決



「猶豫」是有一種野獸，牠天生性的性情非常多疑。不論牠在甚麼地方找食物，或是散步，一聽到聲音就害怕。牠懷疑有獵人要來捉牠，或是別的野獸要來害牠，就慌張地爬到樹上躲起來。再把頭探出來，偷偷地看。過了一會兒，又從樹上跳下來，在樹上東張西望地看看那邊。一直等到甚麼也沒看見，才定下心來。但是過了一會兒，牠又懷疑起來，就又爬到樹上，在樹上停一會兒，定定心心，認為沒有甚麼危險了，才從樹上跳下來。就這樣一會兒又一會兒地跳上跳下，跳了大半天，總是白白費力氣。

後來的人，因為「猶豫」天生性好疑心，不果斷，所以當一個人的處理事情時，沒有主見，不知道怎樣處理，就叫做「猶豫不決」。

說明：

這句成語出自「國策」趙策，猶豫不決的意思就是對事情遲疑不能決斷。

舉例：

① 張媽媽做事總是猶豫不決。② 遇到做事猶豫不決，沒有主見的，辦起事來最困難。

72. THE 'YOU' CANNOT DECIDE

The 'you' is a kind of wild animal which is by nature extremely suspicious. Whenever it hears a sound, it immediately becomes afraid, suspecting that there is a hunter nearby who is trying to catch it, or another animal that wants to harm it. It runs up into a tree and hides, peeking out its head and scanning all around. After a while it climbs back down, looking here and looking there. Only when it is sure that there is nothing around does it finally begin to relax. But then pretty soon, it will again grow afraid, and running up into a tree, begin the same routine all over again. Time and time again, the 'you' repeats this, with the result that it spends half of its day running up and down trees, and wastes a lot of energy.

So, when someone is very hesitant, and cannot make a decision, others often say of this person that "the 'you' cannot decide."

1. 性情 condition / temper
2. 懷疑 doubt
3. 慌張 confused
4. 偷偷的 stealthily
5. 白費力氣 wasted



畫蛇添足



戰國時代（西元前七七〇～二二六），楚國有個廟宇的主持人，送給看廟的人們一壺酒。可是，謝少僧多，怎麼分這壺酒呢？其中一個人就說：「這壺酒，每人喝一口，誰也不過癮，不如讓一個個人喝。這樣吧！我們每個人在地上畫一條蛇，誰先畫完，誰就喝這壺酒。」大家贊成他的意見，就分別在地上畫蛇。起先，大家畫得很快，有的一個已經畫完了。他拿起酒壺準備喝酒。可是，他發現別人都還沒畫好，就左手拿著酒壺，右手又在地上畫著，還得意洋洋地說：「我還能替蛇畫出腳來呢！」當他還沒把蛇的腳畫完的時候，另外一個已經把蛇畫完了。立刻從他手裡奪過酒壺說：「蛇本來沒有腳，你怎麼能添上腳呢？」替蛇添腳的人只好懊惱地看著人家喝酒了。

說明：

這句成語出自戰國策的齊策。比喻做事不能恰當，多餘的話或措施反而無益，就像為蛇添足一樣。

舉例：

① 那個太太形容甚麼事情，都加上很多描寫的詞兒，真有點畫蛇添足。② 兩個小孩吵架，只要勸開，公正評理就夠了。如果再請兩家家長來，就有點兒畫蛇添足，多此一舉了。

73. TO DRAW A SNAKE AND ADD ON FEET

During the Warring States Period, there lived in the kingdom of Ch'u a temple caretaker who gave to the people who worked for him a pitcher of wine. But there were a lot of workers and not much wine, and if they were to split it evenly among themselves, nobody would get very much. Finally, one worker suggested that they each draw a snake in the dirt, and whoever finished first would get the wine. So they all began to draw, and the worker who finished first picked up the wine, preparing to drink. But noticing that others still hadn't finished, he continued to draw, boasting, "I can even give my snake feet!" Before he could finish, however, a second person finished his snake, and immediately grabbed the wine away from the first person, saying, "Snakes don't have feet; how can you add feet to yours?" And the worker who had begun drawing the feet looked sadly on as his friend finished the wine.

This idiom "to draw a snake and add on feet," has now come to mean that taking extra measures after one has already satisfactorily completed a task, or adding extra description after one has already explained oneself clearly, is harmful rather than beneficial.

1. 壺 pot
2. 贊成 agree
3. 意見 comment
4. 發現 occur
5. 腳 foot



結草銜環



74. TO KNOT GRASS AND CARRY A RING

During the Spring and Autumn Period, there lived in the kingdom of Chin a man named Wei Ke, whose father had a young and very beautiful concubine. After his father grew old and fell ill, he told Wei Ke that after his death, his son was to marry the concubine into a suitable family. Later, when his illness had grown worse and he was in a state of delirium, he said that he wanted the girl to commit suicide and be buried with him. Wei Ke felt that he should obey what his father had said when he was fully conscious, and so he married the girl into a nice family. Later, Wei Ke was in a battle which he was about to lose, when suddenly he saw an old man come tie a knot in the grass in front of his enemy. His enemy's horse tripped over the knot, and Wei Ke won the battle. That night, Wei Ke had a dream that the old man came to him and said, "I am the father of the concubine, come to repay you for not burying my daughter with your father."

During the Han dynasty, there lived a man named Yang Bau, who was very kind and sympathetic. When he was a boy, Yang Bau once came across an injured sparrow. He saved the little bird, and treated its wounds. Many years later, this little sparrow brought Yang Bau a ring of jade.

Therefore, "to knot the grass and carry a ring" means to repay someone for a kindness.

1. 年輕 young
2. 美麗 beautiful
3. 合適 suitable
4. 自殺 suicide
5. 草莖 grass
6. 仁慈 mercy

春秋時代，晉國魏顆的父親，有一個年輕美麗的妻子。父親年老多病，自知不久於人世，就跟魏顆說：「我死之後，你給她找一個合適的人家嫁了吧！」不久病重了，在瀕留神智不清的時候又說：「我死後，要讓她自殺，跟我葬在一起。」魏顆認為應該服從父親神智清楚時候的遺囑，就把那個妻子嫁了。後來他跟秦國杜回交戰。體力不支，眼看就要落敗了。忽然見一個老人把草莖打結，使得杜回的馬被絆倒，魏顆因此反敗為勝。當夜夢見那個老人對他說：「我就是那個妻子的父親，結草來報答你不把我女兒殉葬的大恩。」

漢朝時候，有一個叫楊寶的人，性情仁慈，富有同情心。小時時候路過華山，看見一隻黃雀被老鷹追撲，受了傷。立刻救起黃雀，並為他療傷。多年以後，有一天黃雀銜了四枚玉環來給他。

說明：

這句成語是由兩個故事連綴而成，一個出在春秋時代，一個出自漢朝。時代雖然不同，意思同樣是「報恩」，因此後人就常在一起來應用。

舉例：

① 您幫了我這麼大的忙。下輩子「結草銜環」我也要報答。② 您的大恩大德，我就是結草銜環也報答不了哇！

道聽塗說

艾先生的祖先是齊國的人，他到楚國去旅行，剛一回國，就遇見見愛說大話的毛空。毛空說：「我們這兒可發生了新鮮事兒。有——一隻鴨子——一口氣生了——一百個蛋。」艾先生笑了笑說：「哪兒有這種事兒。」毛空停了一會兒說：「大概是三隻鴨子生的。」艾先生還是不相信，毛空又說：「也許是十隻鴨子生的。」艾先生問：「你為甚麼不說點兒蛋的數目呢？」毛空回答：「我寧願增加鴨子的數目，也不願減少蛋的數目。」他接著又說：「上個月，天上掉下一大塊肉，有三四十丈長，十丈寬。」艾先生不耐煩地說：「別胡說了，誰信？」毛空又一再改口，艾先生實在忍不住，就問他：「鴨子的主人是誰？肉掉在甚麼地方？」毛空只好說實話：「我沒看見，是聽街上的人這麼說的。」

說明：

「道聽塗說」是指沒有事實根據的傳聞。在《論語》、《漢書》、《文選》等書裡都出現過。古文裡用的是「道聽塗說」，現在大家常寫「道聽塗說」，意思是一樣的。

舉例：

①有人說黃金要漲價了，這種道聽塗說的話我不信。②那些話全是道聽塗說，你別相信。

- | | |
|--------------|----------------|
| 1. 旅行 travel | 5. 數目 amount |
| 2. 新鮮 fresh | 6. 增加 add |
| 3. 鴨子 duck | 7. 減少 decrease |
| 4. 蛋 egg | |



75. HEARD ON THE STREET AND SPOKEN OF IN THE ROAD

Mau Kung, of the kingdom of Ch'i, loved to exaggerate. He once said to his friend Mr. Ai, "Some strange things have been happening around here recently. For instance, there's a duck that layed 100 eggs, all at once." "That's impossible," Mr. Ai replied. Mau Kung thought a minute and said, "Probably it was three ducks." Seeing that Mr. Ai still didn't believe him, he again changed his mind, saying, "Well, maybe it was ten ducks." He then continued, "Last month, a large piece of meat fell from the sky. It was thirty jang long and ten jang wide." Again, Mr. Ai did not believe him, and again Mau Kung tried to change his story to make it more believable. At this, Mr. Ai could stand it no longer, and asked Mau Kung, "Who owns these ducks? And where did this piece of meat fall?" Mau Kung had no choice but to tell the truth, "I didn't see it myself; I heard people talking about it in the street."

Thus, "Heard on the Street and Spoken of in the Road" refers to hearsay for which one has no proof.





朝三暮四

76. THREE IN THE MORNING AND FOUR AT NIGHT

There once lived a man called Mr. Jiu, who loved to raise monkeys. Mr. Jiu prepared for his monkeys a very comfortable place to live, and personally fed them everyday. Therefore, Mr. Jiu knew his monkeys very well, and the monkeys understood everything that he said.

However, Mr. Jiu's monkeys ate so much food that soon there was not enough left for his family. And so Mr. Jiu was forced to decrease the amount of food he fed his monkeys.

Mr. Jiu first went to talk to his monkeys. He told them that from then on, he would give them each three chestnuts every morning, and four every night. Realizing that their food supply was about to be decreased, these monkeys began to jump up and down with displeasure. So Mr. Jiu said, "Well, then, four in the morning and three at night, OK?" And thinking that this was a greater amount than before, the monkeys nodded their heads in agreement.

Today, "three in the morning and four at night" is used to describe a person who is always changing his mind, so that one can never depend on what he says.

1. 喜歡 like
2. 養 raise
3. 猴子 monkey
4. 舒服 comfortable
5. 親密 close (relation)
6. 發覺 perceive
7. 反對 oppose



從前有一個喜歡養猴子的老人，別人都稱他為「公」。他為猴子預備了很舒服的住處，並且每天親自餵一大羣猴子。因此，他漸漸地很了解猴子的心理，猴子也都聽得懂他的話，彼此相處得十分親密。

「公」養了那麼多猴子，需要很多糧食。他就縮減家人的口糧，來餵猴子。不久，家境越來越壞，一日三餐都成了問題，那兒有糧食來餵猴子呢？最後，一定得減少猴子的糧食了，但是又擔心猴子們不願意，「公」就先跟他們商量。

有一天，他用試探的口氣說：「從今天起，每天早上給你們三個栗子，晚上給你們四個，夠吃了吧？」猴子們發覺要減少食物，就一齊爬在地上表示反對。「公」說：「那麼早上給四個，晚上給三個。」猴子們聽了以為增加了，就高興地點點頭。

說明：

這句成語出自《莊子·齊物論》。意思是：指一個人主張不定，說過的話不算，常常改變。

舉例：

① 李先生是個朝三暮四的人，他的話沒個人信。誰也都不知道他現在做甚麼事。② 那位小姐上個禮拜還信佛教，現在改信基督教了。像他這樣朝三暮四，恐怕明天又信回教了。

債臺高築



戰國時代已接近是周朝末期的後期，周報王雖然是天子，卻沒有實權。當時稱為戰國七雄的齊、楚、燕、韓、趙、魏、秦七國，都很有勢力。尤其是強大的秦國，老是想吞併其他六國，將來自己當天子。

有一天，楚孝王聽了魏國信陵君打敗了秦國，就向周報王說，現在是最好機會，大家聯合起來消滅秦國吧！周報王早早就知道秦國想侵犯周朝，野心勃勃，就一口答應派兵支援。軍隊需要馬匹和武器，但是當時軍費不夠，只好向國內有錢的人借錢。並且說明等打勝仗回來後，再加上利息還給大家。

誰知道，他們出兵以後，只有楚、燕兩國出兵馬來會合，其他諸侯並沒有派兵。仗沒打，錢卻花光了。債主天天在宮門門口吵著要錢。報王只好解到一個高臺上去。

說明：

這個故事出自「漢書」諸侯王表序。比喻欠債太多，無法償還。

舉例：

① 小李因為賭博輸了很多錢，現在是債臺高築了。② 張先生做生意失敗了，如今債臺高築，連房子都賣了。

77. THE DEBT PLATFORM IS BUILT UP HIGH

When the Warring States Period began, it was already nearing the end of the Chou dynasty. Although Chou King Nan was the ruler, he had very little real power. The Seven Great States into which China was divided were all very powerful, especially the kingdom of Ch'in, which planned to swallow up the other six and become ruler of all China.

One day, the king of Ch'u heard that the kingdom of Wei had defeated Ch'in in battle. Seeing this as their big chance, he went and suggested to King Nan that everyone cooperate to destroy Ch'in together. Knowing about Ch'in's plan to invade the Chou court, King Nan readily agreed. Realizing that the court did not have enough money to pay for the horses and weapons his troops would need, King Nan borrowed money from the rich people of his kingdom, promising to pay them back with interest after they had won the war.

As it turned out, however, Ch'u and Yan were the only two kingdoms to send out troops. The war was never fought, but the money had been completely spent. The creditors gathered at the palace gates every day to demand their money, and King Nan was forced to hide up atop his high platform.

Thus, when a person, like King Nan, owes so much money that it is impossible for him to pay it all back, we can say that "The Debt Platform Is Built up High."



1. 實權 authority
2. 尤其 particularly
3. 野心 wild ambition
4. 利息 interest

塞翁失馬



從前有一個住在國境邊界的人，以養馬為生。有一天，他的馬越界跑到胡國去了。朋友們聽說都來慰問。大家覺得損失一匹馬非常可惜，只有養馬人的父親毫不在意，反倒說：「丟了馬，說不定是件好事。」

過了幾天，那匹馬自己回來了，還帶回來一匹胡國的駿馬。朋友們知道，都來向他道賀。養馬人的父親卻說：「沒有甚麼值得高興的。得到馬，說不定是一件災禍。」養馬的人很喜歡那匹駿馬，時常騎著出去玩兒。

有一天，他從馬背上摔下來，把腿摔斷了。朋友們聽到這個不幸的消息，又都來慰問，養馬人的父親反而安詳地說：「摔斷了腿，究竟是禍還是福還很難說。」一年以後，胡人作亂，年輕人都入伍當兵，殺敵，很多人戰死了。養馬人卻因為腿斷了，腿留在家里，保全了性命。

說明：

這個故事出自「淮南子」（漢淮南王劉安撰），說明人生的遭遇很難預料，有些事情發生得非但不幸，但可能因禍得福；有些美滿如意的事反而帶來災禍。用這句成語可以安慰那些遭遇不幸的人，也可以諷刺那些用不正當手段得到了意外財富的人。

舉例：

① 李大明上班的時候沒趕上公共汽車，正在著急，同事小王開著車經過，於是搭小王的車，反而提早到了辦公室，真是塞翁失馬。② 有一個中了獎券的人，得到一筆意外的財富。他從此整天吃喝玩樂，不再工作，也從沒想到塞翁失馬的教訓，最後一無所有了。

78. THE MAN NEAR THE FRONTIER LOSES HIS HORSE

There once was a man who lived near the frontier, and made his living raising horses. One day, a horse of his ran across the border into barbarian territory. When the man's friends heard about this, they all came to console him. Only his father didn't seem to care, saying, "Losing a horse is not necessarily a bad thing."

A few days later, the horse returned, and brought with it one of the barbarians' steeds. The man's friends all came to congratulate him, but his father said, "Gaining a horse just might be a bad thing."

One day, the man who raised horses went for a ride on this steed, fell off, and broke his leg. His friends once again came to console him, and yet his father still said, "It's hard to say if breaking one's leg is a good thing or a bad thing." A year later, the barbarians attacked. Many young men went to war and died, but the man who raised horses, because of his broken leg, stayed at home and lived.

Thus, the meaning of this idiom is that it's hard to determine whether a thing will be harmful or beneficial. Many things which we feel unfortunate turn out to be blessings in disguise, and many things which we feel beneficial turn out to have harmful side effects.

1. 可惜 pity
2. 災禍 disaster

揠苗助長



有_一個_急性_的農_人，自_己從_播種_那天_開始_，就_盼望_早早_兒地_收成_。他_天天_都到_田邊_兒去_看，希_望種_子快_點兒_發芽_長大_。

他_播的_種子_終於_發芽_了，慢_慢長_成了_一棵_棵嫩_綠的_秧苗_。可_是農_人並_不滿_意，他_嫌那_些秧_苗長_得太_慢，心_裡非_常著_急。有_一天_，他_實在_忍不_住了_，就_把一_棵秧_苗試_著拔_高了_一點_兒。果_然不_錯，這_棵秧_苗比_別棵_高了_一截_兒。他_高興_地自_言自_語說_：「這_個辦_法真_不錯_，瞧_吧！我_一定_比別_人早_收成_{。」}他_接著_一棵_一棵_的秧_苗都_拔高_了一_點兒_。拔_完了_一行_又一_行，一_直工_作到_天黑_了才_回家_。他_很得_意地_告訴_家人_說：「我_今天_在田_裡幫_助秧_苗長_高了_。你_們明_天早_上就_去看_看吧_！」

第_二天_一大_早，大_家都_去看_。他_拔過_的秧_苗都_垂下_了頭_，乾_死了_。

說 明：

這_個故_事出_自孟_子公_孫丑_篇，比_喻做_事急_躁，不_按步_就班_，不_照著_一定_的順_序，反_而不_能達_到目_標。

舉 例：

① 這_個小_孩兒_才三_歲，又_學跳_舞，又_學畫_畫兒_，又_要學_功夫_。他_的父_母真_是揠_苗助_長啊_！

② 小_孩子_打球_用成_人的_規則_，跟_成人_一樣_地練_習，可_就是_揠苗_助長_了。



79. TO TRY TO HELP THE SHOOTS GROW BY PULLING THEM UPWARD

There once was a farmer who was always in a hurry. Right from the day he planted his seeds, he hoped to have an early harvest. He went to look at his field every day, wishing that the seeds would grow.

The seeds finally did begin to sprout into tender green seedlings, but the farmer was still not satisfied. He felt that they were growing too slowly. And so one day, he went into his field and pulled each seedling up, so that they were all a little taller than before. It took him all day, but the farmer was very pleased with himself.

The next morning, when the farmer's family went out to look at what he had done, every one of the little seedlings was dead.

Today, this idiom means that trying to hurry things up, rather than letting them take their own course, may be harmful rather than beneficial.

1. 希望 hope
2. 發芽 sprout
3. 長大 grow
4. 自言自語 soliloquize

與狐謀皮



周朝（西元前一一一——一一一——七七一——年）時候，有一個人的思想要去做一件最好的皮衣服，他知道做皮衣服的材料，要算狐皮是最好的。他想：狐皮是狐狸身上上的皮毛，我去找狐狸商量一下，他們一定會有辦法。想着想着就跑到山上，遇到了一隻狐狸，他就對牠說：「狐狸先生，你的皮可以割給我做皮衣服嗎？」狐狸連理都沒有理他，他就走了。他繼續走，看到了一隻狐狸就對牠們說：「狐狸大哥，你的皮做成衣服，一定是很又暖又保，請你讓我割下你的皮吧！」狐狸們聽了，掉過頭就跑，他跑到山上躲起來了。

說明：

這是一則寓言故事，意思是指向惡人求施捨，向強橫的人求憐憫，根本沒有希望。這句成語出自「符子」，也可寫成與虎謀皮。

舉例：

①張先生平日吝嗇得很，你還叫他捐錢救濟別人，那不正是與狐謀皮嗎？②你向老王借錢，簡直是與虎謀皮。



80. TO ASK A FOX FOR ITS SKIN

During the Chou dynasty, there lived a man who wanted to make a fur coat. He knew that fox skin was the best for making fur coats, and so he went out to look for a fox, to discuss the matter of giving up its skin. Before long, the man met up with a fox, and asked, "Mr. Fox, would you be willing to cut off your skin and give it to me to make a fur coat?" The fox just walked away, not paying him the slightest attention. So the man kept searching, and he soon came across a second fox, to whom he said, "Brother Fox, your skin would most certainly make a very warm coat. How about letting me cut it off, OK?" But the second fox lowered his head and ran as fast as he could into the mountains.

Today, people often say that asking an evil person to act against his own interests is like "asking a fox for its skin" — a hopeless request.

1. 皮衣服 fur clothes
2. 狐狸 fox
3. 皮毛 fur
4. 繼續 continue

圖窮匕見

戰國時，秦國的強大軍逼近燕國邊境。燕國太子丹派忠勇愛國的刺客去刺秦王，以解救燕國的危急。他們把燕國督亢的地方畫成圖，然後把鋒利的匕首藏在圖裡。

秦國將軍樊於期得罪了秦王，逃到燕國。秦王下令，凡是能獻上樊於期的人頭，有重賞。樊於期痛恨秦王的暴政，知道刺客的計畫，就自願捐出人頭，自刎而死。

刺客帶了人頭和督亢的地圖，和助手秦舞陽去見秦王，表示燕國願意割地求和，並獻上樊於期的人頭。秦王很高興，立刻召見。在衛士的舉薦下，秦舞陽跟著刺客走，秦王太緊張了，手腳不自由得抖起來。秦王要看看地圖，一打開，寒光閃閃的匕首就露了出來。刺客一把搶過匕首，刺向秦王，可惜只刺到衣袖。兩個壯士就在亂劍下為國犧牲了。

說明：

這個故事在「戰國策」燕策上。「圖窮匕見」指計畫完全敗露，沒有辦法掩飾了。

舉例：

① 張三又想騙錢，人人都知道他說謊，可真是圖窮匕見，沒有人上當了。② 這個孩子真難哄，他媽媽再不回來，我可真是圖窮匕見，沒有辦法了。



81. WHEN THE MAP WAS UNROLLED, THE DAGGER WAS REVEALED

During the Warring States Period, the Ch'in army was drawing very close to the border of Yan. So the crown prince of Yan took a map of the Yan city of Du-kang, and rolled a dagger up inside. He then gave it to a man named Jing Ke, ordering him to take it to Ch'in and kill their king.

Meanwhile, the Ch'in general Fan Wu-chi insulted the king of Ch'in. The king offered a very large reward for his head, and so Fan fled to Yan to escape. When he heard about Jing Ke's plan, however, he decided to sacrifice himself for the cause, and slit his throat, committing suicide.

And so Jing Ke took Fan's head, along with the map of Du-kang, and presented them to the king of Ch'in, surrounded on all sides by armed guards. When the king saw the map, he thought that Yan was ceding territory to him, along with offering him Fan Wu-chi's head, and he was very pleased. He immediately unrolled the map, revealing the shiny bright dagger. Jing Ke grabbed the dagger and stabbed at the king. Unfortunately, he missed the king and hit only his sleeve. And so two heroes had sacrificed themselves for their countries.

Today, this idiom is used to mean that a person's plan is completely exposed, and there is no way to cover it up.

1. 解救 rescue
2. 犧牲 sacrifice





樂不思蜀

82. TO HAVE SO MUCH FUN THAT ONE FORGETS ABOUT SHU

Liou Shan, son of Liou Bei, was ruler of the kingdom of Shu Han during the Three Kingdoms Period. He was a coward who cared only about amusing himself and knew nothing about ruling a country.

One time, the kingdom of Wei attacked Shu and took Liou Shan prisoner.

The people of Wei gave Liou Shan the title "Duke of Peace and Happiness", and took him to live in their capital. Liou Shan had so much fun in the Wei capital that he soon forgot he was the ruler of a defeated kingdom. One day, Sz-ma Jau, a very powerful Wei general, invited Liou Shan over to dinner. Sz-ma Jau intentionally hired some people to perform traditional Shu songs and plays at the dinner, in order to insult Liou Shan. When Liou Shan's subordinates heard the music and saw the plays of their homeland, they grew very sad. Only Liou Shan was completely unaffected, and continued drinking wine and being merry. When Sz-ma Jau asked him, "Don't you miss Shu?", Liou Shan laughed and replied, "I'm having so much fun here; of course I don't miss Shu." And so Sz-ma Jau had even less respect for Liou Shan.

Today, when a person is enjoying himself so much that he forgets about his home and his work, we can say that he "is having so much fun that he has forgotten about Shu."

1. 治理 administer
2. 俘虜 prisoner of war



三國時代（西元二〇〇年～二八〇年），蜀漢的主劉備死了以後，他的兒子劉禪繼位，劉禪小名叫阿斗，懦弱無能，只知道吃喝玩樂，不會治理國事。有一次，魏國來攻打蜀國，俘虜了劉禪。他們並沒有殺害劉禪，還封他當安樂公，接他到魏國京城去住。劉禪每天喝酒玩樂，忘記了自己是亡國之君。魏國當時最有權勢的是大將軍司馬昭。有一天，司馬昭請劉禪吃飯，故意讓人表演蜀國音樂戲曲來羞辱他。跟隨劉禪的蜀國部下，聽到家鄉的聲音，看到家鄉的戲曲，都不由得觸景傷情，傷心起來，只有劉禪依舊高興地飲酒做樂。司馬昭問劉禪：「你不會想念蜀國嗎？」劉禪笑嘻嘻地回答：「我在这兒很快樂，不想念蜀國。」從此，司馬昭更看不起劉禪了。

說明：

這個故事選自「三國志」、蜀志。原本含有悲劇的成分，現在普遍用在比喻在外玩樂，連家鄉、工作都不放在心上。

舉例：

① 他從寒冷的地方到臺北，臺北的天氣和各樣水果，讓他樂不思蜀了。② 張先生到美國已經半年了還沒回來，是樂不思蜀了？



熟能生巧



陳杓堯⁸³，是宋朝⁸⁴（西元九六〇～一二七九年）人，他很會射箭，每次都能射到紅心⁸⁵，所以大家都稱他神箭手⁸⁶，他認為世上沒有人能比得上他，因此非常驕傲。

有一天，他正在射箭，有一個賣油的⁸⁷走過來，放下擔子⁸⁸，斜著眼看他射箭，看了好久，沒說甚麼，只是微微地點點頭。

陳杓堯看到賣油的樣子，心裡有點兒不高興，就問賣油的說：「你也懂得射箭嗎？看我射得多準！」賣油的說：「這沒甚麼，只是手熟罷了。」陳杓堯聽了，認為賣油的看不起他，就很生氣地大聲說：「你怎麼敢輕視我的箭術呢？」賣油的並不說一句話，隨手拿出一個葫蘆⁸⁹放在地上，用一個方孔的銅錢⁹⁰蓋在葫蘆口上，慢慢地用木杓⁹¹子裝滿油，滴下去，只見油從錢孔中滴進去，可見銅錢上面有一點兒油也沒有沾上，這時賣油的才說：「我這也沒甚麼，只是熟能生巧罷了。」

說明：

這句話出自「歐陽文忠公集」，意思是說技巧由熟練而來。

舉例：

① 紡織廠的黃小姐，織的布越來越好了，真是熟能生巧。② 我們做任何事都要多練習，因為熟能生巧啊！

83. PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT

Chen Yau-tz, of the Sung dynasty, was a very talented archer. He hit the bull's eye every time, and so everyone called him "The Magic Archer." Chen Yau-tz felt that he was the best archer in the world, and so he was very proud.

One day, as Chen was shooting arrows, a man selling oil passed by, and stood watching him for a long time. "You know something about archery?", Chen Yau-tz asked the man. "Look at how well I shoot!" The man replied, "That's nothing. All it takes is practice." This made Chen Yau-tz very angry, and he asked, "Dare you underestimate my skill as an archer?" Saying nothing, the man took a bottlenecked gourd, placed it on the ground, and put a coin with a square hole in the center over the top. He poured oil from a wooden ladle drop-by-drop into the gourd, without spilling a single drop on the coin. The man then turned to Chen Yau-tz and said, "That was also nothing. It's just a matter of practice makes perfect."

Thus, the meaning of this idiom is that skill comes from repeated practice.

1. 射 shoot
2. 箭 arrow
3. 紅心 bull's-eye
4. 擔子 a load upon the shoulder
5. 輕視 to think little of
6. 葫蘆 bottle gourd

模稜兩可



唐朝（西元六〇一—八七～九〇七年）有一個人名叫蘇味道。他從小就很聰明，到了九歲就會寫文章了。

因為蘇味道聰明，長大後參加各種考試，成績都比別人好。因為他考試的成績好，後來來做事，從小職員升到主管，從小主管升到大的主管，很快就被升到全國最高的職位，當上了宰相。他為了保住自己的地位，每次處理事情的時候，別人請他表示意見，他怕得罪人，總是說：「這件事這樣也可以，那樣也可以，說話含糊糊塗，不肯做決定。」他還常常對人家說，處理事情不能作明白的決定，因為如果果斷發生錯誤，就要負責任。所以只要模稜兩可就可以了。因此，當時的人就給他起了個外號，叫他蘇模稜。

說明：

這句成語出自「唐書」，模稜是形容處理事情不明確。

舉例：

① 張先生遇到事情，總是模稜兩可，不明白表示態度，真是「太圓滑了」。② 他的爸爸、媽媽平日做事模稜兩可，一遇到一點兒事情，就一點兒主意都沒有了。

84. UNCLEAR AND ABLE TO GO EITHER WAY

During the Tang dynasty, there lived a man named Su Wei-dau, who was very intelligent. He began writing essays when he was only nine years old, and he did well on every examination he ever took. As an adult, he went to work for the government, and worked his way up from a low-level official to the prime minister.

As prime minister, Su Wei-dau was always afraid of offending someone and losing his position. So whenever anyone asked his opinion, he would always answer very vaguely, saying, "Well, you could do it this way, or you could do it that way." He would often tell people that they should never make clearcut decisions about anything, because if their decisions were wrong, they would have to take the responsibility. So it was better to remain unclear, and able to go either way. Therefore, the people of Su Wei-dau's time gave him the nickname, "Unclear Su."

And even today, we can still say that a person who never seems to have any opinion is "unclear and able to go either way."

1. 含糊糊塗 vague
2. 決斷 to decide
3. 外號 nickname
4. 參加 participate in
5. 考試 exam
6. 成績 score
7. 職員 clerk
8. 處理 handle



螳螂捕蟬

春秋時代（西元前七七二～四八一一年），吳國的王好戰，仗著兵力雄厚，常常欺侮鄰國，使人民生活疾苦。有一次，又計畫進攻打楚國，並且聲明，誰要勸阻，一律處死。

大臣少孺子為了勸阻吳王，每天帶著彈弓在花園徘徊，果然引起吳王的注意，問他為什麼這麼早起來洗衣服弄溼了？少孺子回答說：「我到花園去，想試試彈弓，忽然聽見樹上蟬叫。抬頭一看，一隻螳螂舉起雙臂正向前撲去，螳螂的身後站著一隻黃雀，也正要去捉螳螂。我覺得機會難得，就立刻舉起彈弓。沒想到，螳螂剛抓住蟬，黃雀卻一口咬住螳螂，而我正好的打到黃雀。唉！沒提防，我的身後有個池塘，我就一脚跌進池塘了。」吳王聽了，明白少孺子的苦心，就不進攻打楚國了。

說明：

這段比喻出自「莊子」山木篇，這個故事在「說苑」正諫篇。比喻只顧貪圖眼前利益而不顧以後的禍患。通常也說「螳螂捕蟬，黃雀在後」。

舉例：

① 那個扒手不知道身後有警察，正要去偷皮包的錢，就被警察捉住了。真是螳螂捕蟬，黃雀在後。② 小明搶了小學弟的糖，還沒吃，就被另外一個壞孩子又搶走了。小明是螳螂捕蟬嗎？

1. 雄厚 ample
2. 疾苦 suffering
3. 勸阻 dissuade
4. 一律 equally

5. 徘徊 to linger
6. 溼 soaked
7. 螳螂 mantis



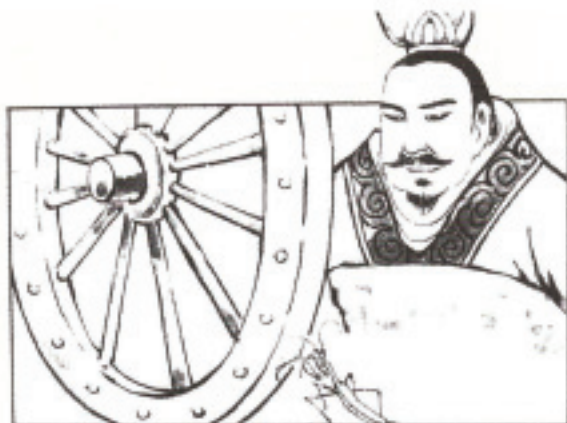
85. THE MANTIS STALKS THE CICADA

During the Spring and Autumn Period, the king of Wu often attacked other kingdoms, and caused his own people to suffer greatly as a result. One time he decided to attack the kingdom of Ch'u, and proclaimed that anyone who tried to convince him otherwise would be executed.

Early one morning a few days later, the king found his minister Shau Ru-tz in the garden with his slingshot, soaking wet. When the king asked him what he was doing there, Shau Ru-tz replied, "I came to the garden to practice my slingshot, and up on a tree branch I saw a mantis which was about to catch a cicada, unaware that there was an oriole behind it about to catch both of them. I lifted my slingshot, and hit the oriole, right as it caught the mantis, which had just finished eating the cicada. However, I didn't notice the pool beside me, and with one false step, I fell right in." When the king heard this, he understood what Shau Ru-tz meant, and cancelled his plans to attack Ch'u.

Thus, when a person is so obsessed with obtaining what is in front of him that he does not notice the danger behind him, we can say that "the mantis stalks the cicada, unaware of the oriole behind."

螳臂當車



齊少莊公是一個國君。有一天，天氣很好，他帶著幾個隨從去打獵。坐在車上，一路欣賞風景。忽然看見一隻綠色的蟲子，翹著長長的身子，舞著雙刀似的兩隻前腳，對準著車輪而來。眼看車輪就要從它身上碾過，齊少莊公大叫一聲：「停車！」他低頭再看，那隻小蟲正舉著鐮刀似的長臂，架在車輪上。它一點兒也不害怕，車輪只要輕輕一動，它就被壓扁了。

「快來看！」莊公說：「這小小蟲子竟敢擋著我的車。」隨從們看了說：「它太不自量力了！」莊公問：「你們知道這是甚麼蟲嗎？」「這隻蟲的名字叫做螳螂，它只知道前進，遇到比他強大的人，也從不退後或躲避。」一個人回答。莊公點頭說：「這真是隻勇敢的小蟲子，人要學他，一定得是勇士。」

說明：

這句成語在「淮南子」和「莊子」上都出現過。比喻一般不自量力的人，妄想阻擋巨大的力量。

舉例：

① 他是拳擊國手，你跟它比賽，真是螳臂當車了。② 他們人多勢力又大，跟他們對抗，無異是螳臂當車。

86. THE MANTIS' LEGS STOP THE CHARIOT

One fine morning, Duke Juang of Ch'i was on his way out hunting with some of his attendants. He sat in his chariot, enjoying the scenery, when suddenly he noticed a small green bug headed towards them. Realizing that the little bug was about to be run over by his chariot, he ordered the driver to stop, and bent down to have a closer look. This little bug was hanging onto the wheel of the chariot with his sickle-like legs, completely undaunted by the fact that he would be crushed to death if the chariot were to move even a tiny bit.

"This little bug is called a mantis," one of the attendants told Duke Juang. "It only knows how to go forward, and even when it meets up with an enemy that is bigger and stronger than itself, it still won't retreat."

Duke Juang nodded and said, "This is truly a brave little bug. Any person who can be like it is certainly courageous."

Today, when a person is unaware of his own limitations and believes that he can defeat an enemy who is much bigger and stronger than himself, we can say that "the mantis' legs stop the chariot."

1. 打獵 hunt
2. 欣賞 enjoy
3. 風景 scenery
4. 輪 wheel
5. 壓扁 flatten
6. 退後 to fall backward
7. 躲避 to dodge



黔驢技窮



中國貴州地方沒有驢，所以貴州地方的人根本從來沒有看見過驢，也不知道驢長得是甚麼模樣。

有一天，一個人從別的地方帶回一頭驢，把牠拴在山坡下的樹上，大家看了都很奇怪。山上有隻老虎走到山坡下，看見這頭驢，也覺得很奇怪，心想：「這是甚麼動物？我恐怕不是牠的對手。」老虎不敢走近去碰牠，只是靜靜地站在那裏看著，突然聽到驢大叫了一聲，嚇得轉頭就跑。

後來日子久了，老虎看慣了驢的樣子，聽慣了驢的叫聲，不再害怕了，就走到驢的身邊，故意碰牠，試探牠究竟有甚麼本領。驢生氣了，踢了老虎一脚，於是老虎知道驢雖然長得高大，實際上沒有別的本領，就把驢咬死吃了。

說明：

這個故事記載在唐代柳宗元所著的「三戒」中，意思是比喻技藝不好沒有用的人；「黔驢之技」也可以寫作「黔驢技窮」。

舉例：

① 剛剛那個賣藝的人表演的飛刀，不過是黔驢之技罷了。② 王大爺為常常騙人，次數太多了，現在沒有人再相信他了，這時他真是黔驢技窮了。

87. TRICKS OF THE CHIAN DONKEY

In Guizhou, China, there are no donkeys, and so people who live there don't even know what a donkey looks like.

One day, a person from another place brought a donkey to Guizhou and tied it to a tree at the foot of a mountain. Along came a tiger, who thought that this was a very strange animal indeed, and fearing that he was no match for it, dared only to quietly watch it from a distance. When the donkey began to bray, it scared the tiger so that he turned and ran away.

After a while, the tiger grew used to the donkey's appearance and its noises. He went up to the donkey and bumped it on purpose, just to see what it would do. The donkey grew very angry, but its only response was to kick at the tiger a little. The tiger then realized that although this donkey was very large, there was really nothing that it could do, and so he ate it.

"Chian" is another name for the province of Guizhou. The idiom "Tricks of the Chian Donkey" refers to a person who, like this donkey, puts on a good act, but actually has no real talent.

1. 貴州 a province in mainland China
2. 驢 donkey
3. 奇怪 strange
4. 恐怕 afraid
5. 嚇得 frightened
6. 本領 ability



舉案齊眉



88. TO HOLD THE PLATE EVEN WITH ONE'S EYEBROWS

During the Eastern Han dynasty, there lived a man named Liang Hung, who made his living raising pigs. He married a girl named Meng Guang, who was from a very rich family.

After they got married, Meng Guang moved up into the mountains with Liang Hung. She began to dress in plain clothes, and every day when Liang Hung got home from work, she would bring him his food on a platter which she carried almost as high as her eyebrows. In their free time, they would read or play the ch'in together. They led a very happy life.

Today, we can use this idiom to describe a husband and wife who, like Liang Hung and Meng Guang, love and respect each other very much.

1. 維持 maintain
2. 志氣 ambition
3. 拒絕 refuse
4. 醜 ugly
5. 傳統 tradition



東漢（西元二〇五～二〇〇年）時，侯平，平陵縣有兩個叫梁鴻的人，家裡很窮，以養豬來維持生活，但是為人卻很有志氣，因為他刻苦讀書，後來就成為了很有學問的人，許多有錢人都想把女兒嫁給他，招他做女婿，可是他都婉言拒絕了。

同縣有一個有錢人家的女兒叫孟光，長得又醜又黑，卻有中興國傳統女子的美德。有很多人向她求婚，她誰也不願嫁，卻願意嫁給梁鴻。

結婚後，孟光雖然是一個富家女，情願跟丈夫到深山去住，脫下漂亮的衣服，換上普通的衣服。梁鴻每天到田裡工作，孟光就在家裡織布。丈夫工作回來，她總是把飯菜做好，用盤子端著舉得差不多和眉毛一樣高來請他吃，表示對他尊敬。空閒的時候，就一起讀書彈琴，你敬我愛，過著幸福快樂的生活。

說明：

這句成語出自「後漢書」的「梁鴻傳」，譬喻夫妻生活互敬互愛的意思。

舉例：

- ① 爸爸和媽媽是「一對舉案齊眉」的模范夫妻。
- ② 現在的夫妻真能做到「舉案齊眉」，已經不多了。



鞭長莫及



春秋時代之（西元前七七二～四八一年），有一年，楚國出兵攻打宋國。宋王派人到晉國去拜見晉王，同時把宋國現在危急情形告訴晉王，請求他出兵幫助，合力抵抗楚國。晉王聽了，很同情宋國的遭遇，就想答應宋國。

晉國的大臣伯宗連忙阻止，並對晉王說：「我們答應出兵，在道義上是應該的，但是就目前的局勢看來，我認為對我們是不利的。因為古人說過『鞭子雖長，也打不到馬的肚子』。現在楚國是多麼強盛，我們的晉國雖然也不差，但是跟楚國鬥，是不聰明的做法。要知道兩隻老虎打架，結果一定不是死就是傷，那又何必呢？還是看看情勢再決定吧！」

晉王聽了他話，覺得很有道理，就拒絕了宋國的請求。

說明：

這句成語見於左傳，「鞭子雖長，打不到馬的肚子」被後人引伸成「鞭長莫及」。比喻心有余而力不足。

舉例：

① 王老太太的女兒在很遠的地方結婚，她想幫忙女兒，實在是鞭長莫及。② 李大年住在學校裡，他養的小狗生病了，但是他不能回去照顧，真是鞭長莫及。

89. THE REINS ARE LONG BUT STILL DON'T REACH

During the Spring and Autumn Period, the kingdom of Ch'u once attacked the kingdom of Sung. The king of Sung sent someone to call on the king of Chin, to ask for his assistance in resisting Ch'u.

The king of Chin was all ready to help Sung, when his minister Bo Tzung said to him, "Of course, it would be good if we could help Sung. However, given the present situation, I do not think that it would be a good idea. People of ancient times had a saying: 'Although the reins are long, they still cannot reach the horse's belly.' Granted, we are strong, but we are no match for Ch'u. When two tigers fight, the one which isn't killed will at least be injured. I say we wait and see what happens before deciding what to do."

And so the king of Chin, deciding that his minister was right, refused to help the kingdom of Sung.

Thus, "The Reins Are Long But Still Don't Reach" is used to mean that despite a person's good intentions, he is unable to be of any assistance.

1. 拜見 to visit
2. 幫助 assist
3. 抵抗 resist
4. 遭遇 meet
5. 阻止 prevent
6. 強盛 strong and prosperous

濫竽充數



90. TO MAKE UP THE NUMBER IN THE 'YU' ENSEMBLE

A 'yu' is a traditional Chinese musical instrument which one plays by blowing. King Shiu'an, ruler of the kingdom of Ch'i during the Warring States Period, loved to listen to this kind of music, and so he hired an ensemble of 300 yu players to go live in his palace.

One day, a poor man named Mr. Nan-guo, who was desperately in need of something to eat, sneaked into the palace and joined the yu ensemble. Unfortunately, Mr. Nan-guo could not play the yu at all, and so whenever the ensemble performed, he would have to pretend.

After King Shiu'an died, King Min took over the throne. King Min also loved yu music, but he preferred to listen to solo performances, rather than to the whole ensemble playing together. So one day, he called each player in separately, and asked him to play a song. Mr. Nan-guo was as nervous as a cat on a hot tin roof, sure that if he were discovered, he would be found guilty of tricking the king. And so as quickly as possible, Mr. Nan-guo sneaked quietly away.

Today, we can use this idiom to refer to a person who has no real talent, but is part of a group only so that the group will have enough members.

戰國時代的齊宣王，很喜欢听音乐，尤其喜欢听「竽」的合奏。他经常养活著三百个吹竽的乐手，给他们很优厚的待遇。有一个很喜欢读书的南郭先生，家里很穷，有时候连吃饭的钱都没有。后来他就混进王宫的乐队里当乐手，可是他根本不会吹竽，大家合奏的时候，他就装作会吹的样子。这样过了很久，居然没有被别人识破。

后来齐宣王死了，齐湣王继位。他跟父亲一样，也喜欢听演奏竽乐；但是他不爱听合奏，偏偏欣赏独奏。有一天，他让三百个乐手在宫里集合，告诉他们说：「一个乐手一个乐手地吹奏，他要慢慢欣赏。」这时候南郭先生急得像热锅上的蚂蚁，他想着等会儿吹不成调，岂不是犯了欺君之罪。于是他不声不响地溜走了。

說明：

這個故事出自「韓非子」。這一本書裡，比喻沒有才能的人，居位充數的意思。

舉例：

① 這個球隊真不錯，每個隊員都有高超的球技，沒有一個人是濫竽充數的。② 你要我這個不會唱歌的人參加合唱團，豈不是濫竽充數嗎？

- | | |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1. 音樂 music | 4. 根本 in the first place / originally |
| 2. 經常 often | |
| 3. 待遇 treatment / receive | 5. 集合 assemble |

鐵杵磨針



我國唐朝初年（西元六八〇—八〇〇～九〇〇年），時候，有一個人名叫李白，他在年輕的時候，不論做事或讀書都不認真，也沒有恆心，遇到一點兒困難就不肯再去做下去了，每天到處遊玩，吃吃喝喝過日子。

有一天，李白出去玩耍兒，不知不覺走到了一條河邊兒，看見一個老太婆，頭髮很白很白，臉上有很多的皺紋，看起來當然是很老了。她手裡拿著一根又粗又長的鐵杵，低著頭，彎著腰，在一塊大石頭上拼命地磨。

李白走過去就問她：「老婆婆，你磨這根鐵杵做甚麼？」老太婆回答說：「我要把這根鐵杵磨成針。」李白聽了老太婆的話，不由地大笑著說：「這怎麼能辦得到呢？」老太婆卻說：「你急甚麼？我每天磨，不住地磨下去工夫，總有一天這根鐵杵會磨成針。」李白聽了很感動，從此努力讀書，後來果然成了大詩人。

說明：

這句成語出自「歷代名媛傳」，譬喻做一件事，只要肯下功夫，有恆心，一定會成功。

舉例：

① 小明說人家能磨鐵杵成針，我每天用功，一定會有好成績的。② 鐵杵磨針的故事是要我們做事有恆心。

91. AN IRON PESTLE CAN BE GROUND DOWN TO A NEEDLE

During the Tang dynasty, there lived a man named Li Bo. When Li Bo was a boy, he was not very serious or persistent about anything. Whenever he encountered a problem with whatever he was doing, he would simply give up and not work on it anymore.

Then one day, Li Bo came across an old woman who was holding an iron rod, and grinding it with all her might on a large rock. When Li Bo went over and asked the woman why she was doing this, the woman replied, "I want to grind this iron rod down to a needle." Li Bo laughed and asked, "How are you ever going to do that?" But the woman replied, "What's your hurry? As long as I work hard at this every day, eventually, one day, it will become a needle." Li Bo was very moved by this old woman's words. From that day on, he began to study very hard, and when he grew up, became one of China's greatest poets.

And so today, the idiom, "An Iron Pestle Can be Ground Down to a Needle" means that as long as we persevere, we will certainly be successful.

1. 年輕 young
2. 恆心 perseverance
3. 感動 moved (emotionally) / touched
4. 鐵棍 iron club
5. 拼命 with all one's might

鷸蚌相爭



92 THE SNIPE AND THE CLAM HAVE A QUARREL

There once was a river clam who climbed up out of the water to sun himself on the shore. Along came a snipe, who thought that the clam's pink meat would make a very good lunch, and stuck his long beak into the clam's open shell. But before the snipe could reach the meat, the clam snapped his shell shut very hard, trapping the snipe's beak inside.

The snipe began to regret having ever tried to eat the clam, but he pretended that he didn't care, saying, "You idiot! By holding me like this, you can't go anywhere, either! If it doesn't rain within the next couple of days, you'll certainly dry up and die!" But the clam very coldly answered, "If I hold your beak until tomorrow, You will surely die of hunger!" And so they continued, each refusing to give in, until a fisherman came by and snatched up the both of them.

Thus, the idiom "The Snipe and the Clam Have A Quarrel" is used to mean that when two parties have a quarrel and refuse to compromise, it is the third party that benefits.

1. 河蚌 clam
2. 溫暖 warm
3. 鷸鳥 snipe
4. 蚌殼 clam shell
5. 猛力 forceful
6. 後悔 regret

一隻河蚌從水里爬上岸來，在溫暖的陽光下，張開了蚌殼曬太陽。這時，有一隻鷸鳥正在尋找食物，突然看到河岸上躺著一個張開蚌殼，露出粉紅色的肉來的蚌，就俯身衝下去，直向蚌肉猛力去啄。牠滿以為可以得個頓豐盛的午餐，誰知正要縮回長嘴時，已經被蚌殼用力夾住了。鷸鳥雖然用力氣，也沒辦法把嘴拔出來。牠有點後悔了，但是牠裝得很不在乎的樣子：「你這個大傻瓜，你夾住我不放，你自已也走不去了。如果今天不下雨，明天也不下雨，你就會乾死。」蚌冷笑着回答說：「我只需要夾著你的長嘴不放，你今天出不去，明天也不出去，就會活活餓死。」牠們倆誰也不讓誰。一個漁翁經過，鷸蚌相爭，各不相讓，毫不費力地把他們捉住了。

說明：

戰國時代（公元前四〇三至二二二年）燕趙兩相鄰，時常相爭。主張連合抗秦的蘇秦怕燕趙兩國一戰，讓秦國獲利，就說了這個故事勸趙王，比喻燕趙兩國相爭，秦國就會像漁翁一樣得利。

舉例：

① 這兩家百貨公司，你打九折，我就打八折。你打七折，我就打六折。這樣「鷸蚌相爭」，只有讓顧客佔便宜了。② 這次競選，張三罵李四，李四罵張三，成了鷸蚌相爭的局面。結果兩人都沒選上，王五倒當選了。

改過自新



古時候，有一個人名叫周處，他從小就沒有父親，沒有人管他。周處沒有好好的兒讀書，整天甚麼事也不做，身體很壯，力氣很大，常常打別人，是個大家都知道的不良少年。

周處漸漸長大了，同村的人都很怕他，更討厭他。一看見他就皺眉搖頭，不願意和他在一起。有一天，周處對同村的王三說：「你們為什麼這麼一見我就皺眉搖頭走開呢？」王三說：「我們這地方，南山上的猛虎，長橋下的蛟龍，都很厲害，常常出來傷人，現在又加上你周處，這樣橫行霸道，成了本地的三害，讓大家都提心吊膽的日子，你為什麼不能改一改自己的行為呢？」周處聽了王三的話，下定決心改過自新，要除掉三害。首先跑到南山殺猛虎，再去殺死蛟龍，最後他自自己離開家鄉，到外地去讀書。經過十多年努力，成了一位有名的學者。

說明：

這句成語出自《晉書·周處傳》，比喻革除自己過去的過失，重新做人。

舉例：

① 王三立志自從小從管教後，已澈底覺悟，決心改過自新。② 小張改過自新以後，大家又和他做朋友了。

- | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------|
| 1. 管教 sure to make | 5. 蛟龍 flood dragon |
| 2. 身體 body | 6. 厲害 fierce |
| 3. 漸漸 slowly / gradually | 7. 傷人 hurt people |
| 4. 皺眉頭 frown | 8. 行為 actions |

93. TO CORRECT ONE'S ERRORS AND MAKE A FRESH START

There once was a boy named Jou Chu, who grew up without a father. Because he had no one to watch over him or teach him, Jou Chu never studied very hard, or did anything very worthwhile. He was big and strong, and often hit people, and so he was known by everyone as a good-for-nothing youngster.

When Jou Chu grew up, he was both feared and hated by everyone in his village. The villagers would hide whenever they saw him coming, because no one wanted to be around him. One day, he asked his neighbor Wang San why everyone always responded to him in this way. Wang San replied, "In the mountains to our south, there lives a fierce tiger, and under the bridge, there lives the flood dragon. And now there's you, the third tyrant, making us all live each day with our hearts in our mouths. Why can't you change your ways?" Jou Chu decided then and there that he would change his errors and make a fresh start. He first went into the mountains and killed the fierce tiger, and then he killed the flood dragon. Finally, he left his hometown and went abroad to study. And after ten years of hard work, he became a very well-known scholar.

Today, when a person, like Jou Chu, changes his faults and becomes like a new person, we can say that he has "corrected his errors and made a fresh start."



自食其果

94. TO EAT ONE'S OWN FRUIT

During the Warring States Period, there lived a man named Chiou Jiun, who went one day to visit a monk. When the monk saw that Chiou Jiun was not a government official, he was cold and indifferent towards him. Right then, the son of a high-ranking military officer came along, wearing his uniform and followed by bodyguards. Smiling, the monk immediately went over and began to entertain him. Chiou Jiun could not believe that this monk could be so snobbish, and so after the officer's son left, Chiou Jiun went over to the monk and very angrily asked him the reason for this difference in his attitude. The monk replied, "You've misunderstood. Those people to whom I act politely, I don't necessarily think much of inside, and those people whom I like inside, I don't see the need to treat so politely."

Upon hearing this, Chiou Jiun lifted the cane that he was holding in his hand, and knocked the monk over the head, saying, "Hitting you, then, means that I love you. Therefore I must hit you; please forgive me!"

Today, when something bad happens to a person as a direct result of something that he has done wrong, we can say that that person is "eating his own fruit."

1. 和尚 monk
2. 愛理不理的 in an unenthusiastic manner / little interest
3. 侍衛 bodyguards
4. 招待 receive
5. 熱情 passion
6. 誤會 misunderstanding
7. 內心 heart
8. 表面 surface

戰國時（西元公元前四〇三年～二二一年）時，有一個人名叫丘浚，有一天，他去拜訪一個和尚。那個和尚見丘浚不是做官的，對他愛理不理的。正在這時，來了一個高級軍官的兒子，穿著軍服，還有侍衛跟著。和尚馬上笑嘻嘻地出去招待。丘浚想，這個和尚怎麼這樣勢利眼。等那個高級軍官的兒子走了，就生氣地問和尚：「你對我為甚麼這樣不客氣，卻對那樣熱情地接待呢？」

和尚馬上回答說：「你誤會了，你不知道我的脾氣，凡是表面上我對他客氣的，內心對他未必好的，凡是內心裡對他好的，那就不必在表面上客氣了。」

這時，丘浚手裡正好拿著一根楊柳杖，一氣之下，就在和尚的頭上敲了一下，說：「照你這樣說，打你就是愛你，所以我只好打你了，請你原諒！」

說明：

這句成語出自「五燈會元」，形容自己作惡，自己受到懲罰。

舉例：

① 小華隨手把香蕉皮丟在地上，過一會兒自己就滑了一跤，真是自食其果。② 小明因為貪玩，成績不好留級了，自己傷心地說：「這就是自食其果。」



獻曝之忱

古時候，宋國有一個種田的老農夫，他一輩子過著很儉樸的生活，住的是一間茅屋，穿的是破舊的粗布衣服，都是市裡的高樓大廈，有錢人穿的棉襖、皮衣，他從來就沒有看見過。到了冬天，天氣很冷，凍得老農夫一直打哆嗦，翻翻櫃子，只有幾件破衣服，全都穿不上，也不怎麼暖和。後來他想可以用火烘火爐、烤火，可是燃料又很貴，真不知道怎樣過這個寒冷的冬天。

日子一天一天地過去，天氣晴了，太陽出來了，老農夫搬個小板凳，坐在門前曬著暖和的太陽，實在很舒服了。他對老伴兒說：「曬太陽取暖這個辦法，是別人還不知道，我準備背著暖和的太陽，去獻給我們的國王，用我們家最好的東西，表示我們的心意，我想國王一定會很高興。」

說明：

這句成語出自「列子」，形容送禮物給別人時，自謙的話。意思是說送的東西並不珍貴。

舉例：

① 這是一點小東西送給你，表示我一點獻曝之忱罷了。② 我的一點獻曝之忱，請你收下。

95. TO OFFER THE WARMTH OF THE SUN

Once upon a time, in the kingdom of Sung, there was an old farmer who lived a very thrifty and simple life. He lived in a hut made of bamboo, and wore tattered clothes made of cotton.

When winter came, the weather turned so cold that the farmer could not stop shivering. Even when he put on all of his clothes, he still was not warm enough. He wanted to build a fire, but fuel was too expensive. He really didn't know how he would ever make it through the winter.

Day by day, the winter passed; the sky cleared, and the sun came out. The farmer moved a stool outside, and sat there enjoying the warm sunshine. He said to his wife, "Warming oneself in the sun is a wonderful thing which others have not yet discovered. I am going to take this sun and present it to our king. I will show him how much we care for him by offering him the very best we have. I'm sure the king will be very pleased."

Today, people can use this idiom to express modesty when giving a gift to someone else. It means that the gift is not very expensive or valuable.



1. 輩子 lifetime
2. 儉樸 thrifty
3. 茅屋 grass hut

4. 破舊 old and torn
5. 暖和 warm
6. 寒冷 cold



養虎貽患

96. TO REAR A TIGER IS TO COURT CALAMITY

In the final years of the Ch'in dynasty, both Liou Bang and Shiang Yu were leading troops in battle against the kingdom of Ch'in, each hoping to overthrow the king. They had signed a treaty stating that whoever fought his way into the capital first would be the victor. Liou Bang was the first to enter the capital, but he was followed closely by Shiang Yu. Because Shiang Yu had more troops, Liou Bang did not dare to enter into direct conflict with him, and so he retreated from the capital.

With the help of his capable advisor Jang Liang, Liou Bang grew more powerful while Shiang Yu, on the other hand, grew weaker. So when Liou Bang asked Shiang Yu to sign a treaty with him, agreeing not to attack each other, Jang Liang said to him, "Right now we are stronger than Shiang Yu. If we don't take advantage of this opportunity and destroy him, it'll be just like raising a tiger and waiting for it to attack us. Isn't this rather dangerous?"

And so Liou Bang broke the agreement and attacked Shiang Yu. Shiang Yu was defeated, and in the end, committed suicide.

Thus, the idiom, "To Rear a Tiger is to Court Calamity" means that sympathizing with one's enemy is a very dangerous thing.

1. 推翻 overthrow
2. 約定 appoint (ment)
3. 得勝 win
4. 反倒 on the contrary
5. 衝突 conflict
6. 禍根 seeds of misfortune
7. 背信 breach of faith
8. 大敗 lose

古的時候，秦國末年，秦國皇帝秦二世被劉邦和項羽攻入國都，劉邦和項羽各自領著軍隊攻打秦國，想推翻秦國。並且約定誰先攻進國都，誰就得到勝利。當時劉邦的軍隊人數比項羽的少。沒想到劉邦先攻進秦國首都，反而倒過來是劉邦，後來項羽也攻進秦國首都，劉邦看到項羽來勢洶洶，不願和他正面衝突，自己動身退出了國都。

經過一段時間，劉邦有參謀張良幫助，勢力漸漸強大，項羽因為沒有得力的人幫助，反而倒過來一天不如一天，正好在這時候劉邦派人去勸項羽和他訂立合約，約定以後誰也不許要攻打誰。

這件事被張良知道了，就對劉邦說：「現在在我們們的勢力比項羽強大，如果趁這時候消滅他，就好的像把老虎養大了，反而會來傷害自己，留下禍根，不是很危險嗎？」

後來劉邦真的背信領兵攻打項羽，結果項羽大敗，自殺而死。

說明：

這句成語出自「史記」項羽本紀。意思是同情敵人是很危險的。

舉例：

① 老師說同情敵人是，就是養虎貽患，是很危險的。② 小朋友看到病貓便收留，可能會養虎貽患啊！

牛角掛書



古時時候，有一個人名叫李密，非常喜歡讀書。每天從早到晚從不浪費一分鐘，所有閒時間都在看書。

有一次，要到遠處地方去辦事，他擔心在路上耽誤時間太多。出門前想了很久，想出一個可以一面趕路一面讀書的好辦法。自己用草編了一個鞍子放在牛背上，把要看的書掛在牛角上。就這樣他可以用舒服地騎在牛背上，一手拿著書，一手牽著韁繩，一邊趕路一邊看書。在路上剛好遇到一個很有地位的人——楊素。他看不到李密專心讀書的樣子，不想打攪，就跟在李密後面，一直等到李密轉頭想換一本新書，纔上前打招呼，還連聲誇獎李密專心讀書的態度。

說明：

這句成語出自「唐書」李密傳。牛角掛書是形容讀書專心，想辦法利用每一分一秒，努力上進。

舉例：

① 小明每天到圖書館，早出晚歸，一分鐘都不浪費，他讀書的精神，可以和牛角掛書的李密媲美了。② 現在在讀書的人，能夠像古時候牛角掛書那樣專心的人，越來越少了。

97. TO HANG BOOKS ON THE OX'S HORN

In ancient times, there lived a boy named Li Mi, who loved to read. He never wasted a single minute, but spent all of his spare time everyday reading.

One day, Li Mi had to go to a faraway place to take care of some business. Not wanting to waste any time on the way there, he took all of the books that he wanted to read and hung them on one of the horns of his ox. He then climbed up onto his ox's back, and with a book in one hand and the reins in the other, began his journey.

On the way, Li Mi was spotted by Yang Su, a very well-known scholar of the time. Not wishing to interrupt Li Mi while he was so absorbed in his reading, Yang Su instead followed behind the ox, waiting until Li Mi looked up to get a new book. Yang Su then rode up to Li Mi and greeted him, praising him highly for his attitude towards reading.

Today, we can say that a person who is so diligent in his studies that he finds a way to make use of every minute is "hanging books on the ox's horn."

1. 浪費 waste
2. 耽誤 delay / hold up
3. 鞍子 saddle
4. 牛角 horns
5. 舒服 comfortable
6. 韁 reins





畫龍點睛

古時候，有一個人名叫張僧繇，他很會畫畫兒，他畫的甚麼像甚麼，誰都知道他是位有名的大畫家。有一天，他到了城外的一座廟裡，廟裡的和尚看見大畫家來了，就請他畫一幅壁畫兒，給遊客欣賞。

張僧繇起初不肯，禁不住和尚再三的請求，就在廟的牆上畫了四條龍。每一條龍都張牙舞爪，好像要飛起來的樣子。好多遊客在旁邊看，遊客們都禁不住地說：「實在太像了，可是怎麼沒畫上眼睛呢？」張僧繇說：「這四條龍，只要我輕輕一點上眼睛，就會馬上騰空飛走了。」

大家都不信他的話，請他把龍的眼睛點上。張僧繇拿起筆，在一條龍的眼睛上點了一點，只見那條龍的眼睛一眨，頓時天昏地暗，又打雷又閃電，震了一聲，牆上的龍就飛上天，不見了。

說明：

這句成語出自「名畫記」，畫龍點睛比喻繪畫或寫文章在最重要的地方著上筆，使全篇生動傳神。

舉例：

① 這部電影是用畫龍點睛的手法，一直到最後纔說明主題。② 小豪這篇文章，最後一句真是傳神，可說是畫龍點睛。

98. TO PAINT EYES ON THE DRAGON

In ancient times, there lived a very famous painter named Jang Seng-yau. All of Jang's paintings were remarkably true-to-life; no matter what his subject, he always made it look exactly like the real thing.

One day, when Jang Seng-yau went to visit a temple, the monks there asked him to paint a mural on their wall. He was at first going to refuse, but at the monks' insistence, he agreed, and began to paint four dragons. All of the dragons looked very fierce, and ready to fly right off the wall. Many of the tourists who were watching him paint said, "They all look very real indeed. But why don't you paint on eyes?" Jang Seng Yau replied, "All I need to do is very lightly dot eyes on these dragons, and they will fly away into the sky."

Seeing that no one believed him, Jang Seng-yau took his brush and dotted eyes onto one of the dragons. The dragon's eyes blinked once, and suddenly everything grew dark. There was a bolt of lightning and a clap of thunder, and the dragon took off into the sky.

Today, the idiom "To Paint Eyes on the Dragon" can be used to describe any work of art — a painting, a piece of writing, a movie, etc., to which the artist has added a special touch at just the right point, causing the entire work to come alive.

1. 廟 temple
2. 和尚 monk
3. 壁畫 wall mural
4. 遊客 traveler
5. 天昏 dusk
6. 牆 wall



捨本逐末



戰國時（西元公元前四〇三年～二二一年）時，有一次，齊國的國王派人到趙國去訪問趙王，還帶著齊王親筆的問候信。趙王還沒把信拆開，就先問派來的人說：「貴國今年莊稼好的嗎？人民的生計怎麼樣？國王的身體好的嗎？」那人聽了，很不高興地回答說：「是齊王派我來向您問候的，您不問候齊王，反而先問莊稼和人民的生計，難道是先賤後貴嗎？」趙王說：「你的觀念錯了，要知道一個國家沒有莊稼，那裡會有人民？如果沒有人民，那裡來的國王呢？難道你讓我捨本去問末事嗎？」

捨本問末是說不重視根本，反而重視不重要的事，也就是一種本末倒置的「捨本逐末」。

說明：

這句成語出自「晉書」的「鮑遠傳」。捨本逐末是形容做事不顧根本，反而斤斤計較細微末節。

舉例：

- ① 小明參加演說比賽，只注重上台時要穿甚麼，卻不去想演稿的準備，就是捨本逐末。
- ② 運動員只希望成績好，卻不注意平日訓練，那就是一種捨本逐末。

99. TO NEGLECT THE ROOT AND ATTEND TO THE TIP

During the Warring States Period, the king of Ch'i once sent a messenger to the kingdom of Chao, to call on the king and deliver a letter sending his regards. Before the king of Chao even opened the letter, he asked the messenger, "How are the crops in Ch'i growing this year? How are the people? Is the king in good health?" The messenger very angrily answered "It is the king of Ch'i who sent me to call on you, and yet you first ask about the crops and the people. Could it be that you are concerned more with the lowly than with the noble?" The king replied, "You don't understand. If we know that a country has no crops, how could it have any people? And if it has no people, where does the king come from? Could it be that you want me to neglect the root, and attend to the tip?"

Today, the idiom "To Neglect the Root and Attend to the Tip" means to attend to trifles to the neglect of the essentials.

1. 拆開 to break / tear up
2. 觀念 concept
3. 錯 wrong
4. 派人 to send someone
5. 難道 is it possible……?



貪小失大

古時侯，秦之王帶領著一大隊人馬去攻打蜀國，軍隊開到了蜀國的邊境，往遠處一看，不是一重重的大山，就是凹凸不平的山路，要想前進實在困難，而且也沒人知道怎樣的走法。

軍中有一個聰明的人，就想到了——個法子：來騙蜀國。他們用大石磨頭鑿成五隻大石牛，在石牛後面故意放許多金子，告訴人家說這些牛真的會變成金子。蜀王聽到這個消息，就命令很多年輕力壯的人，趕快開山鋪路，然後把五隻大石牛推回來。就在石牛一步步向回推的時候，秦國的軍隊也跟了上來，結果，石牛推回來了，蜀國也滅亡了。蜀王這才明白，自己貪了秦國這點點金子，最後把國家亡了，實在不值得，但是後悔已遲來不及了。

說明：

這句成語出自「新論貪愛」。意思是得——點好處，卻失去了很多的利益。

舉例：

① 李太太花錢買了一籃蘋果，回家一看卻是爛蘋果，這真是貪小失大。② 小強在路邊撿了一個包裏，轟隆一聲炸傷了右手，媽媽說他貪小失大。

100. TO SEEK SMALL GAINS BUT INCUR BIG LOSSES

In ancient times, the king of Ch'in once led his army to attack the kingdom of Shu. When the army reached the Shu border, however, they discovered that the terrain was all mountains, and the roads were full of bumps. No one could figure out how to get through.

Finally one of the soldiers thought of a way to trick Shu: the men took five large rocks and chisled them into cows. They then placed several gold pieces behind each cow, and told people that the cows' manure could turn into gold. When the king of Shu heard this, he sent many strong young men to go fix the road, and bring back the five cows. But as the cows were being pushed back, the Ch'in army was right behind them. And so, when the cows arrived, the kingdom of Shu was destroyed. At that point, the king of Shu realized that in seeking a little bit of Ch'in's gold, he had lost his entire kingdom. He thoroughly regretted having been so greedy, but it was already too late.

Thus, the idiom "To Seek Small Gains But Incur Big Losses" means to make a small profit but incur a great loss as a result.

1. 邊境 border
2. 困難 difficulties
3. 鑿成 open / carve out
4. 故意 intentionally
5. 牛糞 cow manure
6. 趕快 quickly
7. 鋪路 pave the way
8. 不值得 not worth it



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