

# 特别英语 词语故事

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# 特别英语词语故事

金 宪 罗勤生 编写

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## **特别英语词语故事**

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《特别英语词语故事》是根据美国驻沪总领事馆文化处提供的 VOA 特别英语专题节目的录音,根据中国听众的特点、兴趣和听力训练的一般规律编写而成的。全书共有三十三个词语故事。这些词语故事生动有趣,文字浅显易懂。每课包括课文,课文注释,练习和译文四个部分。练习由编者根据课文内容编写。课文录音是 VOA 特别英语的原声带,语音语调地道纯正,适合中学生、非英语专业的大学生、科技人员及英语爱好者阅读收听。

为了学好本广播教程,编者建议在学习过程中按以下步骤进行:

(1)预习阶段 首先仔细阅读课文并掌握课文的注释。

(2)收听阶段 在不看课文的情况下先听广播,然后根据自己对课文的理解回答问题,完成中译英,并掌握课文中词组的正确使用方法。

(3)检查阶段 对照课文再听录音,找出自己在听力方面存在的问题。

由此可提高语言理解和听力水平,掌握英语词语的妙用。

本书由上海人民广播电台编辑金宪、上海师范大学副教授罗勤生合作编写。

由于编者的水平有限,缺点、错误在所难免,衷心欢迎读者、听众们批评、指正,谢谢。

编 者

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## Unit 1      The Expression "Nuts and Bolts" and Its Story

Now the Special English program, Words and Their Stories.

Every machine is held together by its nuts and bolts. Without them the machine would fall apart. That is also true of an organization. Its nuts and bolts are its basic, necessary elements. They are the parts that make the organization work. In government, industry, diplomacy, in almost anything, those who understand the nuts and bolts are the most important. Success depends more on them than on almost anyone else.

In government, the president or prime minister may plan and shape programs and policies, but it takes much more work to get them approved and to make them successful. There is a mass of detailed work to be done, the nuts and bolts. This is often put into the hands of specialists. The top leaders are always well-known, but not those who work with the nuts and bolts. This is equally true in the day-to-day operation of Congress. The majority leader of the Senate and the speaker of the House of Representatives, together with the chairmen of committees, keep the business of Congress moving. Behind every senator and congressman, however, are as-

sistants. These people do all the detailed work to prepare congressmen to vote wisely on each issue. The top assistant is the eyes and ears of the legislator.

In diplomacy the chief ministers are unquestionably important in negotiations, but there are lesser officials who do the basic work and preparations on the different issues to be negotiated. A recent book tells of a British Prime Minister who decided to send an ambassador to Washington to learn if details could be worked out for joint action on an issue. "The talks in Washington," the minister said, "would be of nuts and bolts." He meant, of course, the talks would concern all the necessary elements to make joint action successful.

In a military operation strategy decisions are important, but much more time is spent on the nuts and bolts, generally called logistics, of how to transport and supply an army. It has been said that Napoleon was successful because he knew the field position of every one of his guns. He gave careful attention to the nuts and bolts of his operations.

The extreme importance of nuts and bolts was expressed by the Elizabethan poet George Herbert. He wrote, "For want of a nail the shoe is lost. For want of a shoe, the horse is lost. For want of a horse, the rider is lost." Benjamin Franklin carried these lines even further. He wrote, "For want of a rider, the battle was lost. For want of a battle, the kingdom was lost. And all for the



want of a horse-shoe nail.”

### Words and Expressions

- a) hold together: cause something to remain united 使结合

The pages of the pamphlet are held together with pins.  
小册子的书页由大头针别在一起。

- b) nuts and bolts: the working or moving parts or elements of a machine; the simple facts; skills; duties of a job  
螺帽和螺钉; 基本要素, 细节

I can drive a car, but I don't know anything about the nuts and bolts of its engine. 我会开汽车, 但是对汽车发动机的工作原理一无所知。

The ministers discussed the general outline of the plan on joint action, but left the nuts and bolts to their subordinates. 部长们讨论了联合行动计划的大体轮廓, 而把细节留给下属去处理。

- c) depend on / upon: be determined by 取决于, 依靠  
Whether he will succeed or fail in his career will depend on his effort and ability. 他的事业的成败取决于他的努力和能力。

- d) put into the hands of: entrust, let someone carry out  
托付给

The nuts and bolts are put into the hands of specialists.  
细节交由专业人员去处理。

- e) keep sb./sth. doing sth.: cause someone or something to continue to do something 使继续进行

These top leaders keep the business of Congress moving.  
这些高层领导人使议会工作运行不辍。

His strong will keeps him going on with his studies despite heavy odds. 他的坚强意志使他不顾重重困难继续学习。

- f) vote: express one's choice in response to a proposed decision 投票, 表决

These specialists help the congressmen to vote wisely on an important issue. 这些专业人员帮助议员在重要问题的表决上作出明智的抉择。

- g) joint action, usually in the phrase "to take joint action": to act together 联合行动

The two countries agreed to take joint action in the war against their common enemy. 两国同意在和它们的共同敌人打仗时采取联合行动。

## Exercises

### I. Answer the following questions:

- 1) What is meant by "nuts and bolts"?
- 2) Who are responsible for the nuts and bolts in government work?
- 3) What is the top assistant responsible for?
- 4) What, according to the British Prime Minister, would the talks in Washington be about?
- 5) On what is more time usually spent in a military operation?
- 6) Why was Napoleon successful in his military operations?

rations?

7) Why is the rider lost according to the poet?

8) Why, according to Benjamin Franklin, was a kingdom lost?

## II. Translate the following into English:

1) 对体育运动的爱好把这些运动员结合在一起。

2) 我们必须处理这些细节。

3) 你可以信任他，把事情交给他。

4) 儿童继续不断地提问题。

5) 找不到更好的小说，我就阅读这一本。

## 译 文

现在是特别英语节目“词语典故”。

每一台机器都由螺帽和螺钉紧固在一起，没有它们，机器就会散架。一个机构也是这样，它的螺帽和螺钉就是它的基本的、必不可少的部门。它们是使该机构运作的部件。在政府、工业、外交等部门中，在几乎任何领域里，那些了解基本环节的人是最重要的，他们比几乎所有其他的人都更能影响事情的成败。

在国家治理中，总统或首相可以拟订施政大纲和政策，但是要使它们获得议会批准并且顺利实施，却要做多得多的工作。其中要做的是大量的具体工作，即螺帽螺钉性质的工作，这种工作往往交给专业人员去办。上层领导人总是广为人知的，而做具体工作的那些人则不然。在议会的日常运作中，情况同样如此。参议院的多数党领袖，众议院议长，以及各个委员会的主席，保持着议会工作的运转。但是每一个参议员和众议员的背后都有助手，这些人处理所有的具体工

作，使议员们在此基础上就每一个问题的表决作出明智的决定。一个高级助手就是议员的耳目。

在外交中，首席部长在谈判中无疑是重要的。但是也有一些次要官员，为要讨论的各种问题做基础工作和前期准备。最近有一本书谈到一位英国首相决定派一位大使去华盛顿，以了解能否为某一问题制订联合行动的细节。这位首相说，“华盛顿的讨论是螺帽螺钉性质的。”他的意思当然是指该讨论将涉及促使联合行动成功的所有必要的细节。

在军事行动中，战略决策是重要的，但是更多的时间却要化在部队的运送和给养这种具体事务上，亦即通常所称的后勤工作上。据说拿破仑之所以常胜，就是因为他知道己方每门炮的位置，他对自己的军事行动的细节是十分注意的。

伊丽莎白时代的诗人乔治·赫伯特表达了细节的极端重要性。他写道：“少了一颗钉子，马蹄铁就完了；少了一只马蹄铁，马就完了；少了一匹马，骑士就完了。”本杰明·富兰克林把这几句话加以发挥，他写道：“少了一个骑士，战斗就完了；少了一场战斗，王国就完了。这一切全都由于少了马蹄铁上的一颗钉子。”

## Unit 2      The Expression "Dark Horse" and Its Story

Words and Their Stories, a program about special American expressions.

Sports and politics have given the language many colorful expressions. One of these is "dark horse". In racing it means a horse that runs much faster than expected and comes in first, even though the experts said it had little chance of winning. In politics, a dark horse is an unknown candidate for office who wins a nomination or an election.

British Prime Minister Benjamin Disraeli is believed to have been the first to use the expression. He wrote about it in his book *The Young Duke*, which was published in 1831. In the book Disraeli describes a horse race. He tells how the two top choices fell behind, while a dark horse, which never had been thought of, rushed past the grandstand in a sweeping triumph.

As a political expression, "dark horse" appeared for the first time in a national Democratic Party convention of 1844. The dark horse was James Knox Polk. Polk had been the leader of the House of Representatives from 1835 to 1839. He also had been governor of the state of Tennessee, but as a national leader he was considered

a political nobody. Nevertheless, Polk surprisingly won the Democratic nomination and was elected president. This is what happened. Martin Van Buren of New York, a former president, seemed sure of getting the nomination, but he opposed making a territory of Texas part of the United States as another state. He was against it because there was slavery in Texas. Then Buren did not want another slave state in the Union. As a result, he lost support among those Democrats who supported slavery. At the 1844 convention, Van Buren could not get enough votes to win the nomination. The convention was deadlocked. The Democratic leaders decided that the only wise thing would be to run a dark horse, a man who could unite the party. So one of the party leaders proposed the name of James Knox Polk. Polk won and the party united behind him. He defeated his opponent, Henry Clay of the Whig Party, to become the eleventh president of the United States.

After the 1844 convention, the dark horse candidate became an established fact of national political life. Every four years as both the Republican and Democratic Parties begin their national conventions, there is the possibility of surprises. Sometimes the choices for the nomination are clearly established before the convention opens, but one cannot always be sure. There is always a chance that some dark horse would come out of nowhere and run off with the top prize.

## Words and Expressions

- a) dark horse: a horse that wins a race unexpectedly; an unknown candidate who wins a nomination or election  
黑马; “黑马”候选人

Every once in a while a dark horse candidate gets elected President. 偶而会有一个“黑马”候选人当选为总统。

- b) nomination: proposing by name for offices 提名  
The committee has the power of nomination for official posts. 委员会有权提名任职人选。

- c) think of: have the idea of, dream of 想到  
He had never thought of getting the nomination for that office. 他根本不曾想到会得到担任那个职位的提名。  
I wouldn't think of doing such a thing. 我是不会想到去干这种事情的。

- d) nobody: person of no importance 无足轻重的人  
He is a nobody in the field of science. 他在科学界是个小人物。

- e) deadlocked: brought to a complete standstill 陷于僵局的

The deadlocked peace talks gave first signs of reviving yesterday. 陷于僵局的和平谈判昨天初显复苏迹象。

- f) run: cause a person or a horse to take part in a contest or a race 使(人或马等)参加比赛

They won't run the horse in any race this season. 他们不会让这匹马参加本赛季的比赛。

## Exercises

### I. Answer the following questions:

- 1) What is meant by a "dark horse" in politics?
- 2) When was it first used and by whom?
- 3) Why was Van Buren not nominated?
- 4) Why was it said that James Knox Polk was a dark horse?
- 5) Why was the Democratic Convention of 1844 deadlocked?
- 6) Why is there always the possibility of surprises at national party conventions?

### II. Translate the following into English:

- 1) 那次选举，一个不知名人士获得最多选票。
- 2) 她被提名为那机构的秘书。
- 3) 他没想到参加这次选举。
- 4) 他在文学界内是个不知名的人物。
- 5) 会议不能达成协议，只能延期至下周。
- 6) 那个政治上无足轻重的人物出人意料地大获全胜。

## 译 文

现在是关于美国成语的节目，“词语典故”。

体育运动和政治给予英语许多鲜明生动的词语，其中之一就是“黑马”。在赛马中，它指的是一匹虽被专家们认为几乎无获胜可能，然而却跑得比人们预料的快得多而且获得第一的马。在政治上，“黑马”指赢得提名或选举的不知名的候选人。



据说英国首相本杰明·迪斯累里是第一个使用这个词语的人。他在1831年出版的《年轻公爵》一书中谈到这样的一匹马，他在书中描述了一场赛马。他说，两匹最被看好的马落后了，而一匹谁也未曾想到的黑马以压倒优势从大看台前面冲了过去。

作为政治词语，“黑马”最早出现在1844年民主党全国代表大会上，那黑马就是詹姆士·诺克斯·波尔克。波尔克在1835至1839年担任众议院议长，他还当过田纳西州州长。但是以国家领导人标准来衡量，他是一个政治上的小人物。然而波尔克令人惊讶地赢得了民主党的提名，并且当选为总统。事情是这样的，纽约州的范布伦曾经当过总统，似乎肯定会获得提名，但是他反对合并得克萨斯，使它成为美国的又一个州。他反对的原因是得克萨斯有奴隶制，他不愿意合众国再有一个有奴隶的州。这样一来他便失去了那些拥护奴隶制的民主党人的支持，在1844年的代表大会上，范布伦未能得到足够的票数以赢得提名。代表大会陷于僵局，民主党的领袖们最后认为，唯一明智的办法就是推举一个黑马竞选人，一个能团结全党的人。于是有一位党的领导人提出詹姆士·诺克斯·波尔克。波尔克赢得了提名，受到全党一致拥护。他战胜了对手——辉格党的亨利·克莱，成为美国第十一任总统。

1844年代表大会后，黑马候选人已成为全国政治生活中确凿无疑的事实。每过四年，当共和党和民主党各自召开代表大会时，总是有出现冷门的可能性。有时候提名的倾向在代表大会开幕前就已经可以明确判定，但是也不可能永远有把握。说不定会有一匹黑马不知道从什么地方冒出来，夺走了头奖，这样的可能性始终是存在的。