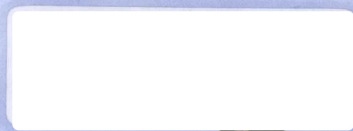


跟新概念英语 学英美文化

(第4册)

Learn British and
American Culture Through
New Concept English



石化出版社

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跟新概念英语 学英美文化

(第4册)

纽约自由女神像，美国，城市景观，自由女神像，自由女神像，自由女神像



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PREFACE

前言

现如今,如何学习英语成为了中国人的必谈话题,越来越多的人加入到了英语学习的队伍中,而英语学习受到英美文化的制约,人们越来越认识到文化学习对语言学习的重要性。这就要求我们在学习英语的过程中,不但要学好作为交际工具使用的英语语言,还要深入了解英美文化。

文化是人类在社会历史发展过程中所创造的物质财富和精神财富的总和,特指精神财富,如文学、艺术、教育、科学等。简而言之,文化就是英文中的 way of life(生活方式)。文化是区分民族最重要的标志,在英语中,文化和社会在很多场合是可以互换的同义词。因此,不同国家和民族之间的一切交流,都必须建立在互相理解和尊重彼此文化的基础之上。

《新概念英语》是以零基础为起点,涵盖了小学到高中的所有必须掌握的语法知识点的教材,能够让学生在学英语的过程中,又同时感受到英语所带来的乐趣。“学习一门语言,不仅仅是掌握一套规则,积累大量词汇。教师工作的重点不应该是告诉学生关于一门语言的知识,而应是使学生能够使用这门语言。”不同的民族语言产生于不同的民族文化土壤,并随着该民族的文化发展而发展,因此,不懂一个民族的文化,就不可能真正学懂这个民族的语言,更不懂这个民族的人民。没有对英美文化的深刻了解,也就无法真正学好该民族的语言。所以,要想学好英语,就必须要了解英美等西方国家的背景文化。因此,我们以新概念英语作为媒介,从中发现丰富的英美文化,感受地道的英语学习。

本书具有以下特点:

一、趣味性强,内容新颖

书中内容与当下的社会生活热点息息相关,话题丰富多彩,极具现代生活气息。话题中既有传统的对人生、家庭、爱情的探讨,又不乏新鲜时尚的生活资讯。

二、简易性与知识性并举

书中尽量选用内容丰富、涉及面广同时语言简明的客观介绍文章,以扩大读者的知识面,提高对英语的理解能力和使用能力。

三、在学习英美文化的过程中学习英语

为便于在轻松的阅读中学习英语,文章中给出的英语词语,一般都是学习英语必须掌握的词语,涉及到英美文化的各个方面,包括常用专有名词、习语、惯用语及著名的英语文章佳句、段落等。本书便于读者边学文化边学英语,可达到一箭双雕之目的。

英美文化知识浩如烟海,不可能一一罗列。鉴于读者的需要,我们这里只选编在《新概念英语》中经常遇到的、与英语学习密不可分的英美文化知识,而且注意选择趣味性强、可读性强、思想健康的有关知识。

《跟新概念英语学英美文化(第4册)》精选反映西方文化的文章,包含地理、民族、政治、法律、文化名人、服饰饮食、人文典籍等方面的知识,英汉对照,适用于各专业学生和广大英语爱好者。相信大家在学习完本书后,不但能够深入了解英美文化与生活的方方面面,而且能够切实提高自己的英语交流能力。

编者

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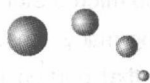
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Lesson

1



文化学习心得 >>>

一、概述

科学家认为,世界上至少存在过大约 10 亿种生物,而被科学家命名的生物大约只有 160 万种,在这 160 多万种生物中,又只有 30 万种生物人们曾经找到过它们的化石。那么化石是什么呢?化石就是生活在遥远的过去的生物的遗体或遗迹变成的石头。在漫长的年代里,地球上曾经生活过无数的生物,这些生物死亡后的遗体或是生活时遗留下来的痕迹,许多都被当时的泥沙掩埋起来。在随后的岁月中,这些生物遗体中的有机物质分解殆尽,坚硬的部分如外壳、骨骼、枝叶等与包围在周围的沉积物一起经过石化变成了石头,这就是化石。这些化石中,海洋生物居多,因为很多海洋生物具有壳这样坚硬的结构。

但是人们找到所有的生物化石了么?仍然还有其他原因使得某些化石从未被人们发现过。例如,很多化石由于地面剥蚀而被破坏掉,或它的坚硬部分被地下水分解了。化石的任何痕迹会完全或几乎完全消失。还有很多化石则存在于未被研究的沉积岩层中。很好露出于地表的含化石的岩石可能分布在世界上的某些地方,科学家没有找到。所以,有的时候科学家推算出来的进化过程可能存在着失误。例如,一段历史时期中,人们一直没有找到马的化石痕迹,因此,无法推断出马进化的正确过程。

二、背景拓展

Fossils (from Latin fossus, literally “having been dug up”) are the preserved remains or traces of animals, plants, and other organisms from the remote past. The totality of fossils, both discovered and undiscovered, and their placement in fossiliferous (fossil-containing) rock formations and sedimentary layers (strata) is known as the fossil record. The study of fossils across geological time, how they were formed, and the evolutionary relationships between taxa (phylogeny) are some of the most important functions of the science of paleontology. Such a preserved specimen is called a “fossil” if it is older than some minimum age, most often the arbitrary date of 10,000 years ago. Hence, fossils range in age from the youngest at the start of the Holocene Epoch to the oldest from the Archaean Eon several billion years old. The observations that certain fossils were associated with certain rock strata led early geologists to recognize a geological timescale in the 19th century. The development of radiometric dating techniques in the early 20th century allowed geologists to determine the numerical or “absolute” age of the various strata and thereby the included fossils.

Like extant organisms, fossils vary in size from microscopic, such as single bacterial cells only one micrometer in diameter, to gigantic, such as dinosaurs and trees many meters long and weighing many tons. A fossil normally preserves only a portion of the deceased organism, usually that portion that was partially mineralized during life, such as the bones and teeth of vertebrates, or the chitinous exoskeletons of invertebrates. Preservation of soft tissues is rare in the fossil record. Fossils may also consist of the marks left behind by the organism while it was alive, such as the footprint or feces (coprolites) of a reptile. These types of fossil are called trace fossils (or ichnofossils), as opposed to body fossils. Finally, past life leaves some markers that cannot be seen but can be detected in the form of biochemical signals; these are known as chemofossils or biomarkers.

三、背景词汇

- literally** *adv.* 逐字地, 按照字面上地, 不夸张地
- fossiliferous** *adj.* 含有化石的
- sedimentary** *adj.* 沉淀性的
- strata** *n.* 层(地层, 岩歧, 阶层, 薄片)
- taxa** *n.* taxon 的复数
- phylogeny** *n.* 事物的发展史
- paleontology** *n.* 古生物学
- specimen** *n.* 样本, 标本
- arbitrary** *adj.* 任意的, 恣意的, 专制的
- associate** *n.* 同伴, 伙伴 *v.* 联合, 联想 *adj.* 副的
- radiometric** *adj.* 辐射测量的(辐射度的)
- microscopic** *adj.* 显微镜的
- bacterial** *adj.* 细菌的
- micrometer** *n.* 测微计
- dinosaurs** *n.* 恐龙类
- deceased** *n.* 死, 死亡
- mineralize** *v.* 矿物化, 矿化, 使含矿物
- vertebrate** *n.* 脊椎动物
- chitinous** *adj.* 壳质的
- exoskeleton** *n.* [动外]骨骼
- feces** *n.* 渣滓(排泄物, 粪便)
- coprolite** *n.* 粪化石
- reptile** *adj.* 爬虫类的 *n.* 爬行动物
- ichnofossil** *n.* [地质]足迹化石, 踪迹化石

文化美文阅读

Native Americans Today

According to the Bureau of Indian Affairs, a part of the U. S. government, there are now about 550 tribes. These include well-known groups like the Navajo and Sioux, and less famous tribes like the Cayuse. The number of Native Americans living in the U. S. is about 1.2 million.

Almost a million live on reservations, areas of land that the government has allowed them to keep as their own. Native Americans are U. S. citizens, and have the rights and responsibilities of any U. S. citizen. However, reservations have their own governments and police forces and Native Americans pay different taxes. They also have the right to hunt and fish where and when they like while other Americans have to get a licence.

On or off the reservations Native Americans find it difficult to live the traditional life. Activities of other Americans affect the way they live. Building dams across a river, for example, can affect the numbers of fish living there, so that even though Native Americans have the right to fish they may not be able to catch anything. Away from the reservations, many Native Americans find that their culture is very different from that of white people and have difficulty adapting.

Poverty is a serious problem. About 37% of people who live on reservations are unemployed, compared with 6% of the general population. Many tribes try to bring in money from outside. Some sell rights to search for oil on their reservation, others use the fact that the reservation makes its own rules to open casinos where people from outside can come and gamble. Gambling is illegal in most parts of the U. S. and many Americans want it to remain so, but it makes a lot of money for the tribes. This brings Native Americans, once again, into conflict with white Americans.

今日美洲原住民

根据美国政府部门印第安人事务局的数据,现有印第安人部落约 550 个,其中纳瓦霍和苏族等部落比较有名,卡尤塞等名气不大。目前居住在美国的美洲原住民约有 120 万。

近 100 万美洲原住民居住在保留地——即政府允许他们自己保留的土地。美洲原住民是美国公民,与美国公民享有同等的权利和义务。但是,保留地有自己的政府和警察机构,美洲原住民交的税也不同。他们还可以随意狩猎和捕鱼,其他美国人则需得到特许。

不管是离开还是留在保留地,美洲原住民都很难保持传统的生活方式。其他美国人的活动影响着他们的生活。例如,在河上建堤坝会影响河里鱼的数量,这样即便美洲原住民有权捕鱼,他们也可能什么都抓不到。离开保留地以后,许多美洲原住民发现他们的文化与白人的截然不同,很难适应。

贫困是个严重的问题。美国总的失业率是 6%,而保留地内的失业率高达 37% 左右。许多部落试图从保留地以外挣钱,有的出让在保留地内寻找石油的权利,有的利用保留地自行制定规章制度这一条件,开设赌场让外面的人来赌博。在美国的大部分地区,赌博是非法的,许多美国人希望保持现状,但这些部落借赌博赚了多少钱。这使美洲原住民再次与美国白人发生冲突。

Native Americans in the Popular Imagination

An American tradition dating back to early times is Thanksgiving. When the English arrived in Jamestown many died during the long cold winter, but in the following spring Native Americans showed them what local foods they could eat. In the autumn, well-prepared for the winter, settlers and Native Americans had a special dinner together, the first Thanksgiving, to thank God and the Native Americans for all the food they had.

Another story describes how the Native American princess Pocahontas saved the life of John Smith, the leader in Jamestown, when her father, Powhatan, wanted to kill him. She later married another Englishman, John Rolfe, and went to England with him. The story of Pocahontas is widely known and many Native Americans are proud to have her as an ancestor.

But Native Americans were more often seen by white settlers as the enemy. Westerns, i. e. films and books about the Wild West, use the threat from Indians as their central theme. In this context Native Americans are still called “Indians”. Children often play “cowboys and Indians” and pretend to kill each other. When Buffalo Bill, began touring the U. S. with his Wild West show, the chief Sitting Bull was one of many Native Americans in it, and many people went to see this former great enemy.

Many Americans have an image of a “typical Indian”, a chief who lived in a teepee with his squaw (= wife), smoked a peace pipe after signing a treaty with the white man (whom he called pale face), sent smoke signals to communicate with people far away, and spoke broken English full of colourful expressions such as “big heap wampum” (a lot of money) and “speaks with forked tongue” (is lying). Most of these ideas have some basis in Native American culture, but it is wrong to put them all together and believe that that was how Native Americans lived.

Americans make such mistakes because they have little interest in Native Americans. Having succeeded in pushing them out of the way onto reservations, most Americans ignore them. This may be because the Native Americans who are left are living proof of a hard truth: America wants to be, and often is, a land where everyone has a chance and where the government behaves fairly and honestly to all, but this America is built on land stolen from the people who lived there first.

大众心目中的美洲原住民

感恩节是可以追溯到早期的一个美国传统。英国人抵达詹姆斯敦以后,许多人在漫长的严冬死去,但第二年春天,美洲原住民告诉他们当地什么东西是可以食用的。秋天,为过冬做了精心准备以后,殖民者与美洲原住民共同举行了特殊的晚宴,感谢上帝和美洲原住民给予他们食物,这就是第一个感恩节。

还有一个关于美洲原住民公主波卡洪塔斯的故事。在波卡洪塔斯的父亲波瓦坦打算杀死詹姆斯敦首领约翰·史密斯的时候,波卡洪塔斯救了他的性命。后来她嫁给了另一个英国人约翰·罗尔夫,并随他一起去了英格兰。波卡洪塔斯的故事流传很广,许多美洲原住民为有她这样的祖先感到骄傲。

但是美洲原住民经常被白人殖民者视为敌人。关于西大荒的西部小说和电影都以印第安人的威胁为主题。在这些小说和电影里,美洲原住民仍被称为“印第安人”。孩子们经常玩“牛仔与印第安人”的游戏,假装互相残杀。当“野牛”比尔的“西大荒表演”在美国巡回演出时,包括印第安酋长卧牛在内的许多美洲原住民参加了演出,许多人赶来一睹这位昔日的大敌。

许多美国人心目中有“典型的印第安人”形象：一个与妻子一起住在帐篷里的酋长，在同白人签订条约以后抽着和平烟斗，发出烟雾信号与远方的人联络，说着蹩脚但生动的英语，例如 big heap wampum (很多钱) 和 speaks with forked tongue (说谎)。美国人的这些想法大多源于美洲原住民的文化，但把这些拼凑起来，认为这就是美洲原住民的生活，那就是错误的。

美国人之所以犯这种错误，原因在于他们对美洲原住民没什么兴趣。在成功地排除了障碍，将他们驱赶到居留地以后，大多数美国人不再理会美洲原住民。这也许是因为，留下来的美洲原住民是活生生的证据，证明了一个令人难堪的铁的事实：美国想成为一个人人享有机会、政府公正诚实地对待所有人的国家，事实也往往如此，但这个美国是在从原住民那里窃取的土地上建造起来的。

Mass Extinctions

Cases in which many species become extinct within a geologically short interval of time are called mass extinctions. There was one such event at the end of the Cretaceous period (around 70 million years ago). There was another, even larger, mass extinction at the end of the Permian period (around 250 million years ago). The Permian event has attracted much less attention than other mass extinctions because mostly unfamiliar species perished at that time.

The fossil record shows at least five mass extinctions in which many families of marine organisms died out. The rates of extinction happening today are as great as the rates during these mass extinctions. Many scientists have therefore concluded that a sixth great mass extinction is currently in progress.

What could cause such high rates of extinction? There are several hypotheses, including warming or cooling of Earth, changes in seasonal fluctuations or ocean currents, and changing positions of the continents. Biological hypotheses include ecological changes brought about by the evolution of cooperation between insects and flowering plants or of bottom-feeding predators in the oceans. Some of the proposed mechanisms required a very brief period during which all extinctions suddenly took place; other mechanisms would be more likely to have taken place more gradually, over an extended period, or at different times on different continents. Some hypotheses fail to account for simultaneous extinctions on land and in the seas. Each mass extinction may have had a different cause. Evidence points to hunting by humans and habitat destruction as the likely causes for the current mass extinction.

American paleontologists David Raup and John Sepkoski, who have studied extinction rates in a number of fossil groups, suggest that episodes of increased extinction have recurred periodically, approximately every 26 million years since the mid-Cretaceous period. The late Cretaceous extinction of the dinosaurs and ammonoids was just one of the more drastic in a

whole series of such recurrent extinction episodes. The possibility that mass extinctions may recur periodically has given rise to such hypotheses as that of a companion star with a long-period orbit deflecting other bodies from their normal orbits, making some of them fall to Earth as meteors and causing widespread devastation upon impact.

Of the various hypotheses attempting to account for the late Cretaceous extinctions, the one that has attracted the most attention in recent years is the asteroid-impact hypothesis first suggested by Luis and Walter Alvarez. According to this hypothesis, Earth collided with an asteroid with an estimated diameter of 10 kilometers, or with several asteroids, the combined mass of which was comparable. The force of collision spewed large amounts of debris into the atmosphere, darkening the skies for several years before the finer particles settled. The reduced level of photosynthesis led to a massive decline in plant life of all kinds, and this caused massive starvation first of herbivores and subsequently of carnivores. The mass extinction would have occurred very suddenly under this hypothesis.

One interesting test of the Alvarez hypothesis is based on the presence of the rare-earth element iridium (Ir). Earth's crust contains very little of this element, but most asteroids contain a lot more. Debris thrown into the atmosphere by an asteroid collision would presumably contain large amounts of iridium, and atmospheric currents would carry this material all over the globe. A search of sedimentary deposits that span the boundary between the Cretaceous and Tertiary periods shows that there is a dramatic increase in the abundance of iridium briefly and precisely at this boundary. This iridium anomaly offers strong support for the Alvarez hypothesis even though no asteroid itself has ever been recovered.

An asteroid of this size would be expected to leave an immense crater, even if the asteroid itself was disintegrated by the impact. The intense heat of the impact would produce heat-shocked quartz in many types of rock. Also, large blocks thrown aside by the impact would form secondary craters surrounding the main crater. To date, several such secondary craters have been found along Mexico's Yucatan Peninsula, and heat-shocked quartz has been found both in Mexico and in Haiti. A location called Chicxulub, along the Yucatan coast, has been suggested as the primary impact site.

大规模物种灭绝

在短短的地质时间间隔内有大量物种灭绝,这些现象就被称为大规模物种灭绝。在白垩纪时期后期(大约七千万年前)曾经发生过一次大规模物种灭绝。在二叠纪时期后期(大约两亿五千万年前)也曾发生过一次规模更大物种灭绝。由于当时消失的物种大部分是人们不熟悉的,人们对二叠纪时期的这次大规模物种灭绝的关注远远不如其他几次大规模物种灭绝。

化石记录显示,至少发生过五次大规模物种灭绝,造成了大批海洋生物物种灭绝。如今物种灭绝的机率和以往那五次大规模物种灭绝时期的几率一样高。因此许多科学家得出结论:第六次大规模物种灭绝即将到来。

是什么导致了如此高的物种灭绝率呢?有几种假说,包括:地球变暖或变冷;季节的变动或洋流的变化;大陆位置移动。生物假说包括:由昆虫与开花植物之间合作式进化或海洋底层肉食动物进化引起的生态变化;这些生物机制,有些在极短的时间内就会灭绝,而有些则很有可能经过长时期在不同时代或不同大陆缓慢地进行的。有些假说倾向于解释在陆地和海洋同时发生的物种灭绝。可能每次大规模物种灭绝都有不同的原因。但是证据指出,人类狩猎以及人类对栖息地的破坏很可能是当前大规模物种灭绝的原因。

美国古生物学家 David Raup 和 John Sepkoski 曾经在大量的化石群里面研究了物种灭绝的机率。他们指出,自从白垩纪时期中期以来,物种灭绝的增加大约每 2600 万年就会定期复发一次。白垩纪时期后期的恐龙和菊石(一种已灭绝的动物)的灭绝仅仅是一系列此类周期性物种灭绝中更为剧烈的一次。大规模物种灭绝会再次定期出现的可能性引起了这样的假想:一个长周期轨道的伴星从正常轨道偏向其他天体,造成某些天体,比如流星掉落到地球,在撞击的时候造成大范围的破坏。

在各种试图解释白垩纪时期后期物种灭绝的假说中,近年来最受瞩目的是由 Luis 和 Walter Alvarez 最先提出的小行星撞击假说。根据这个假说,地球与一个直径大约为 10 公里的小行星或者与几个小行星碰撞。碰撞的力量把大量碎片喷射到大气中,在这些小颗粒沉淀之前能够把天空掩盖上好几年。减弱的光合作用会造成各种植物的生命大规模的缩短。这首先会造成大规模的草食动物饿死,接着就是大规模肉食动物饿死。按照这种假说,大规模物种灭绝就会突然间发生。

Alvarez 假说的一个有趣的检验是基于稀土元素铈的存在。这种元素在地壳中的含量很少,但是在大多数小行星中的含量却多得多。小行星碰撞所放射到大气中的碎片可能会含有大量的铈元素,并且大气流会把这些物质带到全球各地。一个关于跨越白垩纪时期与第三纪时期的沉积物的搜索显示:在这两个时期的交接时期,铈元素的含量急剧增加。即使从没发现过撞击的小行星,铈元素异常却为 Alvarez 假说提供了有力支持。

按理说,偌大一个小行星,即使受到冲击变得粉身碎骨也会留下一个巨大的陨石坑。撞击所释放的极度高温让许多种岩石形成热冲击石英。撞击也会把一些大石块抛出去,在主要陨石坑周围形成次级陨石坑。迄今为止,人们已经在墨西哥尤卡坦半岛附近找到了一些此类次级陨石坑。并且还在海地和墨西哥找到了热冲击石英。尤卡坦沿海一个叫做 Chicxulub 的地方,被认为曾经是主要的撞击点。