



大开眼界

SURPRISES AT EVERY CORNER



Gateway
带你走近西方
World

{ Asher Skowronek (加、澳) { 毕熙燕 (澳) { 编著



外语教学与研究出版社
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ARE YOU THE READER OF THIS BOOK?

Gateway to the World is a cultural reader designed for readers who are eager to understand subtle aspects of western culture, especially English-speaking culture.

Do you want to go abroad for further study?

Do you want to be a knowledgeable/well-informed person?

Do you want to nurture the qualities of a world citizen?

If you answered *Yes* to these questions, then *Gateway to the World* is for you.

WHY?

In this globalized 21st century, Chinese and western people are getting closer day by day both in work and in their daily experiences. The cultures are interacting and influencing each other. *Gateway to the World* was born out of this reality.

Gateway to the World is a different type of cultural reader. It includes news articles, readers' letters, jokes, short stories, songs, interviews with famous people, conversations in Internet chat rooms, and advertisements. These are the kinds of short texts that western people read every day. They are full of shared cultural knowledge about marriage, relationships, money, recent social history, child education, tensions between the generations, etc. *Gateway to the World* offers Chinese readers unusual insights into the daily realities of westerners. It expands **cultural awareness** in a light-hearted way.

WHAT IS CULTURAL AWARENESS?

The cultural awareness we mean is not the usual diet of facts about festivals, the banking system, public transport, etc.—the “fixed” knowledge that is already widely available. Rather, it draws on subtle, in-depth texts with a human touch. It explores the deeper unconscious attitudes of westerners, which are seldom explained because they seem obvious. To Chinese, of course, they are not all obvious. This kind of cultural awareness is the key for Chinese to fully enter into western society, whether to merge into the mainstream, to look for jobs, to achieve success in a career, or simply to live comfortably.

For example, western and Chinese funeral practices differ greatly. A Chinese reader will probably react with filial shock to the son in Unit 7 (*The Gate Swings Open*), who has strapped his mother's coffin to the roof of his car. A westerner is more likely to be amused at the son's meanness. Western and Chinese readers will probably both be amused by the space wedding in Unit 4 (*The Gate Swings Open*), but westerners have a tradition of seeking out bizarre wedding settings, and would read the article in this spirit. The notes in these units reveal the attitudes to death and marriage that underlie the stories.

WHAT IS NATURAL ENGLISH?

To western ears, most Chinese English is not wrong, but sounds formal and bookish. *Gateway to the World* promotes **Natural English**—the living, developing language that people actually use today, not the stiff language that is sometimes taught in books. *Gateway to the World* teaches you to recognize and use idioms, slang and proverbs. Every unit contains a dialog of people discussing current issues. The texts and dialogs are recorded on the MP3 with this series. Useful expressions are highlighted and the dialog is translated into Chinese. You can then listen to the MP3 and imitate the speakers' pronunciation and intonation. Many Chinese students abroad are known as "silent lambs"—famous for keeping their mouths shut and hoping no one will ask them a question. *Gateway to the World* aims to give you the confidence to speak out in everyday settings.

THE TEXTS

This series takes and adapts language from authentic sources: newspaper articles, magazines, letters to editors, blogs, advertisements, short stories, songs, among others. It also offers dialogs where native speakers discuss the issues raised in the units, in vivid, natural, idiomatic speech. They have been selected for Chinese readers with a reading level of intermediate or above. All difficult words are translated in the glossaries beside or after each text.

The texts are followed by questions that check understanding and stimulate thought. We want you to reflect on the similarities and differences between China and the West.

THE BENEFITS

Many Chinese students have very high IELTS or TOEFL scores but cannot benefit from their university studies in the way they hoped.

Some are forced to change their programs, others need to take catch-up courses. According to a survey conducted by a private Sydney school, more than 60% of Chinese students studying in Australia need private tuition to acquire the kind of cultural background set out in this series, at rates of \$50–\$80 an hour.

CULTURAL LINKS

Every unit finishes with references to similar texts or other sources of cultural information on the unit's theme. Most of these can easily be found on the Internet.

We are sure you will find *Gateway to the World* useful, informative, stimulating and fun.

THE AUTHOR

Asher Skowronek, M.A. (English Literature, McGill University, Canada), M.A. (Adult Education, UTS, Australia), RSA Cambridge Cert. TEFLA. A native of Canada and formerly Program Coordinator of General and Business English at the Center for English Teaching of The University of Sydney, he has more than 20 years' experience as a teacher, administrator, test writer and curriculum writer in both Canada and Australia. He has written numerous courses for English language learners, has visited China three times and has extensive experience with Chinese-speaking students.

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Unit One

The Weekend

周末

How Time-poor People
Use Their Time?

时间不够用的人是怎样利用时间的?

Part 1

Where Has the Weekend Gone?

周末都到哪儿去了?

Cultural Issues

Westerners did not always have a two-day weekend. Until the middle of the 20th century, Saturday was a working day for many factory and shop workers. Gradually, the six-day week became 5½ days and finally five days for most workers, except shop assistants who could expect to work the occasional Saturday or Sunday. They would be compensated with penalty rates and/or another day off during the week.

By the 1980s, it was predicted that automation would create an age of



leisure. The working week, which was already 35 hours for many people, was going to become even shorter. Since machines would be doing most of the routine work, most people would only have to work two or three days a week. This prediction could not have been more wrong. From the 1990s into the first years of this century, working hours in many western countries increased. As manufacturing and heavy industry moved to the developing economies of Asia and other regions, these jobs went with them. The new jobs that have been created in the so-called knowledge industries, service industries and the retail sector often require weekend work. Workers in these areas are finding themselves working longer and longer hours and their precious weekend space has been invaded.

The overall picture is that people are working more and playing less.

A Canadian report indicates that between 1981 and 1992, employed Canadians worked 15% more hours and had 10% less leisure time. This trend is typical in most western countries and in recent years, it has intensified. Western culture is a hurried culture, a time-poor culture. We are seeing a new work ethic which affects even the young. About ½ of 15–17 year olds report that they feel stressed when they don't have enough time, and when they need more time, cut back on their sleep.

A time management industry has arisen which teaches people how to use time more efficiently. People who manage time poorly are made to believe that it is somehow their fault. However the problems are so widespread that it is better to look for social explanations. Two of the social causes for the time pressures are the changes in families and the effects of



technology.

The main factor in the changes in families is the entry of women into the workforce. Today, most women work and most families depend on two incomes. This has put huge demands on family time. Computers have speeded up life and made people impatient. Each new technological development makes the old ways seem slow and this leads to a desire for instant gratification. People want everything immediately and do not tolerate slowness.

In Europe there have been moves to reduce and redistribute working hours. France and Italy have led by legislating the 35-hour week. In these countries, companies can be fined if their employees work more than 35 hours. But North America and Australia have gone in the other direction, as



we can see in the two articles below.

penalty rates < 澳 > 双倍或多倍的加班费

automation *n.* 自动化

knowledge industry 知识产业

work ethic 职业道德

instant gratification 即时满意

legislate *v.* 制定法律；通过法律

In “Weekday Time, Weekend Time”, a sensitive woman talks about her need to do “useful things” on weekends. In “Mondayitis Cure—Drop the weekend”, an Australian talks about the disappearance of the weekend in his country.



Translation

西方人并不是一直都有两天的周末。在 20 世纪中期以前，对许多工人和店员来说，星期六一直都是个工作日。逐渐地，大部分人从每周工作 6 天变成 5 天半，最后到只需工作 5 天。只有商店售货员偶尔需要在星期六

或星期日上午，但他们要么有加班费，要么可以在工作日中休息一天。

到了 20 世纪 80 年代，人们曾预测自动化会创造出一个休闲时代。对许多人来说，已经只有 35 小时的工作周将会变得更短。由于机器可以担当起绝大部分程序化的工作，多数人每周只需工作两三天。这个预测错到了不能再错的地步。从 20 世纪 90 年代到本世纪初的几年里，许多西方国家的工作小时数都增加了。随着制造业和重工业迁移到了亚洲及其他地区的发展中国家，这类的工作也跟随而去。在所谓的知识产业、服务行业及零售部门产生的新工作经常需要员工在周末上班。这些行业的工作人员发现他们的工作时间越来越长，而且他们宝贵的周末已被侵占。

总体情况是，现在人们工作得多，娱乐得少。一份来自加拿大的报告显示，从 1981 年到 1992 年，在职的加拿大人工作小时数增加了 15%，而休闲时间减少了 10%。这一趋势在大多数西方国家都很典型，并且近年来日益明显。西方文化是一个匆匆忙忙的文化，一个时间不够用的文化。我们看到的是一种新的职业道德，它甚至影响到了年轻一代。在 15 岁到 17 岁的年轻人中，大约有一半的人说因为时间不够而感到压力；而当他们需要更多的时间时，只能减少睡眠量。

一个教人们如何更有效地利用时间的管理业应运而生，让那些不善管理时间的人相信那是他们自己的错误。可是，这方面的问题是如此普遍，更好的办法还是去寻找其社会原因。造成时间压力的两个社会因素是家庭的变化和科技的影响。

家庭变化中的一个主要因素就是女性加入到工作行列。如今，大多数的妇女都在工作，大多数的家庭都依赖两份工资收入。这一变化对家庭时间的需求量很大。电脑使生活节奏加快，让人变得没有耐性。每一种新科技的发展都会使原有的方式显得很慢，这造成了人们对即时满足的渴望。人们想立即得到需要的东西，不能容忍任何的拖延。

在欧洲，已经有了减少或重新分配工作时间的措施。法国和意大利率

先立法规定每周 35 个小时的工作量。在这些国家，如果员工的工作时间超过了 35 小时，公司就会被罚款。但是，从以下两篇文章中，我们可以看到北美和澳大利亚却背道而驰。

在《工作日时间，周末时间》一文中，一位感情细腻的女性谈到她需要在周末做“有用的事情”。在《周一疲倦症的疗法——放弃周末》中，一个澳大利亚人说到在他的国家里，周末已消失不见。

Text One Weekday Time, Weekend Time 工作日时间，周末时间

(an ambitious person's log 一个一心想做点事的人的日志)

It's Saturday, and I bounced out of bed, ready to do Big Things. Tim and I were going to have our gym workout, because we'd missed it on Wednesday. There was her homework to talk through—the family tree for her history class. And I was going to do some editing on my documentary, just to keep up the momentum. And as a reward, if time permitted, a movie.

We finished breakfast and I was ready to work but Tim and Lewis had other ideas. They wanted to watch the final of *Carnavale*—we'd videoed the show Thursday night. I said, "I'm not sure it's a good use of time." Tim said, "The weekend's not about the use of time." I gave in. The three of us ended up sprawling across the sofa, with two of the cats and Claudia, the golden retriever, and watched *Carnavale*.

**FOCUS
QUESTION**

What does Wanda Churchill, the film editor, want to do on Saturday?

We sank into the cushions and enjoyed the show, riveting and surprising like the rest of the series. People and animals in one big warm heap. It was a special time that we got to spend with our son, who curled up to me, so happy. I guess Tim was right—and not for the first time. Maybe time does flow differently on the weekends. Maybe weekends are not about using time “well”. Maybe weekends are more about following time than managing it.

We did our exercises, so that was something. But not a stitch of work yet. OK, I have worked hard all week and finished about a quarter of the film. Maybe I deserve a day off, but...I'm not good at taking time off. It's not that I'm a workaholic and I can't enjoy myself if I'm not working. It's just that I know from experience that it's important to keep up the pace in a creative project. Breaks slow you down, so that you have to work twice as hard just to get back to where you were.

And I also know that it's getting dark and that I've got next to no chance of doing any work today. Tim's cutting vegetables for dinner. Maybe I've got twenty minutes to jump onto the computer and do a bit of work. Maybe I'd feel better if I just looked at where I got to yesterday. Work is where I really feel my time's my own. Once I close that door, I'm in my own world. It may be stressful, it can be a nightmare at times, but it's my nightmare, and how sweet is that?



- big things 大事业
documentary *n.* 纪录片
momentum *n.* 动力; 势头
give in 让步
end up 结束; 告终
golden retriever 金毛猎犬
(一种犬类, 学名为金毛
拾獾)
rivet *v.* 使(眼光等)一动
不动地停住; 目不转睛
地看
curl up 蜷曲
a stitch of work 一点工作
workaholic *n.* 工作狂
keep up the pace 保持进度

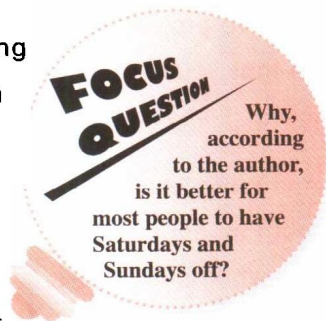


1. What do you think Tim means when he says weekends are not about “the use of time”?
2. Wanda apparently works at home, like many people in this computer age. Is the struggle she feels between work and leisure time typical for other people?

Text Two Mondayitis Cure—Drop the Weekend 周一疲倦症疗法——放弃周末

(news column 新闻专栏)

Slowly but steadily, the weekend is being abolished—and all in the name of progress. In New South Wales, the employers association wants Saturday and Sunday to be treated as “ordinary working days”, with a consequent reduction in penalty rates. Meanwhile, the Federal government’s reforms will make it more difficult for workers to ask for extra pay for public holidays, overtime and shift work.



Many workers will be more likely to have to work at weekends and on public holidays and less likely to be paid extra for the imposition.

Most businesspeople and economists would say that this is a good thing. But I confess I have my doubts. What’s so bad about the weekend that we’d like to get rid of it? Well, that’s actually part of the problem. The