

新东方英语背诵美文30篇

Born to Win

[生而为赢]

俞敏洪 编审
王 强 录音



群言出版社

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联系电话 010—65263345, 65265404

电子信箱 qunyancbs@dem-league.org.cn

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Youth

Samuel Ullman

Youth is not a time of life; it is a state of mind; it is not a matter of rosy cheeks, red lips and *supple*¹⁾ knees; it is a matter of the will, a quality of the imagination, a vigor of the emotions; it is the freshness of the deep springs of life.

Youth means a *temperamental*²⁾ *predominance*³⁾ of courage over timidity, of the appetite for adventure over the love of ease. This often exists in a man of 60 more than a boy of 20. Nobody grows old merely by a number of years. We grow old by *deserting*⁴⁾ our ideals.

Years may wrinkle the skin, but to give up enthusiasm wrinkles the soul. Worry, fear, self-distrust bows the heart and turns the spirit back to dust.

Whether 60 or 16, there is in every human being's heart the lure of wonder, the unfailing childlike appetite for what's next and the joy of the game of living.

In the center of your heart and my heart there is a wireless station: so long as it receives messages of beauty, hope, cheer, courage and power from men and from *the Infinite*⁵⁾, so long are you young.

When the aerials are down, and your spirit is covered with snows of *cynicism*⁶⁾ and the ice of pessimism, then you are grown old, even at 20; but as long as your aerials are up, to catch waves of optimism, there is hope you may die young at 80.

注释

- 1) supple ['sʌpl] *adj.* 柔软的
- 2) temperamental [ˌtempərə'mentl] *adj.* 由气质引起的
- 3) predominance [pri'dominəns] *n.* 优势
- 4) desert [dɪ'zə:t] *vt.* 抛弃, 放弃
- 5) the Infinite: 上帝
- 6) cynicism ['sɪnɪzɪzəm] *n.* 玩世不恭

青春

青春不是年华，而是心境；青春不是桃面、丹唇、柔膝，而是深沉的意志、恢弘的想象、炙热的感情；青春是生命的深泉在涌流。

青春气贯长虹，勇锐盖过怯弱，进取压倒苟安。如此锐气，二十后生而有之，六旬男子则更多见。年岁有加，并非垂老，理想丢弃，方堕暮年。

岁月悠悠，衰微只及肌肤，热忱抛却，颓废必致灵魂。忧烦，惶恐，丧失自信，定使心灵扭曲，意气如灰。

无论年届花甲，抑或二八芳龄，心中皆有生命之欢乐，奇迹之诱惑，孩童般天真久盛不衰。人人心中皆有一台天线，只要你从天上人间接受美好、希望、欢乐、勇气和力量的信号，你就青春永驻，风华常存。

一旦天线倒塌，锐气便被冰雪覆盖，玩世不恭、自暴自弃油然而生，即使年方二十，实已垂垂老矣；然则只要竖起天线，捕捉乐观信号，你就有望在八十高龄告别尘寰时仍觉年轻。

Three Days to See (Excerpts)

Helen Keller

All of us have read *thrilling*¹⁾ stories in which the hero had only a limited and specified time to live. Sometimes it was as long as a year; sometimes as short as twenty-four hours. But always we were interested in discovering just how the doomed man chose to spend his last days or his last hours. I speak, of course, of free men who have a choice, not *condemned*²⁾ criminals whose sphere of activities is strictly *delimited*³⁾.

Such stories set us thinking, wondering what we should do under similar circumstances. What events, what experiences, what associations should we crowd into those last hours as mortal beings? What happiness should we find in reviewing the past, what regrets?

Sometimes I have thought it would be an excellent rule to live each day as if we should die tomorrow.

Such an attitude would emphasize sharply the values of life. We should live each day with gentleness, vigor, and a keenness of appreciation which are often lost when time stretches before us in the constant *panorama*⁴⁾ of more days and months and years to come. There are those, of course, who would adopt the *Epicurean*⁵⁾ motto of "Eat, drink, and be merry." But most people would be *chastened*⁶⁾ by the certainty of *impending*⁷⁾ death.

In stories the doomed hero is usually saved at the last minute by some stroke of fortune, but almost always his sense of values is changed. He becomes more appreciative of the meaning of life and its permanent spiritual values. It has often been noted that those who live, or have lived, in the shadow of death bring a mellow sweetness to everything they do.

Most of us, however, take life for granted. We know that one day we must die, but usually we picture that day as far in the future. When we are in buoyant health, death is all but unimaginable. We seldom think of it. The days stretch out in an endless *vista*⁸⁾. So we go about our petty tasks, hardly aware of our *listless*⁹⁾ attitude toward life.

The same *lethargy*¹⁰⁾, I am afraid, characterizes the use of all our faculties and senses. Only the deaf appreciate hearing, only the blind realize the *manifold*¹¹⁾ blessings that lie in sight. Particularly does this ob-

servation apply to those who have lost sight and hearing in adult life. But those who have never suffered impairment of sight or hearing seldom make the fullest use of these blessed faculties. Their eyes and ears take in all sights and sounds hazily, without concentration and with little appreciation. It is the same old story of not being grateful for what we have until we lose it, of not being conscious of health until we are ill.

I have often thought it would be a blessing if each human being were stricken blind and deaf for a few days at some time during his early adult life. Darkness would make him more appreciative of sight; silence would teach him the joys of sound.

注释

- 1) thrilling ['θrɪlɪŋ] *adj.* 惊心动魄的
- 2) condemned [kən'demnd] *adj.* 被宣告有罪的
- 3) delimit [dɪ'limit] *vt.* 定界限
- 4) panorama [ˌpænə'rɑ:mə] *n.* 全景
- 5) Epicurean [ˌepɪkjʊə'ri(:)ən] *adj.* 伊壁鸠鲁的, 享乐的
主义的
- 6) chasten ['tʃeɪsn] *vt.* 斥责, 惩罚
- 7) impending [ɪm'pendɪŋ] *adj.* 迫近的
- 8) vista ['vɪstə] *n.* 展望, 前景
- 9) listless ['lɪstlɪs] *adj.* 倦怠的, 冷漠的, 情绪低落的
- 10) lethargy ['leθədʒi] *n.* 无生气
- 11) manifold ['mænɪfəʊld] *adj.* 多方面的

假如给我三天光明(节选)

我们都读过震撼人心的故事，故事中的主人公只能再活一段很有限的时光，有时长达一年，有时却短至一日。但我们总是想要知道，注定将要离世的人会选择如何度过自己最后的时光。当然，我说的是那些有选择权利的自由人，而不是那些活动范围受到严格限定的死囚。

这样的故事让我们思考，在类似的处境下，我们该做些什么？作为终有一死的人，在临终前的几个小时内我们应该做什么事，经历些什么或做哪些联想？回忆往昔，什么使我们开心快乐？什么又使我们悔恨不已？

有时我想，把每天都当作生命中的最后一天来过，也不失为一个极好的生活法则。这种态度会使人格外重视生命的价值。我们每天都应该以优雅的姿态、充沛的精力、抱着感恩之心来生活。但当时间以无休止的日、月和年在我们面前流逝时，我们却常常没有了这种感觉。当然，也有人奉行“吃、喝、享受”的享乐主义信条，但绝大多数人还是会受到即将到来的死亡的惩罚。

在故事中，将死的主人公通常都在最后一刻因突降的

幸运而获救，但他的价值观通常都会改变，他变得更加理解生命的意义及其永恒的精神价值。我们常常注意到，那些生活在或曾经生活在死亡阴影下的人无论做什么都会感到幸福。

然而，我们中的大多数人都把生命看成是理所当然的。我们知道有一天我们必将面对死亡，但总认为那一天还在遥远的将来。当我们身强体健之时，死亡简直不可想象，我们很少考虑到它。日子多得好像没有尽头。因此我们一味忙于琐事，几乎意识不到我们对待生活的冷漠态度。

我担心同样的冷漠也存在于我们对自己官能和意识的运用上。只有聋子才理解听力的重要，只有盲人才明白视觉的可贵，这尤其适用于那些成年后才失去视力和听力的人。但是那些从未受过丧失视力或听力之苦的人很少充分利用这些宝贵的能力。他们的眼睛和耳朵模糊地感受着周围的景物与声音，心不在焉，也无所感激。这正如我们只有在失去后才懂得珍惜一样，我们只有在生病后才意识到健康的可贵。

我经常想，如果每个人在年轻的时候都有几天失明失聪，也不失为了一件幸事。黑暗将使他更加感激光明，寂静将告诉他声音的美妙。

Companionship of Books

(Excerpts)

Samuel Smiles

A man may usually be known by the books he reads as well as by the *company*¹⁾ he keeps; for there is a *companionship*²⁾ of books as well as of men; and one should always live in the best company, whether it be of books or of men.

A good book may be among the best of friends. It is the same today that it always was, and it will never change. It is the most patient and cheerful of companions. It does not turn its back upon us in times of adversity or distress. It always receives us with the same kindness; amusing and instructing us in youth, and comforting and consoling us in age.

Men often discover their *affinity*³⁾ to each other by the mutual love they have for a book just as two persons sometimes discover a friend by the admiration

which both entertain for a third. There is an old proverb, "Love me, love my dog." But there is more wisdom in this: "Love me, love my book." The book is a truer and higher bond of union. Men can think, feel, and *sympathize*⁴⁾ with each other through their favorite author. They live in him together, and he in them.

A good book is often the best *urn*⁵⁾ of a life *enshrining*⁶⁾ the best that life could think out; for the world of a man's life is, for the most part, but the world of his thoughts. Thus the best books are treasuries of good words, the golden thoughts, which, remembered and cherished, become our constant companions and comforters.

Books possess an essence of *immortality*⁷⁾. They are by far the most lasting products of human effort. Temples and statues decay, but books survive. Time is of no account with great thoughts, which are as fresh today as when they first passed through their author's minds, ages ago. What was then said and thought still speaks to us as vividly as ever from the printed page. The only effect of time has been to *sift out*⁸⁾ the bad products; for nothing in literature can long survive but what is really good.

Books introduce us into the best society; they bring us into the presence of the greatest minds that have ever lived. We hear what they said and did; we see

them as if they were really alive; we sympathize with them, enjoy with them, grieve with them; their experience becomes ours, and we feel as if we were in a measure actors with them in the scenes which they describe.

The great and good do not die, even in this world. *Embalmed*⁹⁾ in books, their spirits walk abroad. The book is a living voice. It is an intellect to which one still listens.

注释

- 1) company ['kʌmpəni] *n.* 陪伴
- 2) companionship [kəm'pænjənʃɪp] *n.* 友谊
- 3) affinity [ə'fɪnɪti] *n.* 吸引力
- 4) sympathize ['sɪmpəθaɪz] *vi.* 同情
- 5) urn [ɜ:n] *n.* 壶, 容器
- 6) enshrine [ɪn'ʃraɪn] *v.* 珍藏
- 7) immortality [ɪmɔ:'tæləti] *n.* 不朽
- 8) sift sth.out: 剔除; 淘汰
- 9) embalm [ɪm'bɑ:m] *vt.* 铭记, 使不朽