

## A PENNY FOR YOUR THOUGHTS



What is the smallest of all? An atom, a proton or a quark? Or might it be the fleeting thought that flashes across your mind? Invisible and intangible, a thought might only last a split second. Yet it is the starting point of every achievement or failure, great or small. Everything we do, or don't do, begins with a thought. As the old saying goes, "Watch your thoughts, they become words; watch your words, they become actions; watch your actions, they become habits; watch your habits, they become character; watch your character, for it becomes your destiny."

In 2003, Barbra Streisand, the famous singer and actress, was displeased when she found out that an aerial photograph of her cliff-top mansion in Malibu was among 12,000 images posted on a website dedicated to documenting coastline erosion in California. She decided to sue the photographer and the website for invasion of privacy, demanding removal of the photograph. The outcome did not turn out as she wished. Whereas the image of her estate had been downloaded just six times (two of which by her lawyers) before the lawsuit, the publicity ensuing from the court case drove around half a million visits to the website the following month.

A thought of the Hollywood diva led to the decision to file the lawsuit; and from that decision arose not just much unintended publicity, but also an eponymous term in the fields of psychology and sociology. "Streisand effect" is now used to describe the phenomenon that an attempt to hide or censor a piece of information leads to the unintended consequence of spreading it. The case is not only a good example of the power of thoughts, but also a reminder that sometimes things may not go according to plan. One might argue that at least we are the master of ourselves. We can control how we react, what we do or say. But even that might just be wishful thinking. Various neuroscientific findings suggest that 95% of our thoughts, emotions, actions and decisions are driven by our unconscious mind. In fact, research has shown that our brain makes decisions seconds before we realise it. The English philosopher Mary Warnock writes, "We feel free because we act against a background of ignorance, including ignorance of our own genetic system and of the input of circumstances and environment on the computer that is our own brain." Factors

beyond our grasp, such as our genes, upbringing, culture and environment, have created a script that is individual to us. And we go through the day as unsuspecting actors on a stage called life.

To rouse ourselves from the torpor of automatic programming and to live more consciously, we need to be aware of our innermost thoughts. When a thought crosses your mind, detach yourself from it and dissect it in the way you peel an onion: the more layers you peel, the more likely you will unravel the subtle thoughts underneath. For example, when your child has failed an exam (again), before lashing out in anger, as you may be so often inclined to do, ask yourself one simple question, "Why does this make me feel so angry?" If you are honest, you will probably admit that your frustration stems not only from disappointment, but perhaps also from your hard day at work or your own experience as a child. Once you recognise that you are probably using your child as your emotional punching bag, your anger may dissipate.

As elucidated by numerous studies, cultivating a state of mindful awareness in daily life can bring a wide range of benefits, such as alleviation of anxiety, stress, depression and chronic pain. With self-awareness, one can begin to grow in self-understanding and see the underlying currents at play in our actions. What motivates you? What satisfies you? What is the voice inside your head saying when you feel angry, sad, or guilty? Lao Tzu, the Taoist sage, pointed out more than two thousand years ago, "Knowing others is intelligence; knowing yourself is true wisdom (知人者智，自知者明)." Only when we start to recognise and accept our internal flaws, bias and debilitating thought patterns can we lift their grip on us and turn them around.

Carl Jung, the father of analytical psychology, observes, "Until you make the unconscious conscious, it will direct your life and you will call it fate." Once we take the first step towards identifying our subliminal thoughts and deep-seated beliefs, we create some wiggle room that allows us to decide whether or not to follow our habitual routines. Little by little, we will be able to revise the script already written for us. So, what do you think? A penny for your thoughts.

# 方寸乾坤

明末文人魏學洵的《核舟記》膾炙人口，生動地描繪了當時巧匠王叔遠所雕的桃核小舟。桃核長不足一寸，只有約兩顆黍粒高，但王叔遠妙手匠心，竟雕出東坡夜遊赤壁的幽雅意境。小舟艙篷兼備，載有五人：蘇東坡與黃庭堅共閱一卷；佛印法師臂掛念珠，粒粒可數；還有兩名船夫，一人划船，一人烹茶。眾人神態各異，相映成趣。

在果核上雕刻的技藝稱為核雕，屬微雕一門分派。工匠削走果核的多餘部分，塑造作品雛型，然後精雕細琢，刻劃細微之處。果核體積細小，施刀自然比一般雕刻更為困難，能工巧匠卻有“恣取萬象於一毫”的本事，在有限空間發揮無窮創意。

核雕源起何時，現已無從稽考，從古代留傳至今的核雕作品也不多。幸而歷代文人雅士對核雕作品皆有着墨，無論詳寫略述，都足以為核雕藝術拾遺補闕。

根據文獻，核雕在明清時代發展頗盛，名家輩出，題材廣泛。在王叔遠雕出核舟之前兩百多年，宣德年間工匠夏白眼於橄欖核上刻出十六個娃娃，每個僅半粒米大小，卻是眉目俱全，栩栩如生。清人宋起鳳《核工記》描寫一枚核雕扇墜，設計取材自唐詩《楓橋夜泊》的詩句“姑蘇城外寒山寺，夜半鐘聲到客船”，大至高山城閣、佛寺寶塔，小至晚星彎月、河灘輕舟，盡皆刻在“長五分許，橫廣四分”的桃核上。

清代核雕作品題材寫實，講求神韻，即使是舊題材，也能加以變化，拓出新意。乾隆年間，隸屬皇家作坊的陳祖章借鑒前人作品，再以東坡夜遊赤壁為題，在橄欖核上雕出更精巧細緻的核舟。核舟高1.6厘米，長3.4厘米，上有繩索、帆具、燈籠，兩邊艙門各有四扇鏤空小窗，皆可開合；艙內几上有杯盤菜餚。船首至船尾共計八人，舟底更鐫刻着《後赤壁賦》全文三百餘字。陳祖章憑此珍品聲價十倍，成為皇家作坊待遇最優厚的工匠。這枚核舟現藏於台北故宮博物院，是稀有的傳世之作。

縱能在小小果核雕出大千世界，要在茫茫塵世得到豐厚回報，卻非人人皆可如願。據明人周汝瑚所述，有些工匠習藝八、九年，學有所成後，“僅能易半歲之粟”，難以養妻活兒。工藝大師雖有刻棘鏤塵之技，卻地位低微，核雕技藝也被視為雕蟲小技，難

登大雅之堂。明末畫家文震亨在《長物志》評論核雕“雖極人工之巧，終是惡道”。魯迅對於舊文人把玩的書房案頭小擺設，也沒什麼好感。他看過一塊半寸方、上刻《蘭亭序》的象牙片後，批評這不過是故弄玄虛，並非什麼本領學問。

然而，“技可進乎道，藝可通乎神”。任何事臻於極致，令人賞心悅目，便是藝術。核雕工藝的文化價值在現代備受重視，獲列入國家級非物質文化遺產名錄。核雕行業發展成熟，連採購果核也成了一門專業。藝匠手中的一果一核，指間的一刀一鏗，核雕珍品的一刻一劃，無不蘊藏以微小見精深的道理。

水果種類繁多，但只有特定品種的果核適合雕刻。即使是同一品種的水果，也會受生長地的土壤、水源等自然因素影響，長出形態不同的果核。採購者按照果核的形狀大小、紋路深淺、核壁厚薄，挑選合用的原材料。工匠構思作品時，思緒猶如果核上的紋路般高低起伏，遊走於各個主題之間，思考哪些紋路能細加利用，哪些可大刀削去，以便勾勒作品主體形狀。

縱然立意高遠，布局巧妙，動刀也非一蹴而就，而是講求輕重有致，不徐不疾。核雕工匠的桌上，總放着多把鏢刀和雕刻刀，刃口平斜尖圓兼而有之，用以應付各個工序。以雕刻人物為例，工匠以平口刀劃出五官的位置後，改用半圓小刀雕出眼耳口鼻，隨後以細小的尖頭刀點刻鼻孔、牙齒，再用三角刀雕出衣紋。工匠利用粗闊長短只差毫釐的刀具，施展精湛刀功，雕出衣褶紋理等諸多細節，令作品形神俱備。以現代核雕藝匠付洪波所鐫刻的《水滸傳》人物橄欖核雕為例，打虎將李忠衣袍下襠的刻痕或剛勁有力，或淺劃即止，形成一道道深淺不一的皺褶，動感十足，使梁山好漢粗獷豪邁的形象活現眼前。

中華藝術浩如煙海，核雕或許只是一道涓流，但絕非微不足道。果核雖小，卻可化為萬頃碧波上的一葉輕舟、清幽淡雅的山色城景，或豪氣干雲的英雄人物。天地萬物，盡皆蘊藏在方寸之間，恰如英國詩人布萊克(William Blake)的名句：

一沙一世界，一花一天堂。  
無限掌中置，剎那成永恆。

不積跬步，無以至千里；不積小流，無以成江海。

《荀子·勸學》



# All Creatures Great and Small

It was a rainy Friday night. After a long day tending to farm animals, James Alfred Wight, a 50-year-old full-time veterinary surgeon, was tapping away on a portable typewriter in the sitting room, surrounded by his family who were watching television and chattering. Writing under the pseudonym James Herriot, he chronicled his early days as a rural vet in Yorkshire, hoping “someone would publish it and a few people quite enjoy reading it”. Little did he expect that half a century later, his books are still in print, having sold more than 70 million copies worldwide. The success of these semi-autobiographical stories has spawned many film and television adaptations, the latest being *All Creatures Great and Small*, a popular television series remade in 2020 based on his book of the same title.

Published in 1972, *All Creatures Great and Small* is the first book to delve into the fascinating world of James Herriot. Told in short, anecdotal chapters, the book spans Herriot’s first two years as a new veterinary assistant at Skeldale House in Yorkshire in the late 1930s. It starts with the eager trainee stripped to the waist on the cobbled floor of an open cowshed with his aching arm deep inside a cow, struggling to deliver a breech calf in the middle of a harsh winter night. The opening scene sets the tone for Herriot’s life as a country vet: mucky, gritty, back-breaking and with unparalleled opportunities for shoving his arm into the orifices of startled-looking large animals.

Herriot settles into the busy routine of working seven days a week and being on call around the clock. Driving around the unfamiliar terrain of the fictional village of Darrowby in a dilapidated car, he treats horses with twisted bowels, cures cows with milk fever, and grapples with the idiosyncrasies of their gruff owners. Some visits are deeply moving, such as the one to a bedridden old woman who, near the end of her life, is worried that she will not be reunited with her dogs and cats in Heaven. Some are hilarious and heartening, such as his regular visits to the overfed Pekingese Tricky Woo, who, with the help of his owner, pampers “Uncle Herriot” with expensive gifts and signed photographs. And some are indeed life-changing, especially the visits to a farm standing in the loop of a river where he meets Helen Alderson, his future wife. Writing in a conversational style with verve and wit, Herriot paints a panoramic portrait of a different generation and a fading world.

Above all, the book captivates the reader with its panoply of vividly drawn characters. Siegfried Farnon, Herriot’s

eccentric and mercurial boss and the most sought-after bachelor in the town, is by turns disorganised and hair-splitting, avuncular and suddenly fault-finding, a man who has a heart of gold under his irascible demeanour. He often yells at his brother Tristan, and rightfully so. Tristan is a reprobate veterinary student whose life’s ambition is to work little and play hard. Like a reed in high winds, Tristan manages to sway but does not break under his brother’s fury. And there is of course the even-tempered, occasionally awkward, nervous, self-conscious Herriot. The reader will take great delight in the chemistry of the trio.

And those are just the residents of Skeldale House. Throughout the book, Herriot introduces us to all kinds of interesting people who walk the remote, beautiful Yorkshire Dales. Meet, for example, the Major, a master payment-dodger who always charms his way out of paying anyone anything; or the slow-witted Sam Broadbent, who can scare baby cows into obedience by imitating the sound of a warble fly, the only thing he’s good at. The animals are no less present than their human owners. Who would ever forget Nugent, the luckiest pig in the world who has his own valet? Or Strawberry, the proud cow who bears her owner’s hope for the future? Breathing life into an astounding assortment of disparate characters, four-legged and otherwise, Herriot offers insight into human nature and explores the deep and intricate bonds between people and animals large and small.

In many ways, the Yorkshire landscape is just as much a character as its inhabitants. Herriot extols the gaunt beauty of the land in great detail: the verdant hills, the dry stone walls which snake for miles across the undulating pastureland, the quiet and forbidding moors, and so on. “At times”, he writes, “it seemed unfair that I should be paid for my work; for driving out in the early morning with the fields glittering under the first pale sunshine and the wisps of mist still hanging on the high tops.” In real life, the author indeed stayed in the idyllic Yorkshire countryside for the rest of his life.

Time melts away as Herriot recounts his trials and misfortunes, and we traipse with him around freezing farmhouses in the small hours or gaze with him at the glorious heather moorland in the spring sunshine. There is something soothing and comforting about this tenderly drawn slice of life, which is the best tonic for the Covid blues.

Mighty things from small beginnings grow.

John Dryden



# 大歷史小人物

王氏死了。

她躺在雪地上，雖已氣絕多時，卻面色如生。

王氏是清康熙年間山東郟城縣一名孤女，與貧農任某成親後不久跟人私奔，也許在路上遭情人拋棄，走投無路，又回到老家。一個雪夜，任某掐死了睡夢中的妻子，並棄屍林地，企圖嫁禍鄰人。知縣黃六鴻查明真相後，判任某杖刑，戴枷示眾。黃六鴻晚年把這宗案件記錄在其著作《福惠全書》，告誡為官者查案宜細心審度，以免枉累無辜。美國著名歷史學家史景遷 (Jonathan Spence) 讀到此案時，不禁好奇：這名不幸女子，究竟生活在怎樣的社會環境中？一九七八年成書的《婦人王氏之死》(The Death of Woman Wang) 可算是他給自己的答卷。該書文筆優美，風格獨特，把本來枯燥無味的史事娓娓道來，是史景遷的代表作之一。

郟城是山東一處窮鄉僻壤，既沒有什麼風雲人物出現，也沒有什麼歷史大事發生。《婦人王氏之死》一書主要據馮可參編撰的《郟城縣志》和黃六鴻的《福惠全書》寫成。馮黃二人均曾任郟城知縣，對當地狀況知之甚詳，這兩份史料反映了郟城在康熙七至十一年間(公元1668至1672年)的社會面貌。然而，史景遷並未止步於此，他更關注人的命運與遭遇。為了表達當時郟城人複雜的情感、慾望和夢想，他大膽引用《聊齋志異》裏光怪陸離的故事，以虛實交錯的敘事手法，帶領讀者進入這個兵荒馬亂的偏遠之城，探究大歷史下的小人物如何生活。

《婦人王氏之死》以康熙七年郟城一場大地震拉開序幕。近九千人在地震中喪命，郟城知縣馮可參痛斥上天“落井下石”。早在地震發生前，郟城已飽受苦難，從白蓮教起事到清兵屠城，從蝗災、水災到雪災，郟城百姓歷盡憂患，人口由明末逾二十萬劇減至當時六萬左右。田禾顆粒無收，泰半人民餓死，倖存的貧民有的淪為流民，有的落草為寇。康熙九年到任的黃六鴻記述當時的情況：“地方凋瘠，百姓貧苦，原不知有生之樂。”由於生活迫人，“懸樑自縊，無日不聞，刎頸投河，間時而有”，無論知縣如何勸告、威嚇乃至羞辱，也阻止不了這種慘況。

這就是王氏身處的地方，平民百姓顯得那麼渺小，面對天災人禍、橫賦暴斂、豪強欺壓，他們無力反抗，只能掙扎求存。女性的處境尤為悲慘，有些女嬰甫出生便被溺斃；女孩吃的總比男孩吃的次一等；富人三妻四妾，卻要求婦女從一而終。為鼓勵寡婦守節，《大清律例》規定，寡婦改嫁，其嫁妝和夫家財產盡歸亡夫家人處置。禮教要女子守節，現實中卻不時有寡婦被覬覦家產的亡夫族人強迫改嫁。有婦人以死明志；有婦人剪髮毀面，並自願放棄財產，只求攜幼兒回娘家生活；也有孤兒寡母被夫家親戚謀財害命。書中的王氏雖非寡婦，命途同樣坎坷。王氏家庭背景如何，已無從稽考，僅知她纏足，可見其原本家境尚可，說不定家人在地震中喪生，無依無靠，只好嫁給家徒四壁的任某。也許是憧憬遠方有美好的生活，王氏選擇和情人出走，最終卻逃不過猙獰的命運。

史景遷借鑒《聊齋志異》的故事，運用想像力，為生命即將凋零的王氏編織了一場淒美的夢，使她本來模糊的面目有了輪廓，有了血色：

在上，現在是冬天，但這裏很溫暖。冬天，綠色的湖水上，蓮花盛開，花香飄向風中的她，有人試着去採，但當船接近時，蓮花就漂走了……

她可以看到自己是多麼的漂亮，臉上的皺紋消失了，手像女孩一樣的滑潤，不因勞作而粗糙……

她被釘住了，被纏在身上的蛇釘得動彈不得，她奮力掙扎，身體在水中踢打，她可以聞到水裡的臭味，群眾擠在河岸邊，他們邊看邊笑……他們不會幫她的。

王氏死了，死在繁華的康熙盛世。史景遷於卷首寫道：“我猜有許多女人像她一樣，就像許多縣跟郟城一樣。”他把王氏比喻為退潮後拾起的一顆微微閃亮的石頭，其色彩和紋理歷久彌新。作者藉着刻劃王氏的命運，“從過去召喚出那些窮人和為人遺忘者的生活”，使讀者得以瞥見大時代的一抹暗影。大浪淘沙，還有許多平凡人的故事淹沒在浩瀚史海中，等着退潮時被人發現。

小善甚微，累成大德。

星雲大師《佛光菜根譚》

# City of Three Rivers

Sitting on the border near Austria, Passau is a university town tucked into the southeast corner of Bavaria, Germany. With a long history dating back over 2,000 years, Passau rose to prominence as a trading centre during the Middle Ages, but now seems to have faded into irrelevance. Its obscurity is best illustrated in travel books on Germany: while Munich, the state capital of Bavaria, is typically discussed over a full chapter, Passau can count itself lucky if it gets even a short paragraph.

The extensive coverage of tourist spots in large cities conveys a subtle message about travelling: if you want to see something great, just go somewhere big. If size is an indicator of a place's glamour, there should be little to admire about Passau, which is less than one quarter of the size of Munich. Yet Passau possesses its own forms of greatness, both fathomable and unfathomable.

Back in the days of the Holy Roman Empire, Passau was the capital of the Empire's largest diocese, which covered present-day Austria and Hungary. Today, Passau is still home to many churches and abbeys, including St Stephen's Cathedral. With a white façade and green onion domes, the cathedral may not be eye-catching at first sight. Yet behind its modest appearance is an ornate interior embellished with beautiful frescos, stucco, and, most notably, Europe's largest organ.



At one time the largest of its kind in the world, the organ at St Stephen's Cathedral is in fact an ensemble of five individual organs. With a total of 17,974 pipes producing a wide range of pitches and tones, the organ possesses great flexibility and is perfect for hymns and symphonic music alike. The cathedral still holds organ recitals every day from May to September, showcasing the sonorous timbre of the instrument. When the organ is played, the cathedral is filled with an air of solemnity in an instant that gives everyone—including an actor-turned-politician who goes by the name of Arnold Schwarzenegger—a profound sense of humility.

One of Arnold Schwarzenegger's childhood dreams was to listen to organ music at St Stephen's Cathedral. When he finally fulfilled his wish at the age of 70 and set foot in the cathedral in 2017, the Hollywood star and former Governor of California, with all his fame and status, was just another curious visitor attending an organ recital open to the public. He squeezed

into a narrow pew, took numerous photos of the organ in awe, and marvelled at the acoustics. In the face of something mighty, we may feel humbled, but not in a negative way.

In Passau there is more than one way to find pleasure in feeling dwarfed. Known as the "City of Three Rivers", Passau is where the Danube is joined by two tributaries, the Inn and the Ilz. Walk for a few minutes after leaving St Stephen's Cathedral and you can enjoy the sight of the rivers. Gurgling and flowing endlessly, rivers may be a symbol of banal monotony, reminiscent of a dull stretch of motorway. But not in Passau. When the rivers converge here, they do not mix with each other. Viewed from a vantage point, the three bodies of water are of distinct colours, varying in shape and length, as if they were brushstrokes delicately added to an oil painting. The Ilz, the shortest and narrowest of the three, is a swirling thin black line, in stark contrast to the blue-brown Danube and the green whitish Inn, which resemble two thick layers of impasto paint running parallel across a square of canvas and extending all their way into infinity. The picturesque landscape has given Passau its enduring nickname: "Venice of Bavaria".



While such majestic natural scenery may be interpreted as divine intervention, there is of course a scientific explanation for this phenomenon. Every river has its own composites and sediments. Their amounts and types, along with the flow velocity and volume of the waters, help shape the appearance of a river. The Ilz, for example, picks up humic substances from the bog as it flows through the swampy countryside of the Black Forest before joining the Danube, thereby becoming black and earning itself the nickname the "Black Pearl". Meanwhile, the Inn collects water from both the thawing glaciers of the Alps and minerals from rocks, hence its lighter colour. Knowing such facts may take away the romantic notion of the rivers, but they give us a consoling lesson in life: it is the tiniest particles that create the greatest landscape.

Is it worth going to Passau just for the church organ and a view of the rivers? After all, there are bigger organs elsewhere in the world now. Rivers, as one may say, are just fish roads. Passau, almost as small as Hong Kong Island, is no more than a dot on the world map. But isn't the world map made up of a multitude of dots?

A great man is always willing to be little.

Ralph Waldo Emerson

# The BIG and the SMALL of It

## Big Cheese

**Definition:** someone of importance

**Example:** My cousin is a **big cheese** in the company. He will be able to get you a job interview.

The adjective “big” is usually placed before some nouns to refer to an important person, e.g. **bigwig**, **big hitter**, **big shot**, and interestingly, **big cheese**. At one time, cheese, irrespective of size, was a synonym for power and quality. In *A Dictionary of Modern Slang, Cant and Vulgar Words*, which was first published in 1859, the term **cheese** is defined as “anything good, first-rate in quality, genuine, pleasant, or advantageous”. Some speculate that the cheese grew big when the expression crossed the Atlantic to the United States, where huge wheels of cheese were displayed as publicity stunts and then ceremonially cut up by some important persons. In the early 20th century, the phrase **big cheese** came to be used to describe someone of notable influence within a group. But sometimes it is employed as a derogatory term for someone who is self-important.

## Small Beer

**Definition:** something or someone of little importance

**Example:** The new plan involves a substantial increase in operating costs, which is no **small beer**.

The adjective “small” is used in conjunction with a noun to refer to something or someone considered unimportant. Examples include **small potatoes**, **small fry** and **small beer**. Since the early 14th century, the term **small beer** has been used to refer to beer of a weak or inferior quality. The English poet and playwright William Shakespeare was the first on record to use the expression in the figurative sense of “trivial matters” in the play *Othello* written around 1603.

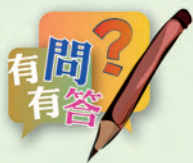
## A Big Fish in a Small Pond

**Definition:** someone who is powerful or important but only within a limited sphere of influence

**Example:** With his excellent qualifications, Peter is hoping to join a start-up and become a **big fish in a small pond**.

This expression, sometimes written as a **big frog in a small pond**, applies to a wide spectrum of decisions—school or job placements, your living place and so on. If you choose to be a **big fish in a small pond**, you are looking for a smaller or less prestigious school or organisation, where you may have a greater chance of standing out. The downside though is that there may be fewer growth opportunities, along with a fake sense of superiority due to a lack of competition. On the other hand, you may choose to be a small fish in a big pond, where only a select few will shine among the best, but you may benefit from more exposure and a wider peer network. So

which one would you rather be: a big fish in a small pond, or a small fish in a big pond?



1. 問：在“減少電晶體的體積”一句中，“減少”一詞應否改為“減小”？

答：“減小”一詞沒有辭書收錄。“少”與“多”相對，用於描述數量；“小”與“大”相對，用於描述體積、面積、年齡和力量等。按照語用習慣，表達數量由多變少用“減少”，表達體積由大變小用“縮小”。因此，句子宜改寫為“縮小電晶體的體積”。

2. 問：“懋績”還是“茂績”？

答：根據辭書，“懋”古同“茂”，可解作“盛大”的意思，兩字都可與“績”字搭配，意思是“大功績”或“豐功偉績”。因此，寫“懋績”或“茂績”皆可。

3. 問：如事件只發生一次，可否用“零星個案”？

答：“零星”解作小量、零碎、零散，不用於單一事件。如事件只發生一次，可用“單一個案”。

4. 問：“百／千”還是“佰／仟”？

答：中文數字有大、小寫之分。“佰”是大寫，“百”是小寫；“仟”是大寫，“千”是小寫。大寫數字常見於商業文件，例如支票、發票、帳冊等，目的是避免他人塗改。香港政府文件一般用小寫數字。

5. 問：“艱巨”還是“艱鉅”？

答：“巨”解作“大”。“鉅”的本義是“堅硬的鐵、鉤子”，與“巨”相通。不過，字典普遍視“鉅”為“巨”的異體字。

“艱巨”解作“艱難而繁重”，例如“艱巨的任務”。大部分辭典只收“艱巨”，不收“艱鉅”。雖有辭書指兩者相通，但以“艱巨”較常見。因此，建議寫作“艱巨”。



# 生死攸關的小事

香港作家劉以鬯的微型小說《打錯了》有兩個截然不同的結局。第一個結局，主角匆忙離家赴約，被衝向車站的巴士輾斃；第二個結局，主角離家之際，接到一通打錯的電話，結果遲了出門，剛好避開交通意外。故事雖短，意味深長。世事難料，發生在須臾之間的芝麻小事，不但可左右個人禍福，甚或改寫世界命運。

## 拐錯彎

一通電話足以影響生死，別以為只是虛構的荒誕情節。有時候，現實生活比小說更曲折離奇。百多年前，某司機拐錯了彎，不僅禍及乘客，還掀起一場世界大戰。

一九一四年六月二十八日，奧匈帝國皇儲斐迪南大公 (Archduke Ferdinand) 到訪波斯尼亞首府薩拉熱窩。當天，七個刺客潛伏在皇儲車隊必經之路，伺機行刺。一人在皇儲的敞篷車經過時投擲炸彈，卻誤中副車，炸傷另一輛車的乘客和在場市民。皇儲夫婦雖飽受驚嚇，但總算安全抵達市政廳，出席宴會。

宴會過後，皇儲臨時決定更改行程，前往醫院探望炸彈襲擊的傷者，但司機沒有收到通知，車隊仍按原定路線行駛，沿着河畔直路駛至路口，向右拐進內街。與皇儲夫婦同坐一車的波斯尼亞總督驟覺路線不對，隨即喝道：“怎麼回事？走錯路啦！”司機馬上煞停，緩緩倒後，豈料五呎之外，剛好站着一個刺客。

“砰！砰！”

刺客上前連開兩槍，擊斃斐迪南大公夫婦。由於刺客是塞爾維亞民族主義者，而奧匈帝國與塞爾維亞素有宿怨，奧匈帝國遂以此事為由，出兵攻打塞國。雙方的盟國也陸續捲入紛爭，互相宣戰。司機拐錯了彎，令斐迪南大公夫婦魂斷薩拉熱窩；歷史也隨之拐錯了彎，歷時四年多的第一次世界大戰就此展開，奪去上千萬條無辜性命。

## 護身符

在斐迪南大公遇刺前兩年，美國第二十六任總統老羅斯福 (Theodore Roosevelt) 同樣乘坐敞篷車，同樣遇上刺客，同樣相距約五呎，同樣中了一槍，結局卻天差地別。

一九一二年，老羅斯福爭取第三度出任總統。為此，他與團隊馬不停蹄，穿州過省，趕赴連場競選活

動。十月十四日，他在酒店吃過晚飯，隨即出發前往集會現場，準備演說。他登上敞篷車後，聽到市民的喝采聲，便站起來向民眾致意，冷不防冒出一個男子，舉槍瞄準他。

“砰！”

老羅斯福右胸中槍，跌倒在座位上。槍手被制服後，老羅斯福竟還有力氣喝道：“別傷害他，我還好。”

原來，老羅斯福離開酒店前，把五十多頁的演講辭對摺起來，與眼鏡盒一同放進右胸前的大衣口袋裏。幸虧這兩件“護身符”減弱了子彈的衝擊力，他才得以大難不死。老羅斯福發現自己未有咳血，推斷子彈沒有傷及肺部，無性命之虞，便決定繼續前往集會現場。他開始致辭時還揚了揚講稿，展示紙上的彈孔，說：“子彈還在身體裏，恕我不能長篇大論，但我會盡力而為。”話雖如此，老羅斯福仍說了將近一小時，才往醫院治理傷勢。

## 躲躲懶

老羅斯福中槍後，仍然堅持演說，工作熱誠無與倫比。醫學界一項拯救萬千性命的偉大發現，卻源於一次小小的“拖延症”發作。

一九二八年，在倫敦聖瑪麗醫院實驗室工作的弗萊明 (Alexander Fleming) 即將放長假。放假前，他把培植了葡萄球菌的培養皿放到水槽，未有清理好便下班了。

約一個月後，弗萊明回來上班，才清洗培養皿。他發現皿中的葡萄球菌不見了，只有青藍色的霉菌。經過研究，弗萊明確認這種霉菌能殺死細菌，將其命名為盤尼西林 (Penicillin)，並在翌年發表論文。

盤尼西林雖然未有馬上受人注意，但十數年後，藥理學家、病理學家與化學工程師通力合作，研究其醫療功效，並找出大量培植和生產的方法。在眾人努力下，盤尼西林趕及在第二次世界大戰後期廣泛應用，拯救了無數傷兵的性命，弗萊明和另外兩名科學家因此於一九四五年獲頒諾貝爾獎。

看似微不足道的事，竟是生死攸關，甚至扭轉乾坤，不禁令人聯想到美國氣象學家洛倫茲 (Edward Lorenz) 於一九七二年提出的問題：一隻蝴蝶在巴西扇動翅膀，會導致德克薩斯州刮起龍捲風嗎？“蝴蝶效應”一詞由此而來，形容微小變化也可帶來巨大差異。人生在世，萬物之間的因果關係如何互為影響，一時半刻難以說清。我們不妨慎觀細察身邊的細枝末節，且看日後會否成為矚目大事的轉捩點。

Hong Kong may just be a small dot on the world map, but for many of us who were born and raised here, this city will always hold a big place in our hearts. In fact, many world records have been set in our tiny city over the years. Answer the following questions to see how much you know about Hong Kong's architectural wonders, technological feats and other fun facts.

- The Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge is the longest bridge-and-tunnel sea crossing in the world. How long is it?  
A. 45 km                                      B. 55 km  
C. 65 km                                      D. 75 km
- Which of the following was the world's longest suspension bridge for both road and rail traffic at the time of its completion in 1997?  
A. Ting Kau Bridge                      B. Tsing Ma Bridge  
C. Stonecutters Bridge                  D. Tsing Yi North Bridge
- How many tramcars did Hong Kong Tramways have when it was awarded the Guinness World Records title of the "largest double-decker tram fleet in service" in 2021?  
A. 105    B. 135  
C. 165    D. 195
- The Central to Mid-Levels Escalator and Walkway System is the longest outdoor covered escalator system in the world. How long is it?  
A. About 500 m                              B. About 600 m  
C. About 700 m                              D. About 800 m
- The world's largest Rubik's Cube was created in Hong Kong in March 2021. How big was it?  
A. 1.5 m x 1.5 m x 1.5 m                  B. 2 m x 2 m x 2 m  
C. 2.5 m x 2.5 m x 2.5 m                  D. 3 m x 3 m x 3 m
- In 2013, the Hong Kong Blind Sports Federation set a new record for the world's longest handshake chain. How many people took part in that feat?  
A. 2,626    B. 2,828  
C. 3,434    D. 4,040
- In 2016, Chan Yuen-ting became the first woman coach in the world to guide a men's professional football team to the top-flight league title. Which team did she coach?  
A. Kitchee                                      B. Eastern  
C. South China                                  D. Tai Po
- The *Wong Fei-hung* series is the world's longest running film series. Which actor made the most appearances as Master Wong in the series?  
A. Kwan Tak-hing                              B. Walter Tso Tat-wah  
C. Jackie Chan                                  D. Jet Li

Please send your entry by fax (2521 8772) or email (csbolrs@csb.gov.hk) to the Editorial Board of *Word Power* by **24 February 2022**. Watch out for our coming issue to see if you get all the answers right, and better still, if you are one of the lucky ten to win a prize. The Editorial Board will have the final say on the answers.

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## 第八十五期參考答案

- 曹公潭                      5. 爵祿街
- 《三字經》                  6. 勝利道
- 李白                          7. 香港總督／駐港三軍總司令
- 國瑞路                      8. 西貢公路

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Issue No. 87 (April 2022) : Black and White

二零二二年四月第八十七期主題：黑白

Issue No. 88 (July 2022) : Fact and Fiction

二零二二年七月第八十八期主題：虛實

Contributions from colleagues are welcome. Please click [here](#) for details.

歡迎同事投稿，細則請按這裏。

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