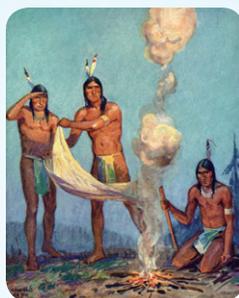


from Smoke Signals to Smartphone



Thanks to technology, we no longer need to rush to the telegraph office to send an expensive two-word message “Safely Arrived” to our family when we are on an overseas trip. Nor do we need to ask hotel telephone operators to put us through to our sweethearts. We will certainly not bother to write letters to our friends to recount our adventures on foreign shores. Letter writing is dismissed by many as a hobby for those who have time to kill. Today, simply stroking our fingers across the touch screen will let our family and friends know instantly what we are doing, with stories vividly told by pictures, emoticons and music.

People in the past were, however, not as lucky as we are. Before handy gadgets were brought into existence, smoke signals were considered a smart way for long-distance communication. If the forefathers of today’s Native Americans were brought back to life, they would jump for joy as they would not have to burn damp grass halfway up the hill to tell their tribesmen that all was well. Nor would they have to climb up to the hilltop to send smoke signals to warn them of imminent dangers. Powerful and versatile gadgets would save them the trouble.



The rapid development of electronic communication has reshaped the world. The landline phone, once considered the greatest invention in the world, has been surpassed by the smartphone, which allows people to stay connected wherever they are. Also, the emergence of a large number of social-networking sites has redefined the meaning of “friends”, who are now not only people you know well and like, but also those whose backgrounds and interests are mysteries to you. They are called “cyber friends”. Many people, especially introverted ones, enjoy this kind of cyber friendship, and have so much to share with strangers in chat rooms.



or even your gender. Telling lies is a sub-culture rather than a sin in chat rooms. Why bother to do this? Perhaps in the virtual world, the authenticity of personal information is not important at all. What matters most is that with a “new” identity, you can talk freely and boldly, and you will not be judged by anyone you

know. Or perhaps, for some people, chat anonymity makes communication more interesting and exciting.

A smart chat room visitor must be good at the language used on the Internet, in particular internet jargon, which has long been bemoaned as the downfall of the written word. In this fast moving world, not many of us bother even to write grammatically correct messages in chat rooms, let alone something more poetic. Do you know what “LOL” and “RUF2T” stand for? As explained by some experts of cyber language, the three-letter phrase may mean “laughing out loud”, “lots of love”, or sometimes “log off loser”, depending on the context of the conversation. “RUF2T”, which looks more like a mathematical equation, is short for “Are you free to talk?” Compared to these two alien expressions, phrases like “u r welcome” and “Meet u there at 8” are much more reader-friendly. In the face of an impending language disaster, linguists have issued a strong warning to us: cyber language is killing the English language and illiteracy is on the rise.

But even before the arrival of the language disaster, we may already have become slaves to modern gadgets. Our over-dependency on such devices has increased the isolation of individuals. The next time you are taking a bus, pay attention to your fellow passengers. The chances are that you will see many of them, with their heads down, tapping the screens of their tablets or texting on their smartphones. Convenient gadgets do help us stay in touch with an extended network of people at all times, but they can also erode our communication with those sitting right next to us. Have you ever felt an obsessive urge to constantly check your e-mail, even when on vacation with your family? Do you grab your smartphone immediately when you hear the sound alert of an incoming message during a get-together with your friends?

True. Gadgets can be relationship killers. So put your tablet down while your kids are trying to talk to you. Switch off your smartphone when you are watching a good show with your lover. But gadgets can also be relationship boosters. Send your friend a cute text if you forgot to wish him or her luck on an important occasion. Write an e-mail message to your partner saying you feel guilty about last night’s argument. Modern digital devices, when used appropriately, make life a lot easier.



漢字的魅力

漢字千姿百態，形體優美，一筆一畫，都別具意蘊，魅力無窮。中國方塊字表意力強，既可用作溝通，也可變成遊戲。數千年來，猜字遊戲一直廣受歡迎，雅俗共賞。字謎是對中國方塊字拆合分離，在千變萬化的文字形體離析過程中，認識漢字本身的結構特點。

《後漢書·五行志》記，漢獻帝時，董卓弄權，顛亂朝綱，民不聊生。老百姓受盡魚肉，為表中怨憤，編寫童謠：“千里草，何青青；十日卜，不得生。”乍聽此歌，實難解其意。其實，“千里草”，由下至上，合為“董”字，“十日卜”合為“卓”字，暗示董卓以下犯上，欺凌君主；“何青青”則是說董卓雖權傾朝野，威勢赫赫，但最終定會敗亡，落個“不得生”的下場。這首童謠巧妙地以字謎詛咒這個專橫跋扈的當權者。

宋代詩人王安石很喜歡字謎。有一次，他出了一個字謎給朋友猜，謎面是：“晝時圓，寫時方；冬時短，夏時長”。朋友聽完謎面後沒有直接答題，只是再出另一謎面：“東海有條魚，無頭又無尾，除去脊梁骨，就是這個謎”。王安石一聽朋

友的謎面，就笑了起來，稱讚朋友天資聰穎，答對了字謎。原來謎底是“日”字。

傳說一年重陽，蘇東坡邀請才子秦觀飲酒賞菊。酒至半酣，蘇學士問：“賢弟才貌並秀，為何遲遲未擇佳偶？”秦觀笑曰：“弟非草木，豈能無情。吾心中久慕一位窈窕淑女，只是難以啓齒。”他沉吟片刻，即賦一詞：“園中花，化為灰，夕陽一點已西墜。相思淚，心已醉，空聽馬蹄歸。秋日殘紅螢火飛”，讓學士猜猜他意中人是誰。蘇東坡聽後，頓明其意，原來秦觀說的是個“蘇”字，意指蘇小妹。他於是代作紅娘，成其美事。

明代有一位皇帝剛登位，想定年號，便召近臣商議。其中一位臣子吟了一首詩：“土本人間大丈夫，口稱萬歲舊山河。一橫永鎮江山地，二直平分天下圖。加子加孫加爵祿，立天立地立皇都。主人自有千秋福，月滿乾坤照五湖。”皇帝聽後龍顏大悅，決定以這首詩的兩字謎底作為年號。大家猜得到皇帝的年號是什麼嗎？（謎底見本頁右下角）



Romeo and Juliet

The ballet begins with an exuberant swordplay between members of the Capulets and the Montagues in the early hours in a street of Verona. The male dancers move forward and back, twisting and turning, brandishing their swords to provoke their enemies. Their powerful jumps and strikes vividly reveal their deep-seated hatred for their long-time rivals.

Guests are seen arriving at the Capulets'. Romeo Montague, a gallant and handsome young man, makes his way into the ballroom in disguise. Men and women, all in glamorous costumes, twirl around the dance floor. Romeo sees Juliet Capulet and is enthralled by her beauty. He glides across the floor with delightful steps. Shy of each other, they swirl together, carried away by their blooming love. Their *pas de deux*, like a romantic hide-and-seek, beautifully conveys the adolescent shyness and fascination between the lovers.

Unable to sleep, Juliet stays on her balcony, thinking about Romeo, who then appears in the garden below. They fix their eyes on each other, and remain still as the music builds. Juliet descends from the balcony stairs, and Romeo then shows off in a solo full of big leaps and spins. He kneels with open arms and Juliet rushes towards him gracefully. At one point, she is drawn towards Romeo by his strong

arms. At another, they exchange loving caresses. The sweeping music goes on. They move with fluidity through pirouettes, embraces and elegant lifts. The dance ends with a passionate kiss.

The second duet takes place in a sorrowful setting. Romeo is sent into exile because he has killed Juliet's cousin in a brawl. Repeatedly lowering her head and casting down her eyes, Juliet feels the immense grief of parting with her newlywed husband. She circles her arms around him, as if trying to keep him from leaving. She falls onto the floor with her whole body bent forward to express her despair. He drags her to him, and she covers him with hysterical kisses until he stops her. Romeo leaves and Juliet stands transfixed, with unspeakable grief.



In the final act, Juliet falls unconscious after drinking the sleeping potion given by Friar Laurence. Without receiving the message to rescue Juliet, Romeo returns to Verona to mourn her death. Seeing his love lying in an open coffin, Romeo is heartbroken. He does high jumps and spins to pour out his sorrow. Before drinking a vial of poison, he holds Juliet's body tenderly in his arms and gives her a final kiss. Juliet awakes to find Romeo dead beside her, and then stabs herself to death. The death of the two star-crossed lovers ends the bitter feud between the two families.



家書抵萬金

沈從文年青時在給張兆和的一封信中說：“我行過許多地方的橋，看過許多次數的雲，喝過許多種類的酒，卻只愛過一個正當最好年齡的人。”簡單的幾句話滿載沈從文對戀人愛慕之情，洋溢着詩般的浪漫氣息。多年後，張兆和拿着丈夫寫給她的一摺書信說：“在這種家書抵萬金的時代，我應是全北京城最富有的人了。”

年青一代可能無法體會張兆和那分喜悅，但在昔日社會裏，關山阻隔，牽掛家人時唯有提筆書寫，遙寄思念。中國人表達情感素來含蓄，見面時說不出口的話，在家書中卻會細細道來，信中一字一句都是家常話，不論是嘮叨的教誨，還是殷切的叮嚀，都包含着濃濃的親情，牢牢地把家人連在一起。

一九三八年年初，聞一多寫信給妻子，提到自己遠赴漢口履新前與孩兒道別時的離愁。他深情地說：“那天動身的時候，他們都睡着了，我想如果不叫醒他們，說我走了，恐怕他們第二天起來，不看見我，心裏失望，所以我把他們一一叫醒，跟他說我走



聞一多畫像

了，叫他再睡。但是叫到小弟，話沒有說完，喉嚨管硬了……一上轎子，我就哭了……四十歲的人，何以這樣心軟。”這封家書字字情真，充滿父愛，今天朗讀起來，仍讓人感動。

聞一多是位溫柔感性的慈父，孩兒不在身邊，讓他牽腸掛肚。著名翻譯家傅雷則是嚴父。他在家書中對兒子傅聰說：“是的，我承認我老朽了……可是我還有幾分自大的毛病，自以為看事情還能比你們青年看得遠一些，清楚一些。”他怕兒子不明白其苦心，在信中又說：“請你原諒我是人，原諒我拋不開天下父母對子女的心。”他與傅聰無所不談，談藝術，談做人，談修養，為的是要兒子做一個“德藝俱備、人格卓越的藝術家”。《傅雷家書》是嘔心瀝血的教子篇，字裏行間處處流露父親對兒子的關懷，舐犢之情躍然紙上。

上一輩的人愛寫家書，遊子在外，思鄉情切，收到遠方家人寄來的信，看到家人的字跡，彷彿他們就在眼前，就算談的只是生活點滴，都會帶來溫暖。年青的一代，你們可曾感受過收家書的幸福滋味？你們可會靜下心來，給家人寫一封家書？

至言不繁。

蘇軾



文化廣場

兵無常勢 水無常形

某天，兄妹倆為分一塊餡餅爭吵，二人都堅持要一塊大的。正當男孩準備給自己切一大塊時，父親上前跟他們說：“等一等，不管由誰來切餅，切的人必須讓對方先選餅。”男孩為了不讓妹妹拿較大的一塊，便把餡餅切成同樣大小的兩塊。父親能平息兄妹之爭，皆因他深諳談判之道，明白在許多情況下，即使出現利益衝突，只要雙方願意退一步，平心靜氣共同解決問題，最後雙方都能得到好處。

談判是溝通的藝術，要在談判桌上佔優勢，說話技巧十分重要，每一句話、每個肢體語言都會影響結果。面對冷漠的談判對手，說話語氣親和可打破隔閡。如果對手重視效率，長話短說，單刀直入方為上策。不過，實際上要如何與對方溝通，並無既定法則。威脅未必能迫使對手讓步，忍讓或許會使對方妥協，一切須按情勢而定。

除了說話技巧，談判也講求謀略。談判如行軍，要審時度勢，因應人事、天時、地利等因素行事。《孫子兵法》有云：“疾戰則存，不疾戰則亡者，為死



地。”“死地”指情勢。如果情勢不利，拼拼也無妨，說不定可以扭轉局面。如果實力不如人，那就不用拼了。孫子說得好：“小敵之堅，大敵之擒也。”手上的談判籌碼明顯比人家少，硬要逞強去拼，暴虎馮河，結果只會讓對手擒拿，焉可不慎？

出色的談判者知所進退。談判時面對衝突，是避還是不避，是談還是不談，都有一套策略。《孫子兵法·謀攻篇》云：“敵則能戰之，少則能逃之，不若則能避之”。談判是力量之爭，是圍，是攻，是分，是合，全看實力。談判的最終目的是利益。爭取或放棄取決於利益多寡，“合於利而動，不合於利而止”。強弱懸殊的談判，局面不難預測，但如果實力旗鼓相當，讓步或許也是致勝之道。談判的最高境界是在妥協中共享利益。

世事如棋局局新，談判處於下風，也有反勝的機會，退一步進兩步可能會轉危為安。“兵無常勢，水無常形”，唯有以臨淵履冰的戒慎，隨時準備各種情勢的變化，才能在多變的棋局中，取得最大好處。

傳情達意

去年五月底，公務員事務局法定語文事務部假香港中央圖書館演講廳舉行專題講座。香港城市大學專業進修學院文化傳意部主任賴蘭香博士應邀主講“公務傳意的原則與實踐”，論述寫作公文和語言運用的技巧。

賴博士指出，公務傳意以對象為本，有特定的文體、語體和表述方式，以期達到某些公務目的和工作效果。寫作公文應符合語用學的“合作原則”，而該原則包括四大準則：適量準則、真實準則、關係準則和方式準則。

首先，公文應提供適量而且簡潔具體的信息，因為信息太多會掩蓋重點，信息不足又讓人費解。試看以下句子：“此登記表只適用於沒有以個人名義開立本地港元儲蓄或往來銀行帳戶的登記人。”此句資料繁多，複雜難懂，如改為“此登記表只適用於沒有在本港開立銀行帳戶的登記人”會更簡單直接。再看這項填表須知：“填妥的表格須在指定時間內交回。”句中陳述的信息不足，沒有說明表格須在何時交回，讀者易生疑問。

公文內的信息必須真實可信，以事實、數字等作為根據。為使讀者容易理解，鋪陳數據時，也須述明語境，例如要提示天氣轉冷，宜說明“氣溫將下降到攝氏14度”；提示天氣回暖，可以說“氣溫將上升至攝氏14度”。此外，如講述失業率，雖然“不足一成”和“高於半成”的說法所指的數字相若，但這兩種表述方式附帶的含義有所不同，使用時宜多加注意。

至於關係準則，是指公文內容必須與主題相關，並且宜一文一意，避免產生混亂。最後，公文須符合方式準則，按邏輯思維次序鋪陳概念，例如先陳述發文緣由，再說知照或請求事項，然後要求回應，使受文者容易明白。譬如收信人同意與否均須作出回覆，在公函中只說“如同意，希盡快函告”容易令人誤解，改為“同意與否，希盡快函覆”則清楚得多了。再看一例：“登記人只可遞交一份表格……如登記人重複遞交表格或在遞交後更改資料，可能會令

其登記延遲辦理及導致有關款項延遲發放。重複遞交的表格將不獲處理。”例中交代重複遞交的表格會如何處理，資料含糊，自相矛盾。

賴博士表示，公文旨在傳遞信息，因此精確表述十分重要。然而，為了顧及受文者的感受，有效傳意，有時也須使用模糊語言，說話留有餘地，使公務傳意靈活婉轉。

什麼時候語言須要模糊？對於不說不行但直說不宜的問題，模糊語言大派用場。試看下例：“關於申請文員職位一事，由於申請者眾多而員額有限，未能悉數錄用，謹此致歉。日後如有合適空缺，歡迎再次申請。”以模糊語言避免直說申請人不獲取錄的原因，得體委婉。

陳述難以定量、定界或定性的事情，往往須用模糊語言表述，例如：“進一步規範信息發布制度”、“巨大的貢獻”、“今後在相當長的時間內”。此外，模糊語言具概括功能，也留有迴旋餘地，可使表述更簡練或更靈活。例如“各部門可以適當方式向社會公告”這句讓部門可彈性處理事情。

模糊語言另一作用是使公文語氣委婉含蓄，方便達到傳意效果。例如發函邀請主禮嘉賓，指定對方“請在x月x日前回覆”並不禮貌，可改為“懇請回覆為盼”。此外，社會上常用的一些詞彙如“視障”、“展能”、“跨性別人士”、“非婚生子女”等均屬模糊語言。這些委婉詞可減輕歧視意味，有助消弭社會矛盾，促進和諧。

總括而言，精確語言與模糊語言相輔相成，寫作公文，應因時制宜，視乎對象和實際情況彈性運用，使公務傳意達至準確、靈活、委婉的效果。

賴蘭香博士現任香港城市大學專業進修學院文化傳意部主任及首席講師，多年來熱心教學，對中國語言文化，尤其是中文傳意，見解精闢。賴博士的著作包括《傳媒中文寫作》、《中文傳意—基礎篇》、《中文傳意—寫作篇》等。

文約而義博，辭近而旨遠。

方回

Dressed in jeans and T-shirt, she was making funny faces at an emaciated boy who had an intravenous catheter taped to his arm. She rolled her eyes, pursed her lips and stuck her tongue out, trying to cajole him into eating the bowl of porridge in front of him. A smile emerged on the boy's face. She then carefully put a spoonful of porridge into his mouth. Her name was Audrey. She was twenty-six years old.

A nurse walked by and gave Audrey a thumbs-up sign as she saw the boy finally finish his meal. Audrey wiped the boy's lips and hugged him gently before rising to greet the nurse. Having worked in this paediatric ward as a voluntary worker for years, she knew how lonely it could be when one was cut off from the outside world because of sickness. Her painful stay in hospital at the age of six had left a mark on her heart, as she had become deaf and partially mute after an attack of a terrible disease.

Audrey was a voracious reader when she was a teenager. Every day after school, she would sit in a quiet corner of the library near her home and immerse herself in the world of books. Ashamed of her unclear speech, she was not keen on mingling with others, except her schoolmates, who were also suffering from hearing loss. Whenever Audrey's friends saw her, they made fun of her by folding and opening their hands and raising them close to their noses — a hand sign for the word "bookworm". That was how they called her.

The meal time was over. Audrey walked out of the paediatric ward with a contented smile. She then hurried home for an early dinner. While she was enjoying her food, an instant message appeared on the screen of her smartphone. It was from her boyfriend Jason, who was rehearsing his tenor solo in a concert hall. On the coffee table was a photo Jason had taken when he worked with a medical team in Africa some years ago. She picked it up, and her memories rushed back to the day they first met. Their encounter was in no way romantic as it ended in tears.

One drizzly afternoon a decade ago, Audrey had left the library as usual after borrowing some books. As she was passing through the turnstile, a loud beeping sound was heard. A young part-time library assistant at the exit immediately stopped her and asked if he could check the contents of her bag. She looked at his lips attentively, trying in vain to figure out what he wanted to say. Terrified and embarrassed, she wanted to run away, but her bag was tightly

grabbed by the young man. She then took out a notebook and wrote: "What've I done wrong?" Wearing a stern face, the assistant wrote: "Take out all the books you've borrowed." At that moment, the librarian came forward and explained to the assistant that it was a false alarm. The red-faced assistant immediately let go of Audrey's bag, and Audrey stood there, the tears welling up in her eyes. The young assistant was Jason.

If two people are meant for each other, they will meet again somehow, somewhere, someday. On a dark wintry morning years later, in the same paediatric ward where she worked as a voluntary worker, Audrey was making a balloon dog to comfort a crying girl who had just been given a shot, while Jason, a medical intern, examined a coughing boy behind Audrey. Jason turned around and their eyes met. With a surprised smile, he made some hand signs to ask Audrey if she still remembered him. No longer a timid girl, she replied naughtily, "Sure, you're the library assistant and I was the book thief." They both laughed.

There are hiccups in every relationship. Jason was an amateur tenor, and had a powerful singing voice. But it was sad that Audrey had never been able to hear it. And it was much sadder that he had never invited her to his performances. A bit mad at Jason, tonight, she wanted to play the naughty girlfriend and go to his concert without letting him know. She longed to "see" him sing. Afraid to be spotted by her boyfriend, she sat in the last row of the hall. In a black tuxedo and with his hair freshly pomaded, Jason belted out *Ave Maria*. Like his devoted fan, Audrey enjoyed every facial expression and hand movement Jason made, as if she could distinctly hear every word he sang. Overwhelmed and overjoyed, she stood up and clapped her hands loudly before the song was over. Interrupted by the untimely clapping, Jason looked around and saw Audrey waving her hand frantically at the back of the hall. He then lovingly made a heart-shaped sign to her while chanting the final part of the hymn: "*Ave, Ave, Ave Maria — Ave, Ave, Ave Maria*".

Uncontrollably, Audrey wept.



Good communication is as stimulating as black coffee,
and just as hard to sleep after.

Anne Morrow Lindbergh

A Smile Does Not Always Work

After touring around an Arabian town under the scorching sun for a whole day, a traveller, thirsty and exhausted, craves a bite of mouth-watering roast lamb and a sip of aromatic lentil soup. Not speaking a word of the Arabic language, he tries to tell the waiter the dishes he likes by nodding and giving a thumbs-up in a restaurant. Twenty minutes later, the dishes arrive. But all he gets is the opposite of what he wanted and an offended face. What has gone wrong?

The poor traveller might have expected that nodding is a universal gesture to show agreement or approval, but actually it is not. In some countries in the Middle East, a nod is a sign of saying no. The waiter might have been confused by the traveller's repeated nods. In the western world, a thumbs-up is a gesture to show appreciation, but it is considered vulgar or threatening in some Arab countries. No wonder that the traveller has offended the waiter.

Non-verbal communication is not universal. Every culture interprets body language, vocal sounds and eye contact differently. The "OK" signal, a hand gesture made by connecting the thumb and forefinger into a circle, refers to

money in Japan and zero in France. In some other countries it is an offensive reference to a private body part. Burping after a meal is considered uncouth behaviour in many western countries, but a hearty belch is a sign of appreciation for the cook in India. The list goes on and on.

In social interactions, most Europeans and Americans feel comfortable at an arm's length away, but Hispanics consider that distance unfriendly. In the Middle East, people may get right up in your face when they talk to you. In Latin America, you will get very touchy-feely with both strangers and friends, often with hearty embraces. A smile should be safe enough and will not cause any trouble, you may say. Yes, but not always. In some places, a smiling face should be reserved for friends only. Americans smile freely at strangers, but in Russia this is considered strange and even impolite.

So to avoid misunderstanding and embarrassment, you had better learn in advance the culture of non-verbal communication of the place you want to visit. Remember your body is always saying something, even when you are not speaking.



有聲與無聲

保安局
二級法定語文主任
林勁秀

在部門裏，很多同事把我當作“人肉字典”，經常問我一些中英文句子應怎樣寫，某些英文字體的中文對照詞彙是什麼。雖然有時不知怎樣回答，但有字典幫助，大部分問題都能解決。然而，自從巴別塔倒下，不同國家的人說着不同的語言，就算懂得中英文也不算什麼。人在旅途，言語不通，該怎麼辦？

中國人足跡遍布全球，旅遊的時候，很多遊客會以為我們是當地華僑，給別人用不同語言問路是常見的事。最近我在荷蘭就有一次有趣的經歷。我剛登上機場巴士，一位伯伯用我完全不懂的語言向我問路。他一口氣說完後，我問他是否懂英語，他沒有回答。我猜想他是不懂英語的荷蘭人，於是用英語問同車的一位年輕荷蘭乘客可否解答他的問題。原來伯伯不是荷蘭人，與那位青年無法溝通。花了不少時間，我才知道伯伯說的是土耳其語。最後，他拿出一張紙，上面寫了一個地方名稱。我把那張紙拿給荷蘭青年看，

他告訴我那個地方是位於巴士終站的火車站。我想，土耳其鄰近德國，語言會較相似，我唯有硬着頭皮，用蹩腳的德文跟他溝通，他聽了我用德語說“火車站”便明白了。

在異地替人解決的問題，當然不及自己要解決的問題多。在未唸法語前，我在巴黎看不懂菜單，就指着鄰桌的食物對服務員說：“One, merci”。在日本的情況好一點，因為食店櫥窗都擺放了寫有食物名稱的模型。點菜時，我把抄下的名稱給服務員看便行了。買車票時，目的地和時間可以用寫的方法問，至於是否可以用信用卡付款，由於日語很多詞彙都借用英語，也沒有太大問題，但要問信用卡付款是否收取附加費就比較複雜了。我起初以為日文漢字中也有“附加費”這三個字，於是寫給票務員看，但他看不懂。我唯有在紙上再寫：“15,000 yen+ _____?”聰明的票務員看明白了，連忙耍手，表示不會多收費用。

不過，要傳情達意，有時也不一定要依靠語言文字。有一次我跟一羣義工探訪老人院，向老人家講解一些保健常識。我的對象是一位不懂廣東話，又不懂普通話，只懂鄉下話的婆婆。我連怎樣問她鄉下在哪裏都不懂，更不用說講解保健常識了。義工在台上表演短劇，玩問答遊戲，我也不懂得怎麼讓她明白，但她只是一直坐着，向我微笑，讓我心裏感到溫暖。無聲勝有聲，這應該是溝通的最高境界吧。





Be a Smart Writer



You are perhaps not a journalist or a novelist, but you are a writer nevertheless of a job application letter, a heartfelt condolence e-mail to your friend or a report on work. Mind and pen poised, you will soon realise that the gap between what you want to say and what appears on the paper is as wide as an ocean.

The ability to write well is a valuable asset, and often helps us achieve our goals. Moreover, everyone is capable of enhancing their power of written communication by practising the basic principles of writing. To be a good writer, we have to write more tightly. Less is often more. However, we tend to lengthen the things we want to write by using sometimes meaningless expressions. Consider the following sentence:

Needless to say, we are, **if you like**, facing a problem which, **when all is said and done**, we did not create ourselves.

The three highlighted phrases are meaningless in the sentence. A shorter sentence is more powerful: *We are facing a problem which we did not create ourselves.*

Also, we all tend to use clichés. It is true that familiar phrases sometimes are a handy way of expressing ourselves. But most of us are unaware of the irritation that overuse of clichés can cause. If we want to use clichés only when appropriate, and avoid them when not, it is better for us to recognise them. Give

yourself a quick test. Can you complete the following tired and well-worn phrases with the missing word? Check the answers at the bottom of this article.

1. If you've got it, _____ it.
2. a gift from the _____
3. quantum _____
4. weighed in the _____ and found wanting
5. light at the end of the _____

Apart from meaningless expressions and clichés, we often use redundant words: *free gifts*, *added bonus*, and *utterly unique*, to give just a few examples. A *gift*, if not free, is not a gift; a *bonus* is normally an addition; and *unique* means the only one of its kind. You cannot get much more unique than that.

So when you want to place an advertisement in the newspaper to announce the arrival of your little darling, don't write: *Mr and Mrs John Chan are delighted to announce the birth of a baby girl, Anne Chan.*

Why not? We all know it is a baby. Can Mrs Chan give birth to an adult girl?

Answers: 1. flaut 2. gods 3. leap 4. balance 5. tunnel

The most important thing in communication is hearing what isn't said.
Peter Drucker



言不盡 意無窮



細雪如絮在空中蹁躚舞動，詞人李清照拾階而上，在清幽的梅園徘徊，見到花影飛雪相互輝映，忽發雅興，低聲吟詠“雪裏已知春信至，寒梅點綴瓊枝賦”。一輪明月映照在梅枝上，疏影橫斜，晶瑩剔透的花瓣在風中微微顫動，輕盈柔美，如同玉人“香臉半開嬌旖旎”。在這良宵月夜，滿園暗香四溢，與摯愛“共賞金尊沉綠蟻”，花前酣醉。銀色的月光、金色的酒樽、淡綠的美酒構成一幅畫，如夢似幻。

沉，就宛如進出大海的懷抱，銀河燦爛的光輝也好像從海的心窩溢瀉出來。如此壯麗的大海景色激發詩人的雄心壯志，讓他感到前景一片光明。

閱讀詩詞歌賦就好像打開了百寶箱，頓覺珍品紛呈，璀璨奪目，不僅有言喻婉約柔情的詠梅詞、抒發凌雲壯志的觀海詩，也有嚮往歸隱田園的閒居詞。南宋詞人辛棄疾落職後常到稼軒書屋旁的博山寺遊玩，穿過古剎長廊時，聽到僧侶敲打木魚和誦經的聲音，內心感到寧靜，明白“不向長安路上行”，退居山野是正確的選擇。他塞北江南，“人間走遍”，早已看清官場的黑暗，寧願在田園修心養性，保持自己的節操，也不願躋身仕途，謀取功名。官場爾虞我詐，互相傾軋，稼軒居士只好遠離紅塵，在山林隱居，與“一松一竹”、“山鳥山花”為伴。

走進繽紛多彩的詩詞藝苑裏，細讀詩家詞人的名言雋語，體味他們的思想感情，不論是意味深長的說理，還是肖似傳神的描寫，都可滋潤心靈，啟發奇思。古典詩詞語言精練濃縮，寥寥數句便能表達深邃意念，精彩絕妙，言不盡，意無窮。

文人墨客情感豐富，月盈月缺，花開花落也會觸動心靈。李清照溫婉多情，踏雪而來，見到梅枝纖纖瘦影，自然有深刻體會。曹操心狠手辣，殺人無數，原來也有感性一面。一代梟雄常常寫詩寄情言志，面對世事多變，哀嘆“對酒當歌，人生幾何？譬如朝露，去日苦多”。詩句看似傷時感懷，字裏行間卻隱隱透着慷慨激昂的情緒。東漢末年，曹氏東征北伐，統一天下大業指日可待，某日登上碣石山，遠眺茫茫渤海，舉目所及，“水何澹澹，山島竦峙”，清冷的秋風吹過海面，“洪波湧起”，氣勢澎湃；日月升





言簡意深

文字的基本作用是傳情達意，運用得宜，傳遞信息自然會得心應手，事半功倍。古典詩詞、對聯、成語等都是文字藝術的結晶，言簡意深。以下的問題均與精妙的文字有關，大家看看能否解答。請在橫線上填寫答案：

1. 明東林黨領袖顧憲成曾撰寫一對名聯，上聯為“風聲雨聲讀書聲，聲聲入耳”，下聯是什麼？

2. 唐楊炎《贈元載歌妓》詩：“玉山翹翠步無塵，楚腰如柳不勝春”。“楚腰”形容什麼？

3. “兩個伙計，為人正直，貪讒一生，利不歸己”，猜物品。

4. 秦檜一生殘害忠良，罪惡昭彰，擢髮難數。“擢髮難數”一語何解？

5. “想當初，綠鬢婆娑；自歸郎後，青少黃多。受盡了許多磨折，歷盡了無數風波。休提起，提起了，清淚灑江河。”猜物品。

6. 宋周邦彥《虞美人》：“別來新翠迷行徑，窗鎖玲瓏影，研綾小字夜來封，斜倚曲闌凝睇、數歸鴻。”“研綾”喻指什麼？

7. 清曹雪芹《紅樓夢》名聯，下聯為“無為有處有還無”，上聯是什麼？

8. 讀書不可囫圇吞棗，必須認真領會箇中精華所在。“囫圇吞棗”一語何解？

9. “誓掃匈奴不顧身，五千貂錦喪胡塵”，“貂錦”喻指什麼？

10. “坐也臥，行也臥，立也臥，卧也卧”，猜動物。

請在二零一三年十一月八日前，把答案連同下列個人資料寄回“香港金鐘道66號金鐘道政府合署高座2310室公務員事務局法定語文事務部《文訊》編輯委員會”。答對問題者可獲書券一張，名額五個。答案及得獎者名單將於下期公布（答案以《文訊》公布者為準）。

姓名：_____ 先生／女士（請刪去不適用者）
 部門：_____
 職位：_____ 電話：_____
 辦事處地址：_____



Not-a-Mindboggler

Solution of Issue No. 52

- | | |
|--------------|-------------------|
| 1. comes | 7. beholder |
| 2. costs | 8. pros |
| 3. thirsty | 9. cons |
| 4. alive | 10. procrastinate |
| 5. intrinsic | 11. worry/whine |
| 6. varies | 12. difficult |

The following winners will be notified individually by post:

Name	Department
Au Wai-chun	Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department
Ng Pui-yan	Census and Statistics Department
Kelvin Ling	Financial Secretary's Office
Tsang Ching-man	Home Affairs Department
Ng Man-fung	Hong Kong Observatory

Issue No. 54 (December 2013) : Knowledge is Power

二零一三年十二月第五十四期主題：知識就是力量

Issue No. 55 (March 2014) : Day and Night

二零一四年三月第五十五期主題：日與夜

Contributions from colleagues are welcome. Please refer to Issue No. 42 for details.

歡迎同事投稿，細則請參閱第四十二期。

中文顧問 樊善標教授

英語顧問 Dr Robert J. Neather

Hon Chinese Adviser Prof Fan Sin-piu

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