

# 文訊 WORD POWER

法 定 語 文 事 務 署 通 訊 OFFICIAL LANGUAGES AGENCY NEWSLETTER

## 人間色相

顏色本來不過是不同波長的光線。白光穿過稜鏡，析為不同顏色的光線。多虧這種物理現象，世界才變得燦然可觀。

天地山水，花草鳥獸，日月更替，四時轉遞，自然界可說是最能善用顏色的大師。人間色相姹紫嫣紅，顏色的綻放和變換教人目不暇給。從裝飾布置以至藝術、文學的園地，顏色無處不在，也無時不在滋潤我們的感官和心靈。

文字天地同樣色彩繽紛。漢語自古就有豐富多彩的顏色詞。《說文解字》“糸”(音“覓”)部關於絲帛的顏色字就有二十多個。單說青色，漢語就有“紺(音“禁”)青”、“菜青”、“茶青”、“淡青”、“蛋青”、“靛青”、“豆青”、“佛青”、“青”、“天青”、“蟹青”、“玄青”、“雪青”、“藏青”、“花青”、“青灰”等字詞。一些顏色字一字多義，如“青”既可指綠色(青山綠水、青翠綠、青苔)，又可指藍色(青天、青花瓷)黑色(青絲、青布、青衣、青眼)，使用時可要留神了。

把顏色字與其他字詞組合起來，描繪事物更見生動：桃紅柳綠、面紅耳赤、金碧輝煌……實在是色彩紛陳。且看張愛玲《沉香屑 第一爐香》一段文字：

“山腰 這座白房子是流線型的，幾何圖案式的構造，類似最摩登的電影院。然而屋頂上卻蓋了一層仿古的碧色琉璃瓦。玻璃窗也是綠的，配上雞油黃嵌一道窄紅邊的框。窗上安雕花鐵柵欄，噴上雞油黃的漆。屋子四周繞寬綽的走廊，當地鋪紅磚，支巍峨的兩三丈高一排白石圓柱，那卻是美國南部早期建築的遺風。”

沒有諸色點染，紙上風景可少了幾分流麗，黯然失色。

漢語的顏色詞蘊含深厚的文化象徵意義和感情色彩。中國人以紅色寓意喜慶、幸福、美好，所以說“紅利”、“大紅”、“紅粉佳人”，而黑色則常用來代表倒霉、邪惡，所以說“黑市”、“黑錢”、“黑心”。翻開報刊，以顏色作比喻的例子多不勝數：赤字、清白、藍領、藍籌、黃色電影、綠色團體等等，各行各業都難求“素淨”。不同的民族，顏色的文化涵義不盡相同。中文和英文對顏色字詞的運用有時不謀而合，有時卻大相逕庭。英文的“brown sugar”，我們稱為“紅糖”；我們叫“紅茶”的，洋人叫“black tea”；我們稱嫉妒為“眼紅”，到了英國，就是“green-eyed”了。

顏色字詞通過客觀的描述，引發聯想。了解這些字詞所包含的歷史文化元素，掌握其中用法，可以加強語彙能力，執筆行文自能得心應手。



# WORD FOR WORD



## A Rainbow of Colours

Do you find your work life pale and drab? Is everything leaden and greyish? Better take a good look around you and you will see life in quite a different light. It has all the colours of a rainbow.

*White-collar workers* of all hues and shades slog away in the office. Besides those who have *grown grey in the service*, we may have greenhorns, the fresh graduates. There are also *blue-eyed* innocents who look at the world *through rose-tinted glasses*. They always get conned by the *silver-tongued*. The yellow bellies who would rather *show* their *white feather* than make counter suggestions to their boss. The hot-heads who *see red* at the slightest provocation and can fairly *make the air turn blue* when they give vent to their anger. Not to mention, the pessimists who paint everything in dark colours.

Come lunchtime, some of us cannot get away from the office fast enough. We make a beeline for the door at the stroke of the hour. For the *brown baggers*, it is time to take a repast of their sumptuous packed lunch. For the *yellow-journalist* followers, the hour is to be wiled away by devouring the sensational stories in the tabloids. For the *green thumbs*, the time is best spent tending to their little pots of violets and evergreen.

After the lunch break, we are back *in the brown study* devising plans to *bleed* our customers *white-* in the economic downturns, we have to make sure that the company books stay in the black or we would *be shown the red card*. Yet more often than not, our brilliant ideas get caught up in *red tape*. What a life!

However, *every cloud has a silver lining*. Just when we feel *browned off*, out of the blue our boss *gives the green light* for our plan after *blue-pencilling* some of our more innovative ideas.

Our project comes through *with flying colours*. The profits turn the company book *into the black*. It is again time to break open a bottle of bubbly and to *blue our money* till kingdom comes.

Notes:

*White-collar workers*

*To grow grey in the service*

*Blue-eyed*

*To look through rose-tinted glasses*

*Silver-tongued*

*To show white feather*

*To see red*

*To make the air turn blue*

*Brown-bagger*

*Yellow journalist*

*Green-thumb*

*In a brown study*

*To bleed someone white*

*Be shown the red card*

*Red tape*

*Every cloud has a silver lining*

*Be brown-off*

*To give green light to*

*To blue-pencil*

*With flying colours*

*Into the black*

*To blue one's money*

Professional or office workers as opposed to manual or factory workers.

To remain in one occupation (usually the military or the government) for most of one's working life.

Someone who is inexperienced and can be easily deceived.

To see things in an over-optimistic light.

Someone who is eloquent and persuasive.

To act in a cowardly way, for white feather is a symbol of cowardice.

To become enraged.

To give vent to one's rage by swearing violently.

A person who takes a packed lunch to work.

A journalist who relies on sensationalism and lurid exaggeration to draw readers.

A person who has an unusual ability to grow plants.

In a mood of deep absorption or thoughtfulness.

To extort all of someone's money.

To be dismissed, as in a football match, a player who is shown the red card for an offence may be barred from playing.

Obstructive official routine or procedure.

There is always a brighter side to a gloomy situation.

Thoroughly discouraged or disheartened.

To give permission to go ahead.

To censor.

With great success.

In credit or without debt.

To "blow", i.e., spend money wildly.



## The Gate of Heavenly Peace: The Chinese and Their Revolution

The book, spanning the years 1895 to 1980, is a splendid study of some prominent Chinese intellectuals during a turbulent period in modern China. Ennobled by literature and philosophy, it presents a century of change through portraits of such historical characters as Kang Youwei (康有為), Chen Duxiu (陳獨秀), Lu Xun (魯迅), Shen Congwen (沈從文), Ding Ling (丁玲) and Lao She (老舍).



their stories through quotations of their own words as much as possible. Instead of telling the stories of each character one by one, he alternates segments of each biography in a way more of fiction than of history, while at the same time he demonstrates how they crossed in their lives and how their diverse personalities responded to the same challenges.

Professor Jonathan D. Spence makes a highly literate guide to the Chinese Revolution, approached via the lives and written testimony of its intelligentsia, chiefly men and women of letters.

*The Gate of Heavenly Peace* employs a method of delicate interweaving and transition. A well-plotted, accurately annotated history, with insightful details and extensive quotations, gives readers the sights, sounds and emotions of the time. Regarded as a “felt history”, the book has a sense of urgency, due to the closeness of the subject to us, morally and in time.

As befits a narrative in which writers are the principal characters, *The Gate of Heavenly Peace* takes a shape that owes much to the novel. The central figures include Lu Xun, arguably the most brilliant essayist in modern China, and Ding Ling, one of China’s best-known literary women. From their interaction with the secondary characters, we come to know other poets, novelists, scholars, political activists and even a few foreign visitors to China. Professor Spence sets forth

A world-renowned sinologist, Professor Spence is Sterling Professor of History at Yale University. Born in England in 1936, he was educated at Winchester College and Cambridge University. In 1965, he was awarded Ph.D. in history by Yale, which appointed him to a professorship subsequently, and in that esteemed position he has been guiding generations and generations of students of Chinese history.



含英  
咀華

### 畫蛇添足

戰國時，昭陽為楚伐魏，在勝利後欲出兵攻齊，陳軫音“診”為齊王出使，游說昭陽既已得楚，那就別再攻齊。陳軫引用了“畫蛇添足”的比喻。話說楚人祭祀後賞給門客一壺酒，門客人數多而酒不足，於是相約畫蛇，誰先畫成，誰便可以飲酒。其中一人先畫完，卻因仍有時間，所以提筆給已畫成的蛇添上蛇腳。這時，另一人畫完，伸手搶去酒壺，說：“蛇固無足，子安能為之足。”（“蛇本來是沒有腳的，你怎能為牠加上腳呢？”）《戰國策 齊二》後以“畫蛇添足”比喻多此一舉，不僅無益，反而壞事。

歷代詩文也多次引用“畫蛇添足”這個典故，例如韓愈《感春》詩云：“畫蛇著足無處用，兩鬢雪白趨埃塵。”羅貫中《三國演義》：“將軍功績已成，聲威大震，可以止矣；今若前進，倘不如意，正如畫蛇添足也。”

“畫蛇添足”一語也衍生出多個同義詞語，包括“畫蛇足”、“添足畫蛇”、“蛇足”、“安蛇足”等等，含意不變。



### Paint the Lily

Lily, in particular white lily, has always been regarded as a symbol of purity, beauty and delicacy.

The Christian *Bible* likens the magnificence of Solomon, the Israelite king renowned for so much his wealth as his wisdom, to a lily and finds it pale in comparison. For it says in the scripture “...see how the lilies of the field grow...I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendour was dressed like one of these.” (*Matthew 6 : 28-29*)

In William Shakespeare's *King John*, the Earl of Salisbury tried to persuade King John that there was no need for him to be crowned again. He argued that:

*To gild refined gold, to paint the lily,  
To throw a perfume on the violet,  
To smooth the ice, or add another hue  
Onto the rainbow, or with taper-light  
To seek the beautiful eye of heaven to garnish,  
Is wasteful and ridiculous excess.*

(Act 4, scene 2)

Hence we have the phrase “to paint the lily” or “to gild the lily” to describe any effort to make perfection more perfect and end up spoiling the effect. For example:  
*To dress an elegant and understated beauty in loud colours is like gilding the lily, and all it does is turn her into a common pretty girl like many others.*



## “嫂”的疑惑

在飛機上聽到這樣的對話：

“上星期乘飛機到北京去，看見一位機艙服務員挺漂亮的，一打聽，才知道是空嫂。”

“那可‘相逢恨晚’了。”

香港的朋友聽到這多會摸不頭腦。其實，“空嫂”是依照“空姐”一詞創造的稱謂，指年紀稍長的已婚女性空中服務員。

根據《現代漢語詞典》的解釋，“嫂”原指兄長的妻子，也指年紀不大的已婚婦女。可是，“嫂”一字在北京已演變為泛指三四十歲的婦女。內地現時以“嫂”來稱呼已婚女性的用法十分普遍，用途也越來越廣泛。除了“空嫂”之外，還有其他形形色色的“嫂”：

- 商嫂：做買賣的婦女
- 的嫂：的士(出租車)女司機
- 軍嫂：解放軍軍人的妻子
- 呼嫂：在傳呼台當傳呼員的已婚女子
- 警嫂：已婚女警
- 京嫂：尋找工作的下崗北京婦女
- 月嫂：有專業護理經驗、負責向產婦提供產期母嬰護理的婦女
- 紅嫂：忠誠為國，熱心助人的婦女
- 芭嫂：藉練習芭蕾舞來健身的已婚婦女

下次，北京朋友說在飛機上碰到漂亮的“空嫂”，或者得到友善的“警嫂”幫忙，可別給弄糊塗了！



## 青梅竹馬

在小說中讀過這樣一句話：“兩個女孩自小青梅竹馬，感情要好。”“青梅竹馬”其實指男女孩童之間的率真情誼，也指自小一同長大，其後相戀或結成夫婦的男女。拿來形容同性朋友之間的友誼，未免不倫不類。

此語出自唐代李白詩《長干行》，是一首描述“商人婦”生活的敘事詩。詩中描寫兩口子年少時一塊兒玩耍：

“郎騎竹馬來，繞床弄青梅。  
同居長千里，兩小無嫌猜。”

這幾句詩是說男女小孩同住一巷，感情深厚，女孩把玩着手中的青色梅子，男孩把竹竿當成馬來騎，繞着井邊追逐嬉戲，相親相愛、天真爛漫之情躍然紙上。

追本溯源，“青梅竹馬”這句成語用於男女之間才貼切恰當，可是有時候卻給誤用了。

“青梅竹馬”多與“兩小無猜”連用，兩詞都是出自《長干行》一詩。

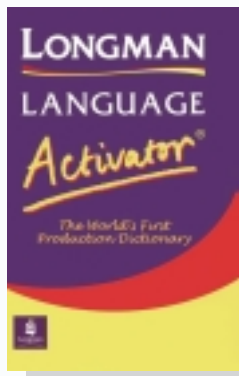


## Express Yourself in English

### Longman Language Activator

Put your ideas into words! If you know what you want to say, but fail to find the right words, this is the dictionary for you.

Compared to conventional dictionaries, *Longman Language Activator* enables English speakers and learners to express themselves better linguistically.

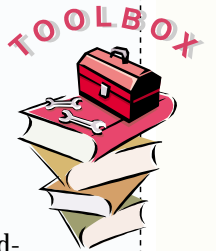


To put it simply, it is a dictionary of ideas and how to express them in English. It gives learners clear guidance on how words are normally used, in which context they are appropriate, which subjects and objects go with particular verbs, whether they be spoken or written, formal

or informal, or American or British.

The most important feature of the dictionary is the grouping of individual word-meanings or phrase-meanings that generally share the same idea, concept or semantic area. They may mean the same in a general way, but they entail certain key differences which govern why one word sounds natural or correct in a particular sentence and why another word, apparently very close in meaning to the first word, does not sound right or jars with native or highly proficient speakers of English.

The dictionary, though using grouping by concept, is arranged in alphabetical order, which provides an easy searching method for readers. Together with over a dozen interesting illustrations and plenty of examples, the dictionary proves to be a valuable reference for English learners, writers, students and translators.





## 到普通話傳譯組一遊！

早就聽說法定語文事務署普通話傳譯組的工作很有趣，大家就一起去探個究竟吧！

普通話傳譯組編制上有組員七名，包括一位總中文主任、三位高級中文主任及三位一級中文主任。普通話傳譯組的工作分為筆譯和傳譯兩大類，筆譯包括翻譯、擬稿和審稿等工作，職責跟一般中文主任無異；另外也會處理有關普通話的查詢，如字詞釋義、普通話讀音、廣普名詞對譯、內地機構名稱查證等等。

為政府部門提供粵普和英普傳譯服務，是普通話傳譯組的核心職責，也是極富挑戰性的工作。那麼，普通話傳譯組組員會在什麼情況一顯身手呢？

原來，本港公務員內地探訪團、內地官員訪港團、特區政府與內地機關或中央駐港機構的會議，以及如《財富》全球論壇和香港特區西部訪問團等活動，都需要普通話傳譯組提供服務，為外籍人士或不諳普通話的本地官員傳譯。

組員常要穿梭內地與香港之間，甚至到外地工作。別以為他們在外公幹，只在會議時才忙於傳譯，其餘的時間就可以到處遊覽。他們工作繁忙，無法忙裏偷閒。大體來說，只有在《財富》全球論壇等重要場合，普通話傳譯組才會全體動員，其他的會議或訪問則大多只

派一名組員“單騎上陣”。組員出差時，除了會議外，在酒會、宴請、出遊和禮節性拜會等社交場合都要提供傳譯服務，而且往往要全日候命，犧牲休息、進餐時間，少一點精神和體力也不行。

傳譯是兩種語言的轉化，在一般人心目中，良好的語文水平必然是傳譯員最重要的條件。可是，組員指出，語文能力固然重要，但事前準備工夫更是必不可少，所佔的時間往往比實際的傳譯工作還要多。由於需要傳譯服務的會議多涉及專門知識或敏感課題，所以他們一方面要熟習有關的專有名詞，另一方面要閱讀各式各樣的書刊和參考材料，擴闊知識領域，以應付臨場突發情況。舉例來說，在涉及財經事務的會議中擔任傳譯，組員不但要熟悉常見的財經用語，更要留心時事和了解相關的政府政策，傳譯時才能了無滯礙。

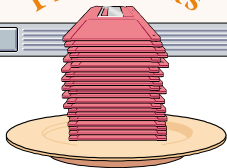
優秀的傳譯員還要具備哪些條件呢？

傳譯員要為操不同語言的人士搭建溝通橋梁，語文水平和交際能力缺一不可。開朗的性格、求知的精神、機敏的反應和成熟圓融的待人接物技巧等，都有助加強傳譯員與服務對象之間的了解和合作，使工作更為暢順。

臺上一分鐘，臺下十年功，傳譯要天分和經驗兼備，一點也不賴。



### IT Snacks



## How colourful you want it to be?

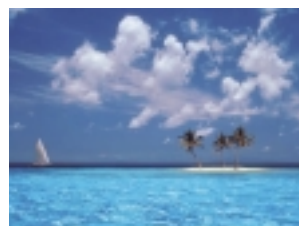
We are living in a colourful world. Every day we encounter thousands of shades of red, blue, green, yellow, orange, black and white. How can we reproduce this spectacular array of colours faithfully in the virtual world of computer and see images as we see them in reality on the monitor? This is very simple. All we have to do is set the colour depth of the computer correctly.

Well, what exactly is colour depth?

Technically speaking, colour depth is expressed in terms of bits. It steps up from 1 bit (2 colours) to 2, 4, 8 (256 colours), 16 (65 536 colours), 24 (1.6



256 colours



24 bits

million colours) to 32 (1.6 million colours and 8 bits to indicate the transparency of each pixel). It may be easier to remember if we call 16 bits High Colour and 24 bits True Colour. Normally, the colour depth should at least be set to High Colour.

What would happen if the colour depth set is lower than required? The pictures here tell the difference. When the colour depth is set to 256 colours, the image is grainy, washed out and looks like an abstract painting. When the colour depth is set to 24 bits or above, the picture returns to its full splendour.





Clues	
A _ _ _ _ _	The colour of the traffic light used as a warning between red and green.
B _ _ _ e	A very light brown similar to the colour of undyed wool.
B _ _ _ _ _	Total absorption of all light.
B _ _ _ _ _	An earthy colour. Also used as a surname.
C _ _ _ s _ _	A deep red colour. Also part of the name of a movie in which Denzel Washington played a major role.
G _ _ _ _	The colour of a precious bright yellow metal.
I _ _ ig _	The colour of the ceiling panel representing the Light of Science in the Members of Congress Room, the American Library of Congress.
L _ _ _ _ _	A purple colour. Also the name of a plant of Eurasian oleaceous shrubs or small trees which has large sprays of fragrant flowers.
M _ g _ _ _ _	The colour where blue and red spotlights overlap.
M _ _ v _	The first artificial dye found by an English chemist William Perkin in 1856. It brought about revolutionary changes to the trade of dyemaking and fashion.
N _ _ _ _	A dark greyish-blue colour derived from the colour of the British naval uniform.
P _ _ _ _ _	The royal colour in the western culture.
S _ _ _ _ _	The 47th element in the Periodic Table of Elements.
T _ _ q _ _ _ s _	A colour which combines the effects of green and blue. Also the name of a mineral used as ornamental stone for carving and jewelry.
V _ _ _ il _ _ _	A bright reddish colour. Also the name of a lake in Minnesota, U.S.A.
V _ _ _ _ _	The last colour of the visible spectrum. Also the name of a family of flowers and can be used as a girl's name.
W _ _ _ _ _	The colour worn by brides on their wedding day in many western countries.
Y _ _ _ _ _	A card in this colour warns soccer players of foul.

Name : \_\_\_\_\_ Department : \_\_\_\_\_  
 Post : \_\_\_\_\_ Tel. No. : \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address : \_\_\_\_\_

Finish the crossword puzzle, fill in the form and send it to the Word Power Editorial Board, Official Languages Agency, 23/E, Queensway Government Offices, 66 Queensway, Hong Kong on or before 31 December 2002.

Prizes will be awarded to the best five entries. Lots will be drawn if necessary. Results will be announced in the next issue of *Word Power*.

## 上期“牛刀小試”遊戲答案：

1. b	幽州	6. c	明朝
2. a	清華大學	7. d	永樂年間
3. b	海淀區	8. c	山楂
4. a	八國聯軍之役	9. d	承天門
5. c	元朝	10. a	東側

## 得獎名單如下：

姓名	所屬部門
駱家慧	房屋署
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各得獎者將獲專函通知領獎。



## 淺談國畫

### 中國繪畫藝術的源起和唐代的山水畫

中國的繪畫，可上溯至黃帝時代，經歷數千年發展，佳作紛陳，大師輩出。中國的繪畫史，本身就是一軸絢麗豐富的長卷。

早期的中國繪畫，多用於器物裝飾、紀念人物事功或作禮教用途。中國繪畫真正成為藝術，很多學者都認為始於六朝的顧愷之(約公元345-406)。顧愷之擅長當時最盛行的人物畫，著名的畫作包括《女史箴圖》和《洛神賦圖》。不過，顧愷之對中國繪畫最大的影響，是他以繪畫為職業，改變了以前繪畫只給視作工匠手藝的看法，大大提高了畫家的地位。顧愷之既有傑出畫作，復有畫論傳世(《畫論》《魏晉勝流畫贊》《畫雲台山記》)，明代楊慎就稱他為中國繪畫四祖之一。

唐代太平盛世，文藝宗教發達，繪畫得到很大的發展，突破之一，是繪畫的選材範圍擴大了，山水花鳥畫日趨成熟，出色的畫作不再局限於人物。在南北朝以前，山水風物多作為人物畫的背景；到了唐代，山水畫不僅確立了在畫科分類上的獨立地位，技術上也有長足進步。李思訓(公元651-716)和王維(公元701-761)可說是唐代山水畫的雙璧。



李思訓江帆樓閣圖

李思訓繼承了隋代展子虔的畫風，格律嚴謹，筆法工整精細。李思訓擅畫華麗着色山水，確立了“青綠金碧”山水畫的風格，後人視他為山水畫北宗之祖。李思訓為唐宗室，官至左武衛大將軍。他的兒子李昭道亦擅丹青，繼承父風，父子兩人並稱大小李將軍。李思訓的作品多已散佚，現存台北故宮博物院的《江帆樓閣圖》傳為李思訓真。



王維雪溪圖(局部)

王維與李思訓的畫風截然不同，前者渲淡秀逸，後者濃麗工細，後人視王維為山水畫南宗之祖。王維，字摩詰，官至尚書右丞，故世稱王右丞。他既是詩人，也精通繪畫和音樂，多才多藝。他以破墨法來寫山水松石，成品素淡高潔，與着色山水各有不同的韻味和意趣。破墨法是中國畫一種用墨技巧，用不同的墨色濃淡相間來表現物象的輪廓界限，畫面鮮活生動。宋代蘇軾在《書摩詰藍田雨圖》中說：“味摩詰之詩，詩中有畫，觀摩詰之畫，畫中有詩。”足見王維的作品詩畫相融，獨樹一幟。明代董其昌在《畫旨》中稱：“文人之畫自王右丞始。”王維的畫對後世文人畫影響深遠，也是中國繪畫史上詩、書、畫結合的一個起點。

#### 英語顧問 苗學禮先生

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