

OXFORD FORWARD

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Explore a new world— in English

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Forward Foreword



“

Ask your students why they are learning English, and the frankness of their answers will probably determine the quality of their learning and the rewards they will reap in the future. Some may say they want to learn it for better employment opportunities; others may want to use it for travel; while a few may just want to pass the HKDSE exam.

However, not many of them will be aware of the huge impact English fluency can have upon their skills development, global interconnectivity and the way they perceive humankind and themselves.

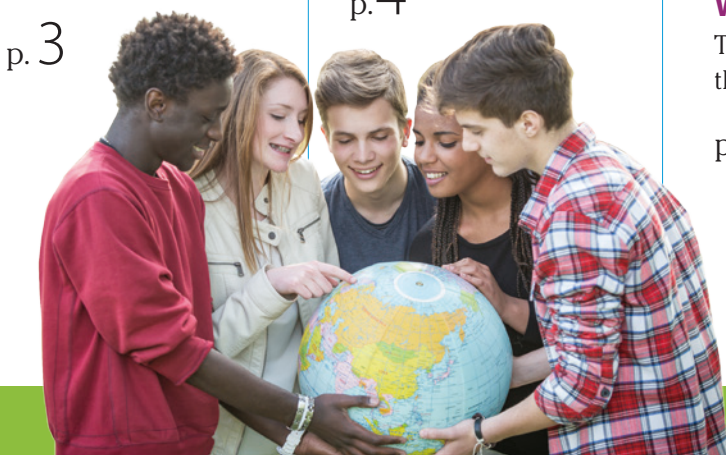
We see the world not only through our beliefs and experiences, but through our linguistic heritage. We all think in a language. Language gives us the tools to reflect on our thoughts and bring them to life. We process thoughts using the words and grammar of the language we have grown up speaking. Learning another language helps us see the world from another point of view, expand our minds and enrich our way of thinking.

Spoken by more than 300 million native speakers, and between 400 and 800 million foreign users, English is, undeniably, the most widespread language in the world. It is also the main language of science, technology and commerce, and the official language of aviation and shipping. It is a key medium of publishing, education and international negotiation. Most of the information in the world's computers is in English, which is the universal language of the Internet.

So with fluent English, your students can open themselves up to a whole new world of experiences, fascinating cultures, perspectives and possibilities, and constantly educate and enrich themselves.

”

Dr V. Gasper
Editorial Manager, English Language
Teaching Department



Hong Kong Publishing Biennial Awards 2017

The *Wenyan* series and *English in Jasper's Life*



Two of our titles, the series *Wenyan* and the book *English in Jasper's Life*, won awards at the Hong Kong Publishing Biennial Awards this July. They were awarded the *Best Publishing Award* and *Publishing Award* respectively within the language learning category.

Wenyan 《悦心文言讀本》 breaks traditional publishing convention by using comic strips to tell stories about classical Chinese works. These are grouped into five themes:

- Cultivating good customs
- Hopes and aspirations
- Ways of wisdom
- Decorum in society
- Sentiment and sensibility

The comics arouse students' interest and teach them how to admire the Chinese language. As the local Chinese curriculum puts more weight on classical Chinese, *Wenyan* will become a great student companion to improve learning outcomes and enhance knowledge of classical Chinese.

English in Jasper's Life 《英語・人生 曾鈺成》 is the third instalment in

Oxford's Reading English 閱讀英語系列, a series established with the aim of providing enriching and empowering reading experiences. The Hon Jasper Tsang Yok-sing, former President of the Legislative Council, tells readers how English inspired his life. He talks about his childhood and shares his views on education, politics, culture and philosophy. He focused on his English studies, which led him to be crowned the 'Grammar Prince' in school. Mr Tsang uses his life experience to encourage people to work hard on developing language skills, which he considers a lifelong benefit.

Mr Tsang not only shares his stories in his book, but also his experiences and insights into learning English. He elaborates on the challenges of Chinese-English translations and vice versa, the distinct personality of every English word and the importance of 'knowing the rules and memorizing the exceptions' in language usage.



Hong Kong Book Fair 2017

Oxford's 'Book Reading Renaissance'

Oxford University Press has participated in the Hong Kong Book Fair for decades, meeting the public and showcasing our publications with themed booths. Our theme this year was the 'Book Reading Renaissance', in the hope of bringing people back to reading physical books. We had three booths—one in University Square and two in Children's Paradise.

The *Oxford Path* books and courses were located in Children's Paradise. The *Oxford Path* home learning system also showcased how children's proficiency in English, Cantonese, Mandarin and mathematical concepts can be developed in a thorough and systematic manner. Professional consultants provided explanations and live demonstrations on the language acquisition and learning needs at every stage of a child's growth.

For the booth in University Square, we selected many of our newest English and Chinese reading materials. As usual, one of the highlights was our English Language Teaching section. Visitors came over to our booth to find the latest ELT materials to enhance their English. Over 100 series of ELT materials were on display there. With the help of our onsite helpers, visitors could find the products that fit their needs. Our DSE series was very popular; both the Grammar and DSE skills books were favourites amongst DSE students. Many students also registered and got information on our upcoming HKDSE English language Mock Exam 2017/18.

Other ELT materials like dictionaries, writing books and reading books were very popular for all levels of English learners. The critically acclaimed *Oxford RWI* (Read Write Inc) English language programme, *Oxford C&W* (Comprehension and Writing) English language programme and Oxford Chinese language programme were all showcased live for the first time at the exhibition. Two new series, *Get Set Go Phonics* and *Practical English Usage* (Fourth Edition), even sold out before the end of the exhibition.



Adapting to English

Oxford Forward met with Mr Qiang Wang, co-founder of New Oriental Education & Technology Group Inc., to discuss learning English in China.

English has gained popularity in China over the past four decades. You graduated from Peking University in English, then taught English there for six years. Why did you choose to study English?

At that stage of my life, before the 1980s, people thought of a foreign language as a window to the world. The options at that time were Russian and English. I think an urge and desire to better understand the world, coupled with an interest in literature, was my main motivation for studying English.

Then you did a Master's degree in Computer Science at State University of New York. It seems this is a growing trend with English majors. Is there a link between language (especially English) and programming?

Yes, I think there is. Programming is, simply put, a set of logical instructions given to machines by us. To create a program you need to master one thing only—a programming language. The keyword here is *language*; you master it the same way you master other languages, because of its similar nature. In the computer science field they call programming languages 'high languages'—to distinguish natural languages from 'machine oriented' ones—with C or C++, you're essentially using English the same way you use it to express your thoughts and logic.



You are considered one of the most well-known English teachers in China. What is that like?

Firstly, you're thrilled to hear that you're a famous teacher. I think it's similar to being a celebrity—the students become your fans and come to your classes regardless of the content taught, because they want to see how you communicate your thoughts. Being able to share my appreciation for English and literature with classes of 500 students is an incredible feeling.

You are also a co-founder of New Oriental Education & Technology Group (the largest comprehensive educational company in China). What is the key to the company's success?

What New Oriental did was promote the idea that 'language is power' in the minds of students and ultimately made learning English enjoyable. We also made teaching English less burdensome for teachers as they were able to share their experiences of the language with students. One thing I noticed was that Chinese students spend the majority of their time rote memorizing vocabulary and grammatical rules.

While these two aspects are extremely important in language learning, this isn't an efficient way to learn. Instead, our courses try to tackle the English speakers' 'way of thinking'. One of my oral English courses 'Think in American English' is an example of this.





If students are able to learn this, then they are better suited to language learning—I think this is why students enjoy coming to us. We view the use of grammatical rules and vocabulary merely as a reflection of the way one thinks.

What kind of teaching / published materials do you like using? What are the most important factors when selecting them?

For oral practice, New Oriental uses authentic materials like movies, dramas and plays. This way, we can arouse students' interest in learning and mastering the language through real and authentic contexts.

The textbooks we selected were effective for teaching because they reflect the humour or national characteristics of the language. When we look at a textbook, we look at the technical aspects first, like how efficiently and concisely it can teach the language. But what we focused on is whether or not students, after the lessons, have a better understanding of the 'Englishness' of English people or 'Americanness' of Americans.

'We can arouse students' interest in learning and mastering English through real and authentic contexts.'

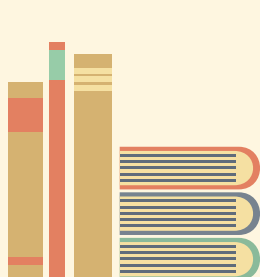
What is the best way to prepare students for a language exam? What advice can you give to senior secondary teachers?

There is a difference between purely mastering a language and preparing for a language exam. All exams—and this applies to all subjects, not just language—are put together logically to test for certain things. An efficient way to prepare for an exam is to understand the logic behind the questions. If you are able to thoroughly familiarize yourself with past papers and past exam questions, you will be pretty well prepared for any upcoming exam.

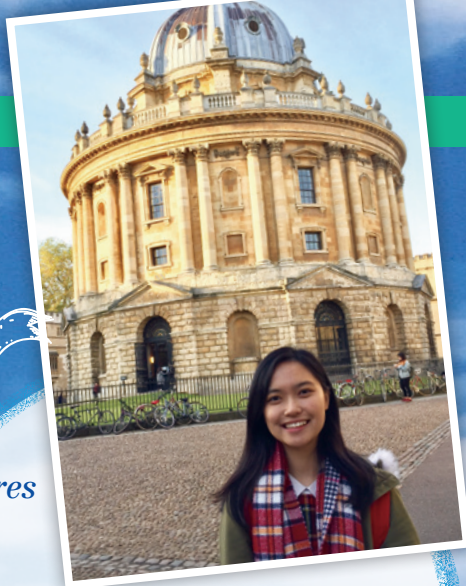
'An efficient way to prepare for an English exam is to understand the logic behind the questions.'

What are the difficulties or challenges faced by Chinese learners of English and how can learners overcome them? Do you have any advice?

Generally speaking, Chinese learners of English are shy when it comes to speaking English to foreigners or strangers. They might have sufficient knowledge of grammar and vocabulary to express their thoughts, but the willingness to speak is extremely important. If learners are able to overcome this psychological barrier, then mastering the language becomes easier.



Englishization



OUP Editorial Assistant Coco (Ho Kwan Chan) shares a few words with us about the impact of English on the world and her UK exchange trip last year.

Bridges help us to overcome regional obstacles, while language is a tool that connects us to the world. With globalization, the interaction and communication between people from different cultures and areas has increased dramatically. 'Englishization' is a newly emerging term that illustrates the dominant role of English in the 21st century.

English is one of the most common languages around the world. Even though it may not be the most spoken language in the world, English is the official language in many countries.

English is more than just a school subject; it is, perhaps, a life-long token of human interaction and social behaviour. As I grew older, I gradually realized the evolving and diverging role of English in my life. As a second language learner in English and an English major student, being praised or gaining recognition from native speakers or professionals are certainly the most satisfying moments during my language learning process. Beyond this, English also allows me to come out of my shell by making friends with people from different countries. With the enormous English-speaking population worldwide, English is like a key that unlocks doors all over the globe. Through English, communicating with people from various countries is not an unachievable goal. Learning a foreign language can be demanding, but the experience of opening our minds to an entirely new perspective of the world is definitely far more rewarding than imaginable.

The use of English can increase our cultural intelligence and eliminate cultural stereotypes. Going back to my exchange journey last year, I stayed with seven other housemates from different nationalities; it took us a few days to accustom ourselves to each other's living habits. The English language was the only thing that we had in common. Even though I was not used to this multicultural environment, through communication, I started to appreciate the beauty of cultural diversity. It was also a valuable chance to discover untranslatable customs from the British locals.

The use of English has become significant in our day-to-day life. I believe that English could be something more than just a bridge that allows you to cross the border between two places; rather, it could be a punt that rows you anywhere after you've acquired the right punting skills. So, what is English for you?

Coco
Lingnan University,
English major



Junior Secondary

Oxford English Writing Competition **Winner**

Whodunnit?

Secondary student Valerie Chee's reward for winning the Oxford English Writing Competition Whodunnit? was a place on a study tour at the University of Oxford.



Watch Valerie's video

After seventeen days at St. Hilda's College, I have returned to Hong Kong. I experienced things that could never happen here. This trip has helped me to grow and learn more.

Almost every day, we had lessons in the morning for three hours and forty-five minutes. Then in the afternoons and evenings there were fun activities, such as movies, a Casino Night and a Disco Party. These brought me so much joy. I guess this is why some people fancy studying abroad; it is not just about learning but also merging learning and entertainment.

I also made tons of friends from different countries, including Germany, Italy and Russia. When it comes to communicating with people worldwide, English is essential. A Spanish person cannot understand Chinese, and I cannot understand Spanish. My roommate was Portuguese, so we spoke English to each other. This was a rare opportunity! I am so glad to know her. She is really nice and friendly. I also met people from Hong Kong. We often have reunions here.

One of the happiest events was the approval of my accent from a British teacher. I fell in love with the British

accent in Form 1. So I started doing research on accents and practising my pronunciation. Two years later, Mr Phil told me that I have a pure South-East England accent. 'That is very difficult to fake, unless you are actually from here,' I remember him saying. How exciting that was!

As days passed, I learnt more about English culture and traditional activities. People are polite, open doors for ladies and help tourists who seem lost. All these things show they care for others, which is one of the things I like about England. Experiences like these can make us grow as people by learning the values, habits and ways of life of a different culture.

We also went punting, which is a must-do in Cambridge. I could see the beautiful view along the river, including the different colleges of Cambridge University, the famous Bridge of Sighs and some huge parks. It was an amazing experience to see all these sights and buildings which are hundreds years old. That was the most memorable activity of my trip.

I miss England very much. If I have the chance, I would definitely want to go there again. I am sure this memory will never fade.



Valerie Chee

Form 3A, Maryknoll Convent School (Secondary section)

Watch this space

Things to look out for in the coming months

HKDSE English Language Mock Exams 2017/18 Paper 1 and Paper 3

In order to better prepare students for the HKDSE Exam in 2018, and to familiarize them with its procedures, Oxford University Press will hold two sessions of HKDSE English Language Mock Exams on 11 November 2017.

For enrolments made through your school, please refer to 'School enrolment and Exam procedures'. For individual enrolments, please download the enrolment form at <https://www.oupchina.com.hk/en/dse-mockexam>

Date	Session	Time
11 Nov 2017 (Saturday)	Morning	8.45 a.m.–1 p.m.
	Afternoon	1.45 p.m.–6 p.m.
		Paper 1 Reading and Paper 3 Listening & Integrated Skills

Closing date for enrolment is 23 October 2017

For enquiries, please contact the OUP Account Executive for your school or call 2516 3126.

Junior Secondary English

Oxford Video Competition

English is a key to the world. Create a video in English to share your unique stories or perspectives.

Stay tuned for more information!



New for 2017

iSolution Our new all-in-one e-learning platform

Oxford iSolution provides users with easy and direct access to an array of e-learning resources, e-textbooks, interactive activities and assessment materials via a single app. The platform currently hosts *New Treasure Plus* (Second Edition), *Success in Grammar* (Second Edition) and *Advantage* (Second Edition).

New features include the split page display, which allows users to view two different pages at the same time (useful for viewing a reading passage and questions alongside each other, for example). Oxford iSolution is also capable of playing three different speeds of audio recordings to cater for learner diversity, as well

as hiding and showing answers and detailed explanations to exercises. Furthermore, keyword search, whiteboard drawing features and integrated links to related components (such as vocabulary books and tapescripts) help make Oxford iSolution the perfect all-in-one e-learning platform for teachers, students and home learners.

Oxford iSolution also promotes mobile learning with cloud technologies, enabling users to learn anytime, anywhere with their iPads, laptops or other digital devices.



In the next issue of Oxford Forward

- More news, interviews and students' activities

Look out for the next issue of *Oxford Forward* in March 2018

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