

IELTS Speaking

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1. 衔接词

首先想到的: off the top of my head

关于: when it comes to/regarding/in terms of/as for..

2. Part 1

1. Paying bills

What kind of bills do you have to pay?

How do you usually pay your bills? Why?

Is there anything you could do to make your bills cheaper?

3. Part 2

3.1 题目总览

① Note

去过的乡村 好的人生变化 有用的发明 征求意见 困难决定终成功

用手机做重要的事情 节约时间的方法 喜欢一起聊天的朋友 交通拥堵

[学习中的积极建议](#) [你的国家的名人](#) [一次非常忙碌的经历](#) [传统产品](#)
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[向长者学习技能](#) [远距离步行](#) [生活中离不开的东西](#)
[一见面想再见的人](#) [印象深刻的课程](#) [坏掉又修好的东西](#) [想共度时光的人](#)
[收到特殊蛋糕](#) [有趣的歌曲](#) [有趣的讨论](#) [语言学习](#) [社交媒体上关注的人](#)
[不喜欢并想改变的规则](#) [别人给你的衣服](#) [有趣的城市](#) [一个去过的地方](#)
[别人讲述的故事](#) [送朋友的礼物](#) [童年喜欢的玩具](#) [重要河流/湖泊](#)
[生活精彩有趣的老人](#) [购物服务](#) [文化之地](#) [公园/花园](#) [给建议的人](#)
[看到野生动物的地方](#) [别人房间](#) [公共场所接陌生人电话](#)
[传统节日的食物](#) [医疗人士](#) [喜欢做手工的人](#) [书迷](#) [近期观影](#) [弄丢贵重物品](#)
[帮助亲人](#) [拥挤地方](#) [遇到困难挑战](#) [理想房屋](#) [固执己见的人](#)
[老友又见](#) [令你自信的事](#) [获奖](#) [学到新东西的网络视频](#)
[对社会有贡献的人](#) [向小辈展示新东西](#)

3.2 人物 person

3.2.1 Famous person

3.2.1.1 famous role model/well-known people in your country

介绍: Sun Yingsha, phenomenal table tennis player, exceptional skills & dedication, sportsmanship, and relentless pursuit of excellence

特点: mixed doubles gold medal, determination, a calm demeanor, humility, grounded; symbol of perseverance and excellence

感受: sports icon

??? note

- 1 I'd like to talk about Sun Yingsha, who is one of the most well-known athletes in China today. She's a phenomenal table tennis player, and she's gained widespread recognition, especially after her impressive performance in the 2024 Paris Olympics. Sun Yingsha has become a household name in China, not just because of her exceptional skills, but also because of her dedication, sportsmanship, and relentless pursuit of excellence.
- 2 At the Paris Olympics, Sun Yingsha had a remarkable run. She won several medals, among which the mixed doubles gold was particularly significant because it was the first-ever mixed doubles gold medal for the Chinese table tennis team.
- 3 What really impresses me about Sun Yingsha is her determination and focus on the game. (She's known for her incredible agility, quick reflexes, and powerful shots.) Watching her play is truly inspiring because she always gives it her all, whether it's a national competition or the Olympic finals. Despite being under immense pressure, she maintains a calm demeanor, which is something I really admire.
- 4 Beyond her skills on the table, Sun Yingsha is also admired for her humility. Despite her numerous achievements, she remains grounded and always credits her teammates and coaches for her success. This attitude has won her a lot of fans, not just in China but around the world.
- 5 Her popularity in China goes beyond just sports enthusiasts. She has become a symbol of perseverance and excellence, especially for the younger generation. Many young athletes look up to her as a role model because she shows that with hard work, anything is possible.
- 6 All in all, Sun Yingsha is a true sports icon in China. I believe she will continue to inspire future generations with her incredible talent and unwavering dedication to the sport.

Fence 1

3.2.1.2 社交媒体上关注的人

介绍：周深

I'd like to talk about Zhou Shen, a Chinese singer whom I follow on social media. Zhou Shen is widely known for his **exceptional vocal range and his ability to sing in various styles**, from pop to classical music. He became popular not just in China, but internationally, thanks to his unique voice and his participation in several reality singing competitions, including "The Voice of China."

I first discovered him a few years ago when I heard one of his songs featured in a popular TV drama. His voice immediately caught my attention – it has this **ethereal**, almost **otherworldly** quality, which is quite rare. Since then, I've been following his updates on platforms like Weibo and NetEase Music.

What really attracts me to follow Zhou Shen on social media is **his authenticity and his connection with fans**. Despite his fame, he's always been very humble and down-to-earth. His posts often feature behind-the-scenes glimpses of his life, from rehearsals to casual moments in his life. He shares his thoughts on music and life, and this personal touch makes him more relatable. I also admire how he interacts with his fans; for example, he often responds to comments and occasionally holds live-streaming sessions where he chats with his followers, which helps him build a closer relationship with his audience.

Apart from his music, Zhou Shen is also quite **involved in charitable activities**, and he uses his platform to raise awareness about important social issues. On his social media, he often posts about his involvement in fundraising campaigns, environmental causes, and other initiatives to help those in need. I really appreciate that he doesn't just use his fame for personal gain, but also

for the greater good, which makes me respect him even more.

Overall, Zhou Shen is not just a talented musician but also a positive and inspiring figure on social media. His genuine personality, his dedication to his craft, and his social responsibility are some of the reasons why I follow him closely.

3.2.2 Friend

3.2.2.1 a person met in a party

have a lot things in common, hit it off

人物特点: professional traveler, story teller -- engaged, open, chatty & charismatic, knowledgeable, humble & down-to-earth

Ok, so, today I'd like to talk about an interesting old person I met at my grandma's dinner party. She's my grandma's good friend, Mrs. Li.

At that dinner, Mrs. Li was sitting right next to me, therefore, naturally we started talking to each other. Surprisingly, despite the age difference, we had a lot of things in common (尽管年龄不同, 有很多共同之处). For example, we both loved traveling, watercolour painting and yoga! That's why we hit it off (投机) right away, which was incredible.

She was a professional traveler (职业旅行家), and she had traveled to more than 40 different countries at that time. She shared with me a lot of fascinating stories. She was indeed a great story teller. I was so engaged (听故事时被深深吸引).

I really enjoyed the conversation with her, because, first off, I love traveling. I loved listening to her traveling stories. She was a very open, chatty and charismatic person, at the same time, very knowledgeable with the world (对全世界的知识很博学多闻). So, I really admired her. And secondly, she was 0 pretentious (装逼的) or self-centred (自我为中心). You know how sometimes people who have seen and done a lot in life tend to be very arrogant and ego-centric (傲慢且自我), and they make everything about themselves (一切话题都是关于他们的)? Mrs. Li was not like that at all. On the contrary, she was a great listener (善于倾听), and she cared about my stories. She was humble and down-to-earth.

So, yeh, that's the person I met at a dinner party. Thank you!

3.2.2.2 有趣的邻居; 生活精彩有趣的老人

Introduction

- Neighbor's name: Mrs. Li
- Interesting: Inspiring, kind, adventurous

Who They Are

- Age: Late 70s
- Traits: Humble, active, friendly, curious, lively
- Long-time neighbor

Why They Are Interesting

- Hobbies: Traveling, painting, yoga
- Achievements: Traveled to 40 countries, travel writer
- Personality: Humble, down-to-earth, great storyteller
- Special experiences: Fascinating travel stories, shared wisdom

Relationship with Them

- Interaction: Regular chats, painting together, yoga tips
- Shared interests: Painting, art, yoga
- Memorable moments: Painting together, discussing travel, learning life lessons

Conclusion

- Interesting: Inspiring, adventurous, humble
- What I've learned: Life lessons, cultural awareness, storytelling

I'd like to talk about an interesting neighbor of mine, Mrs. Li, who has been living next door for several years now. She's quite elderly, in her late seventies, but still very active and lively, which makes her stand out in the neighborhood. I first got to know her better when my family moved here, and we immediately became friends because of her warm and welcoming nature.

Mrs. Li is an incredibly fascinating person. Despite her age, she's traveled to more than 40 countries and has a wealth of stories to share. She's a retired professional travel writer, and over the years, she's written a number of books and articles about her adventures, which is something I find really impressive. What's even more amazing is how humble she is about it. Unlike many people who might brag about such accomplishments, Mrs. Li is very down-to-earth. She's always willing to listen to others and seems genuinely interested in hearing about what's going on in my life, too.

One of the things that really makes Mrs. Li stand out is her love of sharing her travel experiences. When we get the chance to chat, I can listen to her for hours. She's a fantastic storyteller, and I'm always captivated by the way she describes the different cultures, people, and places she's visited. She's not only well-traveled but also very knowledgeable, so when she speaks about her experiences, I always feel like I'm learning something new and valuable. I really admire her curiosity about the world and her open-minded approach to life.

Interestingly, we also share a lot of common interests. We both love painting, especially watercolor, and we often spend time together working on our paintings. I think it's great to have a neighbor who has similar hobbies, as it makes it easier to connect and share ideas. Additionally, Mrs. Li is very into yoga, and though I'm not as experienced as she is, she's always encouraging me to try new poses or attend local classes.

What I truly appreciate about Mrs. Li, though, is how non-pretentious she is. It's rare to meet someone with so much life experience who remains so humble and unassuming. She never makes conversations about herself, which is refreshing because sometimes people who have done a lot in life can become a bit arrogant or self-centered. But Mrs. Li is always interested in what I have to say and makes me feel heard.

In short, she's an inspiring, thoughtful, and kind person, and I feel really fortunate to have her as a neighbor. Our chats are something I look forward to, and I'm always learning from her, whether it's about life, travel, or art.

3.2.2.3 喜欢一起聊天的朋友

特点: have known each other for, cherish the most in my life, go-to person

原因:

1. an attentive listener 和现在人对比, asks thoughtful questions and offers insightful advice
2. share similar interests (books, movies, and current events)

3. sense of humor, lightens the mood

总结: not only enjoyable but also meaningful

??? note

- 1 " I'd like to talk about a friend of mine, Anna, who I absolutely love talking to. We've known each other for about 3 years now, ever since we met in university, and over time, she's become one of the people I cherish the most in my life. Whenever I need someone to talk to, whether it's about something serious or just a lighthearted chat, Anna is always my go-to person.
- 2 One of the main reasons I enjoy talking to her is because she's such an attentive listener. No matter what I'm talking about, she always gives me her full attention, which is quite rare these days when people are often distracted by their phones. She doesn't just listen passively either—she asks thoughtful questions and offers insightful advice. For example, there was a time when I was really struggling with making a career decision, and she helped me weigh the pros and cons without being pushy or judgmental. Her ability to understand my perspective and give me advice that's actually helpful is something I truly appreciate.
- 3 Another reason I love our conversations is because we share similar interests, especially when it comes to books, movies, and current events. We often end up having deep discussions about the latest book we've read or a thought-provoking documentary we've watched. These conversations can sometimes last for hours, but it never feels like a waste of time because I always come away feeling inspired or having learned something new.
- 4 What I admire most about Anna is her sense of humor. Even when we're talking about serious topics, she has this amazing ability to make me laugh. It's not that she makes light of serious matters, but rather, she knows how to add a touch of humor that lightens the mood. This is especially comforting when I'm feeling stressed or overwhelmed—she just has a way of turning my day around with her jokes and witty comments.
- 5 All in all, talking to Anna is something I genuinely look forward to because it's not only enjoyable but also meaningful. I always feel understood, supported, and uplifted after our conversations. It's a rare thing to have someone in your life with whom you can talk about almost anything, and I consider myself lucky to have a friend like her."

Fence 2

3.2.2.4 喜欢做手工的人

介绍: Anna, creative & crafty, have a knack for

做什么: pottery -- clay mugs and bowls, handmade cards, upcycle old stuff into something completely new

举例 送礼物, worn out boot into planter for succulents -- turn ordinary things into art

感受: accomplishment, express herself, unwind -- admire

3.2.2.5 想共度时光的人

I'd like to talk about my friend Anna, who's someone I really enjoy spending time with. We've known each other for about three years now, ever since we met in university. Over this time, she's become one of the people I cherish the most in my life.

What makes Anna such a great person to spend time with is her warm and easy-going nature. She has this rare ability to make everyone around her feel comfortable and valued. Whether we're hanging out after classes, grabbing coffee, or simply having a chat, there's never a dull moment when she's around. I think it's because she has such a positive attitude towards life and always manages to see the bright side of things. She's the type of person who can turn a mundane activity into something enjoyable.

One of the reasons I like spending time with Anna is that she's an excellent listener. Whenever I'm going through a tough time, or even if I just want to talk about my day, she always listens attentively and offers thoughtful advice. It's really comforting to know that I can share anything with her, whether it's something serious or just a lighthearted chat. In fact, some of my best memories with her come from our long conversations, which range from deep discussions about life to silly jokes that leave us both in fits of laughter.

Apart from being supportive and a good listener, Anna is also very creative and adventurous. We've had a lot of fun going on spontaneous trips together and trying out new activities. She's always up for exploring new places, whether it's a hidden café in the city or a hiking trail in the mountains. I think her curiosity and enthusiasm are contagious, and that's another reason why I enjoy spending time with her – she makes everything feel exciting.

Overall, Anna is someone who not only brings joy into my life but also supports me during tough times. Her kindness, creativity, and the genuine care she shows for others make her the kind of person I truly value and love spending time with.

3.2.3 Cousin

3.2.3.1 music lover

特征: mid-20s, a music enthusiast, always had her headphones on

I've known her my whole life as we grew up together and in my memory ...

具体喜欢音乐的表现: explore all kinds of music from classical to jazz, rock to hip-hop, go to concert

1. think music is important => resonate with, universal language brings people together & express inner emotions -- sensitive, emotional, artistic person -- her language
2. my feelings: envious -- time and money to go to concert, admire -- vast knowledge and understanding of genres and artists == mixed bag

3.2.3.2 想要共事的家人

介绍: an incredibly organized and creative person, a graphic designer

原因:

1. both share a passion for creative projects, complement each other
2. extremely disciplined, a strong work ethic -- a great influence
3. a sense of trust and openness

总结: start a creative venture, not only strengthen our relationship but also help both of us grow professionally

??? note

- 1 One family member I would really like to work with in the future is my cousin. She's not only a family member but also someone I deeply admire and look up to. My cousin has always been an incredibly organized and creative person, and over the years, I've seen her develop these skills into something truly professional. Currently, she works as a graphic designer for a well-known agency, and I've always been fascinated by her work.
- 2 The reason I would like to work with her is that we both share a passion for creative projects. I have some skills in writing and content creation, so I think we would complement each other quite well if we started a business together. For instance, I imagine we could run a small design and marketing firm, where she could handle the visual elements, while I focus on managing social media, and marketing strategies. It's something we've casually discussed a few times, and I believe our combined skills would make for a solid partnership.
- 3 Moreover, my cousin is someone who is extremely disciplined and has a strong work ethic, which I think would be a great influence on me. She's always been the kind of person who plans things meticulously, whether it's a project deadline or even a family event. This kind of structured approach to work is something I could definitely learn from. On the other hand, I'm a bit more spontaneous and flexible, so I think we would balance each other out quite well.
- 4 Another reason I'd love to collaborate with her is that working with a family member, especially someone I'm close to, would make the experience more enjoyable. I imagine it would create a sense of trust and openness, which can be hard to find when working with colleagues you don't know as well. Of course, there could be challenges, such as mixing family and business, but I think our strong communication skills would help us overcome any potential conflicts.
- 5 In the future, if the opportunity arises, I would definitely love to ****start a creative venture**** with my cousin. It's something that excites me, and I believe it would not only strengthen our relationship but also help both of us grow professionally.

Fence 3

3.2.3.3 书迷 a person who likes to read a lot

介绍: a few years older than me

特点: bookworm, nose buried in some novel

对比: 她 from cover to cover, 我 comic books, quite impressive

读什么: classical literature, sci-fi, fantasy, crime -- well-written and thought-provoking

为什么喜欢: curious, knowledge-driven; relaxing

3.2.3.4 a person from whom others like to ask for advice

介绍: 10 years older than me, **go-to person**

特点:

1. knowledgeable, insightful about ...

2. not give generic answers(listen, share thoughtful suggestions), weigh the pros & cons

感受: admire -- down-to-earth/approachable, never feel judged or belittled

3.2.3.5 a person who has strong opinions

介绍: 10 years older than me, while.. opinionated, impossible to have a light-hearted conversation with her because she will turn every conversation into a heated debate

特征: strong opinions about how people should handle their personal lives -- straight up -- give unsolicited advice + 举例 1 switching jobs, vocal about + 举例 2 headstrong, dating or marriage advice

-- pretty shocking

感受: so stubborn so knowledgeable and confident in what she knows (It's almost like she feels she owes it to the world to share her wisdom)

3.2.3.6 a person you know who has chosen a career in the medical field

介绍: pediatrician, early 30s, swapped with her work, workaholic

选择该职业: love kids, had a way with kids, hard worker, dedicated & determined -- fit personality

感受: 1. proud, meaningful & rewarding; 2. worried, take a toll on health

3.2.3.7 Nephew

helped a family member

介绍: 8 or 9 years old, puzzle

过程: mission impossible, assemble a puzzle

怎么帮: logic, set the stage, got the hang of it, come alive

感受: happy, imparting knowledge, super hero

??? note

- 1 So, my little nephew was only 8 or 9 years old at that time, and he just got a new puzzle for his birthday. It was a big one, probably 200 pieces. So, obviously, it was a bit of a challenge for him.
- 2 My cousin and his wife were cooking in the kitchen, and they left me and my nephew in the living room. In the beginning, the little boy was trying to show off (显摆) by putting the puzzle together all by himself. But very soon, he realized that it was a “mission impossible” (不可能的任务). So, he turned to (求助于) me. I saw those puppy eyes (狗狗眼, 可怜巴巴的), I couldn't say NO, and I decided to give him a hand (帮一把) and teach him the logic behind assembling a puzzle.
- 3 In terms of how I helped him, basically, I helped him by teaching him the logic of doing a puzzle. I told him to always start from finding the corner pieces (四角的块块) and the edge pieces (四条边线上的块块). That would set the stage (铺垫前景) and make things much easier (让事情变得简单).
- 4 So, together, we picked out the four corner pieces first, and, bit by bit, we hunted down (找到) all the edge pieces, lining them up (连成一条直线) to frame the whole picture. My nephew got the hang of it (找到感觉, 上手) pretty quick, his little hands moving faster with each piece he placed. I was just there to tell him in the right direction from time to time. Then, piece by piece, the image started to come alive (呈现出来), and you could tell he was really proud of what he was achieving. By the time we put in the last piece, the whole picture looked awesome. It put a big smile on his smile (让他很开心).
- 5 He couldn't thank me enough (非常感谢). I felt quite happy that I helped him and taught him some new skills. I enjoyed the feeling of “imparting knowledge” (传输知识) and also being the super hero for my little nephew.

Fence 4

3.2.3.8 Contributor

对社会有贡献的人 a person who contributes to the society

介绍: 张桂梅

Today, I'd like to talk about **Zhang Guimei**, a truly inspiring individual who has made a remarkable impact on society. Zhang is a Chinese educator and the founder of the **Huaping High School for Girls**, which was the first free high school exclusively for girls in China. Her dedication to education, especially for underprivileged girls in rural areas, is nothing short of extraordinary.

Zhang Guimei has spent **over two decades** working tirelessly in the remote, mountainous regions of Yunnan province, where many families face economic difficulties. The area she chose to work in is incredibly impoverished, and girls there are often forced to drop out of school due to financial constraints or societal expectations. What's truly commendable about her work is that she not only focuses on providing free education but also **personally visits** families to persuade them to allow their daughters to attend school. In some cases, she even uses her own limited income to help pay for students' expenses.

Her efforts have **transformed countless lives**. Many of her students, who would have otherwise been confined to a life of hardship, have gone on to pursue higher education and secure stable careers. Zhang's selflessness has not only empowered individual girls but also uplifted entire families and communities.

What I find most inspiring about Zhang Guimei is her relentless **commitment to social equality**. Despite battling health issues, including cancer, she continues to devote her life to ensuring that girls from impoverished backgrounds have access to education. She firmly believes that education is the key to breaking the cycle of poverty, and her actions reflect that belief.

In recognition of her contributions, she has received numerous national awards, including being named one of the **"People's Role Models"** in China. However, I think what truly sets her apart is her genuine compassion and her willingness to sacrifice her own well-being for the greater good.

To sum up, Zhang Guimei is a true inspiration and a shining example of how one person's dedication and hard work can change society for the better. Her story reminds us that, with enough passion and determination, we can all make a positive difference in the world.

3.2.4 Stranger

3.2.4.1 一见还想再见的人（聚会上见到的人）

改编自 [a person met in a party](#).

介绍

I'd like to talk about a girl I met recently at my friend's dinner party. It was a gathering where I got the chance to meet a lot of new people, and this particular girl, who sat next to me, really stood out. We started talking almost immediately, and from the very first conversation, I could tell that we clicked. She was incredibly friendly, outgoing, and easy to talk to, and it felt like we were on the same wavelength. We just "got" each other, and the conversation flowed effortlessly.

What really intrigued me about her was that she was a professional traveler, and at the time, she had already traveled to over 40 different countries. She shared some of the most fascinating travel stories I'd ever heard. I could tell she was a great storyteller because I was completely captivated by everything she said. Her stories weren't just about the places she visited; they were filled with details about the people she met, the cultures she experienced, and the unique moments that made each trip memorable. I was absolutely engaged throughout our conversation, and I couldn't help but feel inspired by her adventures.

I really enjoyed talking to her because, first of all, I'm someone who loves traveling too, so we had that in common. I found her experiences both exciting and educational. She was also incredibly knowledgeable about the world in general, not just travel. It was clear that she had a deep understanding of different cultures, global issues, and various ways of life. This made her very charismatic, as she didn't just talk about herself, but also shared insights and interesting facts about the world.

What I appreciated the most about her, though, was how humble she was. Despite having traveled so much and experienced so many things, she didn't **come across as** pretentious or self-centered at all. It's common to meet people who have had extensive life experiences and for them to be a bit arrogant or always turn the conversation back to themselves. But she was the complete opposite. She was a great listener and was genuinely interested in what I had to say. I felt like she cared about my stories, too, and that made me admire her even more.

Since we only met that once, I've been really curious to get to know her better. I would love to hear more about her travels and learn from her perspectives on life, as she seemed so open-minded and wise. I also think she could teach me a lot about staying humble and grounded, despite achieving so much. So, I definitely hope to see her again and continue our conversation.

3.3 物品 items

3.3.1 Invention

有用的发明 useful invention

介绍: online payment, transform

举例: physical, time-consuming --> a few taps on phone

好处: convenience -- save time; secure; travel simple -- no hassle of currency exchange

??? note

- 1 Today, I'd like to talk about an invention that has become incredibly useful in my life: online payment systems. This technology has really transformed how I handle my finances and go about my daily activities. It includes various platforms like mobile banking apps, digital wallets, and payment systems like Apple Pay, Google Pay, and others.
- 2 I first started using online payments a few years ago, and it's made my life so much easier and more efficient. In the past, whenever I needed to pay bills or make purchases, I had to visit physical stores or banks, which was time-consuming, especially with long queues. Now, I can pay for almost anything with just a few taps on my phone. Whether it's paying for groceries, ordering food delivery, or booking a taxi, I can do it instantly without needing cash or even a physical card. Also, these systems are highly secure, with encryption and two-factor authentication, so I don't worry much about fraud.
- 3 Another thing I appreciate about online payments is how they make traveling simpler. I don't have to carry large amounts of cash when I'm in a foreign country. I can just use my phone to pay for things, which is really helpful and reduces the hassle of currency exchange.
- 4 Overall, I would say online payments have made my life more convenient, efficient, and secure. It's hard to imagine going back to the old days when I had to withdraw cash from ATMs or write checks. This invention has definitely become an indispensable part of my everyday life, and I believe it's something that more people will continue to rely on in the future.

Fence 5

3.3.2 Chinese zither

a traditional item, musical instrument

介绍: **Gu Zheng** = Chinese zither, long history, a long, wooden instrument with typically 21 strings, played by plucking the strings using one's fingers, often with the help of finger picks made of plastic or even tortoiseshell

I: bring me a sense of calm and relaxation. There's something almost meditative about running my fingers along the strings and producing those flowing, melodic sounds.

特点:

1. The instrument has a very distinct timbre, often described as both delicate and powerful. It can mimic the sound of flowing water, which is why it's commonly used in traditional Chinese music to evoke the beauty of nature.
2. deeply intertwined with Chinese culture and history, played during festivals, convey a wide range of emotions

(For me, mastering the Gu Zheng has been both a challenging and rewarding journey. It requires a lot of precision and control, especially when it comes to finger movements and using techniques like vibrato and glissando to express different moods. However, the effort is definitely worth it because, beyond the technical skills, it has helped me connect with my cultural heritage and develop a deeper appreciation for traditional Chinese music.)

总结: not just an instrument, a bridge that connects the past with the present and has enriched my life both musically and culturally

3.3.3 River

important river in your country

Yangtze River

特点: stretching over 6,300 kilometers, originates in the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau, flows eastward to East China Sea

重要性: holds significant historical, cultural, and economic importance

support the livelihoods of people, hydroelectric project -- the Three Gorges Dam, not just a natural wonder, but also a lifeline for millions of people

3.3.4 Journal

生活中离不开的东西

特点: not just jot down my thoughts; a tool for organizing my life, processing emotions, and even setting goals

1. having a conversation with myself, track my progress -- a form of self-therapy -- emotional benefits
2. invaluable for its practicality -- brainstorm new ideas, draft plans for upcoming events, or list things I need to accomplish -- transform vague thoughts into concrete actions

=> 对比 app, physical act of writing to be far more satisfying

总结: more than just a notebook: a companion that helps me stay grounded, creative, and reflective

3.3.5 Rule

不喜欢并想改变的规则

介绍: annual physical fitness test, mandate

原因:

1. unified fitness standard -- unrealistic, 举例 respiratory system
2. erodes students' quality of life and freedom, negative attitudes towards fitness

建议: individualized approach -- take fitness assessments that align with their personal health conditions or interests

结论: one-size-fits-all fitness test -- flexible and personalized approach

??? note

- 1 One rule that I strongly disagree with and would love to change is the annual physical fitness test that all students in Chinese universities are required to take, except for those with physical disabilities. This rule mandates that every student must meet a certain fitness standard in order to graduate, and I find it not only unreasonable but also counterproductive in many ways.
- 2 First of all, the idea of having a unified fitness standard for all students is simply unrealistic. Every individual's health condition and fitness level are different, and this rule fails to take that into account. For example, I myself am not particularly good at physical activities due to issues with my respiratory system. During physical exercises, I often experience significant pain and discomfort, especially when I engage in endurance activities like running. This makes it extremely hard for me to meet the required fitness benchmarks. On the other hand, there are students who are naturally more athletic and enthusiastic about sports, and for them, this test might even feel like a fun challenge. The idea of applying the same standard to everyone is, in my opinion, unscientific and unfair.
- 3 Furthermore, I believe that this physical fitness test erodes students' quality of life and freedom. University life should be about personal growth and exploration, but the pressure to meet an arbitrary fitness standard can lead to unnecessary stress. Instead of encouraging a healthy lifestyle, it often forces students into routines that may not be suitable for their individual needs. For students like me, who may have physical discomfort during strenuous activities, this rule can lead to feelings of inadequacy or even worsen their health problems. In the long run, it may also contribute to the development of negative attitudes towards fitness.
- 4 The rule also seems outdated in today's world, where universities are increasingly focusing on personalized education and promoting mental well-being alongside physical health. Instead of imposing a one-size-fits-all fitness test, I believe universities should take a more individualized approach. For instance, students could be given a choice to take fitness assessments that align with their personal health conditions or interests, such as offering alternative activities like yoga, swimming, or even mental health workshops for those who struggle with physical challenges.
- 5 In conclusion, I strongly feel that the fitness test rule in Chinese universities needs to be reformed or replaced with a more flexible and personalized approach that considers students' unique needs and capabilities. This would not only improve the students' physical and mental well-being but also allow them to focus more on their academic goals and overall development.

Fence 6

3.3.6 Cake

惊喜之事

介绍: birthday cake from my boyfriend, long-distance relationship

过程: beautifully decorated cake, handcrafted and customized, note,

感受: a surge of **happiness and appreciation**, one of the fondest memories

One of the most surprising and happiest moments I've experienced was when I received a **birthday cake from my boyfriend** at the time. This happened about two years ago, and I still remember it vividly because it was such an unexpected yet touching gesture.

To give you some context, my boyfriend and I were in a **long-distance relationship** back then. My birthday was approaching, and honestly, I wasn't expecting much since we couldn't be together in person. I had planned to just spend the day quietly with a few close friends. However, on the morning of my birthday, there was a knock on my door, and to my absolute surprise, there was a **beautifully decorated cake** waiting for me.

What made this surprise so special was the effort he put into it. It wasn't just any store-bought cake—it was **handcrafted and customized** with my favorite flavors and decorations. Apparently, he had coordinated with a local bakery near where I lived to make sure it was delivered on my birthday. The cake had a small note attached, expressing how much he missed me and wished he could be there to celebrate with me in person.

Receiving that cake was incredibly heartwarming and truly made my day. At that moment, I felt a surge of **happiness and appreciation** because I realized just how much he cared. It wasn't just the cake itself but the thoughtfulness behind the gesture that made it so memorable. To be honest, I was almost moved to tears because it was the last thing I was expecting.

Sadly, we eventually **broke up** due to the challenges of maintaining a long-distance relationship. However, looking back, that surprise is still one of the fondest memories I have. It not only made me happy but also reminded me that even small gestures can have a significant impact on someone's emotions.

3.3.7 Unachieved ambition

壮志未酬

介绍: securing an internship,

过程: polishing my CV, highlight, rejections, paradox

感受: look at the situation positively, enhance my skills

An ambition that I haven't yet achieved is **securing an internship** during my last summer holiday. I had been really eager to gain some practical work experience before graduating, so I set a goal for myself to find an internship in my field of study. However, despite my best efforts, things didn't quite go as planned.

To prepare for this, I spent a significant amount of time **polishing my CV** and writing tailored cover letters. I wanted to make sure that my application stood out, so I highlighted my academic achievements, extracurricular activities, and any relevant skills I had acquired. Once I felt confident with my resume, I started sending it out to various companies, hoping to land a position that would align with my career goals.

Unfortunately, despite applying to numerous companies and positions, I faced a lot of **rejections**. Some companies didn't respond at all, while others sent polite but **discouraging emails**, stating that they had decided to move forward with other candidates. It was quite disappointing, especially since I had invested so much time and effort into the application process. I even reached out to a few contacts and alumni for advice and potential referrals, but it still didn't work out.

One of the challenges I encountered was the fact that many companies preferred candidates with **prior experience**, which created a sort of paradox: I needed experience to get the internship, but I needed the internship to gain experience. This was definitely frustrating and made me question my own abilities at times.

Despite not achieving this goal, I've tried to look at the situation positively. I realized that setbacks like these are part of the journey and can be **valuable learning experiences**. I've learned to handle rejection better and have a clearer understanding of how competitive the job market can be. This experience has motivated me to **enhance my skills** even further, whether it's by taking online courses or participating in workshops, so that I can be better prepared for future opportunities.

I'm still determined to find an internship or some practical experience in my field before I graduate. I plan to **start my search earlier** next time, expand my network, and perhaps explore opportunities in smaller companies or startups where the competition might not be as fierce. I believe that if I stay persistent and continue to improve my skill set, I will eventually achieve this ambition.

3.3.8 Song

有趣的歌曲

Introduction

- Song: **PPAP** (*Pen-Pineapple-Apple-Pen*)
- Artist: **Pikotaro**
- Year: **2016**
- **Why interesting?:** **Viral sensation**, quirky, catchy

Song Description

- **Lyrics:** Repetitive, simple, humorous (e.g., "Pen, Apple, Pen")
- **Melody:** Catchy, simple beat
- **Dance:** Easy hand gestures, viral dance trend

Why It's Interesting

- **Silly and fun:** Absurdity, humor
- **Catchy:** Stuck in your head, repetitive
- **Cultural impact:** Viral, memes, social media

Personal Reaction

- **Fun:** Always makes me smile
- **Global trend:** Social media, internet culture
- **Unexpected popularity:** Simple but memorable

Conclusion

- **Final thoughts:** PPAP's charm, fun, and global influence make it unforgettable.

One song that I find particularly interesting is **PPAP**, which stands for *Pen-Pineapple-Apple-Pen*. It was released by a Japanese artist named **Pikotaro** in 2016 and became an unexpected viral sensation. The song itself is quite simple, both in terms of its lyrics and its melody, but it's the quirky and absurd nature of it that makes it so interesting.

The song's lyrics are ridiculously catchy and repetitive, consisting mostly of the words "Pen," "Pineapple," "Apple," and "Pen" being paired together in a way that doesn't make any logical sense. For example, Pikotaro sings "I have a pen, I have an apple, uh! Apple pen!" It sounds almost childish, but that's what makes it so entertaining. The repetitive nature of the song, combined with its simple but energetic beat, creates a sense of fun and lightheartedness that's hard not to smile at when you hear it.

What really grabbed people's attention, though, was the **dance** that goes along with the song. It's very simple, just a few hand gestures mimicking the action of holding a pen and an apple, but it became so iconic that people from all over the world started making their own versions of the dance, adding to its viral appeal. I think that's why it became such a huge hit globally, even though it's not a serious or traditional song. It has this kind of **silly charm** that makes it hard to forget.

Despite the song's simplicity, I find it interesting because of how **infectious** it is. You can hear it just once, and it'll stay stuck in your head for hours, which is a sign of a very successful and memorable song. Even though it's not a song with deep lyrics or complex composition, its charm comes from how it plays with absurdity and humor, and how it reflects the way people in today's world are drawn to quirky, offbeat content.

What I also find fascinating about **PPAP** is how it became a **cultural phenomenon**. The song was widely shared on social media and even appeared on various TV shows and in memes. It became a symbol of internet culture, and even though Pikotaro is a relatively unknown artist, he gained worldwide recognition because of it. So, for me, **PPAP** is a great example of how modern technology and social media can turn something unexpected into a global trend.

In conclusion, I find **PPAP** interesting not just because of the catchy tune and the silly dance, but because it represents a unique moment in pop culture where something simple, quirky, and unexpected can capture the attention of millions and go viral. It's a fun song that always makes me smile whenever I hear it.

3.3.9 Class

印象深刻的课程

One course that really impressed me was a **creative writing course** I took last year. It was offered by my university as part of an elective program, and I decided to enroll because I've always been interested in writing, but I felt I lacked the skills to express myself creatively. The course lasted for one semester and was taught by an experienced novelist who had published several books. From the first class, I was hooked.

The course was structured in a way that encouraged not just learning about writing techniques but also **developing our own unique style**. We started with the basics—things like character development, plot structure, and writing dialogue—but gradually, the focus shifted to more advanced topics, like **creating tension, developing themes, and building emotional depth** in stories. What impressed me most was the balance between theory and practice. We were required to write short stories every week and submit them for feedback. I was amazed by how much I learned just through the writing exercises and peer reviews.

One aspect of the course that stood out was the **atmosphere of encouragement** and support. Our professor was extremely approachable and always made sure to give constructive feedback. Rather than criticizing our work, she would point out areas for improvement and offer suggestions for making our writing more engaging. The class was also very interactive, and we often had group discussions where we would read each other's

work aloud and give feedback. This **collaborative environment** helped me see writing from different perspectives and learn from my peers.

Another thing that left a lasting impression on me was how the course helped me understand the **importance of storytelling techniques** in conveying emotions and making characters more relatable. I remember a specific assignment where we had to write a short story based on an image, and this exercise really opened my eyes to how powerful storytelling can be when you combine imagery and emotion effectively.

By the end of the course, I felt much more confident in my writing abilities. I had developed a deeper understanding of the craft and also discovered that I have a passion for writing short fiction. The course not only improved my writing skills but also gave me the motivation to keep writing outside of class, and I even started working on my own short story collection.

What really impressed me was how much I grew in such a short period of time. The course was challenging, but it was also incredibly rewarding, and I'll definitely take what I learned with me as I continue to pursue writing.

3.3.10 Clothes

别人给你的衣服

One item of clothing that I received as a gift and have cherished for years is a handmade sweater from my grandma. She gave it to me as a birthday present several years ago, and it holds a lot of sentimental value for me.

The sweater is really special not just because it's a gift from my grandma, but also because she made it herself. My grandma has been knitting for as long as I can remember, and she's always crafted beautiful, intricate pieces for her family. When I opened the package and saw the sweater, I was immediately struck by the craftsmanship. It's made of soft wool, and the pattern is quite unique – a combination of subtle colors and geometric shapes that give it a cozy yet stylish look. The fit was perfect at the time, and it was incredibly comfortable to wear, which made it even more special.

What makes this sweater even more meaningful is the thought and time my grandma put into making it. She spent weeks working on it, knitting each section carefully, and I know that she poured a lot of love and attention into every stitch. Every time I wore it, I felt a deep connection to her and a sense of warmth, both physically and emotionally.

However, now that I've grown up, I've outgrown the sweater. It no longer fits me as it once did, which is a bit bittersweet. Still, I can't bring myself to part with it because it holds so many memories. Even though I can't wear it anymore, I keep it tucked away in my wardrobe as a reminder of my grandma's affection and the special bond we share. Sometimes, when I'm feeling nostalgic, I take it out just to feel close to her.

Overall, this handmade sweater is one of the most meaningful gifts I've ever received. It's not just about the sweater itself, but the love, effort, and thought behind it. That's why it will always hold a special place in my heart, even if I can no longer wear it.

3.3.11 Toy

童年玩具

介绍: a dragon doll

One toy I absolutely loved as a child was a dragon doll. I can still remember how excited I was when I first got it, as I had always been fascinated by dragons ever since I was little. I think my love for dragons started from reading fairy tales and watching animated movies where these mythical creatures were portrayed as **powerful and majestic beings**. So, when I got the dragon doll, it felt like I finally had my own little piece of the fantasy world.

The dragon doll itself was quite special. It was a vibrant green color, with golden wings that shimmered when the light hit them. The body was **soft and plush**, but the wings and tail had a slightly stiffer texture, which made them stand out. It also had bright, sparkling eyes that gave it a very lifelike appearance, almost as though it could come to life at any moment. I used to spend hours playing with it, imagining all sorts of adventures where my dragon would fly through the skies and protect me from imaginary villains (坏人) .

What made this toy even more memorable for me was the sense of wonder and creativity it sparked. I didn't just play with it as a regular doll. I created entire worlds and stories around it, and it became a companion during many of my childhood games. It helped me develop my imagination and storytelling skills, as I would invent elaborate scenarios and scenarios involving my dragon. It also made me feel like I could escape into a fantasy realm whenever I wanted, which was something I really valued as a child.

Though I've grown up now and no longer play with the doll, I still keep it tucked away in a box as a reminder of my childhood and the magical adventures I had with it. It's not just a toy to me anymore; it's a symbol of the creativity and imagination that shaped a lot of my early years. It helped me dream big and created a sense of magic in my everyday life, which is something I will always treasure.

3.3.12 Gift

送朋友的礼物

介绍: a DIY wooden assembly model

If I were to buy a gift for my friend Anna, I would choose a DIY wooden assembly model, specifically one that's designed to look like a chocolate factory. Anna has always been someone who loves DIY projects and is incredibly **crafty**, so I think this would be the perfect gift for her. She enjoys hands-on activities that allow her to build or create something from scratch, and this model would definitely **capture her interest**.

The chocolate factory model is a unique and intricate design. It's made from high-quality wood, and the pieces are laser-cut, which makes it very precise and easy to assemble. Once she completes the assembly, the model actually has **moving parts**, which is what I think will make it really exciting for her. The most interesting feature of the model is that it has marbles, served as chocolate beans, that roll through the structure, mimicking the process of chocolate being made in a factory. There are little gears and mechanisms that make the marbles move along a track, and when it's all put together, the factory **comes to life in a fun and charming way**.

I think Anna would absolutely love this gift for several reasons. First, she enjoys **working with her hands**, so assembling this model would be a fun challenge for her. The fact that it's a chocolate factory theme would also appeal to her because she has a **sweet tooth**, and the idea of creating something that's related to chocolate is quite fitting. Secondly, I know that she appreciates gifts that are **thoughtful and personalized**, and this one would show that I understand her hobbies and interests.

Moreover, this model would serve as both a **relaxing activity** and a **decorative** piece once it's completed. It's the kind of thing that she could proudly **display** on her shelf, and every time she looks at it, she'd remember the fun process of building it. I can imagine her spending hours working on it, and I'm sure she'd enjoy every step of the journey, from the assembly to watching the marbles roll.

Overall, I think a DIY wooden chocolate factory assembly model would be a wonderful gift for Anna. It's not only creative and fun, but it also aligns perfectly with her interests. I'm sure she'd appreciate the thoughtfulness behind it and enjoy the experience of building it.

3.4 地点 Places

3.4.1 Cultural place

a cultural place you would like to learn the culture there



So, today I'd like to talk about this 100-year-old library in my city.

So, the library is located in the heart of the city (市中心) . It definitely stands out from the surrounding modern buildings (从别的当代建筑里脱颖而出) due to its unique look. It looks like a typical traditional Chinese building, you know, pagoda-like structure (宝塔似的结构) , multi-tiered roof (多层屋顶) covered in green-glazed tiles (绿色琉璃瓦覆盖) . The façade (立面) is strikingly beautiful (美到震撼) and can transport you back in time (把你带回过去的年代) immediately.

Regarding how this place is related to culture, well first, this building itself is part of the history and culture of my city as it's 100 years old. It was the first library in my city, and now it is still the city library, but more multifunctional (多功能的) . And then, inside, it's a world of culture and education. The library is with an ocean of books (书的海洋) . The reading rooms are always filled with people, old and young, lost in books (迷失在书中) . In addition to that, there's a media room (多媒体室) where you can access all kinds of digital resources, like, movies, TV series, documentaries, etc.

On the second floor, there's a lively kids' section (儿童区) filled with colorful children's books and educational toys. Even though I'm not a parent yet, still I feel happy for those parents who can have an option to bring their kids to the library and soak up some culture (吸收文化) .

That's why I absolutely adore this library. It feels like a bridge connecting the past with the present (连接过去与现在的桥梁) . I feel grateful that we have this place in our city where we can unwind (放松) and disconnect from the world (与世界脱节, 放松) .

3.4.2 Room

someone else's room you enjoying spending time in



So, I remember years ago when I first visited my friend's bedroom, I was really impressed by the space. It's not just a bedroom where you sleep; it feels more like a multi-functional personal space (感觉更像是一个多功能空间). First of all, the room is quite spacious (空间很大的), at least 20 square meters, so my friend has divided it into different areas, each with its own function.

Right by the floor-to-ceiling window (落地窗), there's this big, comfy bed. In the morning, when the sun pours in (当阳光洒进来), the whole bed and room are bathed in this beautiful golden light (整个床、房间都沐浴在金光里). It feels so cozy and warm, and it just naturally lifts your mood (提升你的情绪).

There's also a little reading nook (读书角) in her room. There's a gorgeous fabric armchair (布艺的单人沙发) with a striped cushion (条纹的靠垫), yes I remember all the details as I love her room décor (房间装饰风格)! And right next to the armchair, there's a whole wall of bookshelves (一整墙的书架). So, you can just grab a book, sit in the armchair, and get lost in a good read (迷失在一本好书里).

In another corner, there's a desk and chair where you can study or watch a movie on a laptop. My friend's really into music, so she has several guitars mounted on the wall (把吉他镶在墙上) beside the desk. They look super cool and add to the room's vibe (增加了房间的风格). Sometimes, after a long day, she'll sit there and play her guitar, and it just makes the room feel so peaceful.

I honestly love hanging out in her room way more than in mine. My room is small and a bit cramped (狭窄的, 憋屈的), so there's not much space to move around. It can even feel awkward at times because there's nothing much to do. But in her room, it's a different story (就不同了). We can play guitar and sing, watch movies together, read books, or just chat and relax in the sunlight. It feels so much better when you've got more space to enjoy life, you know? I'm so jealousy! Haha!

3.4.3 Mountain

安静的地方, 能看到野生动物的地方

Ok, so today I'd like to talk about a place in my city where I can see some wildlife. It's a mountainous area on the outskirts of my city called Laohe Shan. I first went there a few years ago when I was feeling pretty stressed with school/ work and just needed to clear my head (清空大脑). Since then, it's kind of become my go-to spot (首选地点) whenever I need a break from the hustle and bustle of daily life (需要从日常的喧嚣与繁忙之中抽空休息一下).

Xiang Shan is not a well-known tourist destination (不是一个知名的旅游地点), which is part of what makes it so special. It's peaceful, with hardly any tourists or even locals during the week. The reason I love going to this place is the sense of tranquility (宁静之感) it gives me. It's the perfect spot for unwinding and recharging (放松与充电).

In terms of wildlife, there's a lot to see. You can find/ spot (发现) all sorts of birds, from colorful songbirds (鸣禽) to bigger ones like owls and hawks (猫头鹰和山鹰). One time, I even saw a wild squirrel running across the trail (横穿小路), which was a nice surprise. There are also tons of insects, especially butterflies in the spring and summer. The area is full of plant life too, with lots of different types of trees and wildflowers (野花).

The best part for me is just how connected I feel to nature when I'm there. I love sitting under the shade of a tree (坐在树荫下), watching the birds or even reading a good book. Sometimes, I'll just close my eyes and take in (感受、吸收) the sounds of the forest; it's incredibly calming. I love this place. Thank you!

3.4.4 Park

公园

Ok, so, today I want to talk about our new dog park (狗狗公园) in the city.

So, this dog park, is located right in the heart of the city (在城市的中心) . It was just built a few months ago, and it's been a hit (潮流) from day one (从第一天起) . It's become a local sensation (当地的潮流) for not just dog owners (狗主人) , but also dog lovers (爱狗人士) . I walk my dog (遛狗) in that park almost on a daily basis as it's just a stone's throw away (很近) from my home.

Moving on to how I feel about it, well, first off, I feel happy for all the dog owners (狗主人) like me. I can't tell you how much this dog park has changed my life. There're so many things we can do in this park. We can walk our dogs on the winding walking trails (蜿蜒的步行小路) . Or we can just let them run around in the open areas (开场地带) . And there are benches and picnic spots (长椅长凳和野餐地点) for the owners, so it's not just fun for the dogs. It's a nice hangout spot (聚点) for us too.

And then, I love the impacts of this new park. It brings dog owners together (把人带到一起) , creating a sense of community. It's like this little social hub where people meet, chat, and share their dog-raising experiences (分享养狗经验) . It's also beneficial for people who don't like dogs or even are afraid of dogs, because this dog park keeps dogs off the streets (让狗狗远离大街) , giving those dogs, especially bigger ones, a specific place to be.

So, yeh, that's the park. Thank you for your time.

3.4.5 House

理想房屋

Ok, my ideal house would be located in a coastal city where I can have access to the beach, like, Qingdao, or Sanya, in China. But I wouldn't want it to be right next to the beach as it'd be too humid (潮湿的) to live there.

I would like to have the house located in the woods (树林里) , surrounded by tall and green trees. I love vegetation (植被) . All the greenery can clean the air, and freshen up the environment. And, in terms of the look of the house, I don't really care about the façade (外立面) , so it doesn't have to be super fancy-looking (看起来华丽丽的样子) . I actually enjoy a cozy cottage look (温馨度假小屋风) , so I would want this house to have a cottage style to it. For me the most important thing is what it features inside (里面有什么特点) .

First, I love natural light, so I would want each room to be filled with sunlight. Each room needs to have big floor-to-ceiling windows (落地窗) to let the sun get in. And then, since I'm a foodie (吃货) and love cooking, I would like to have an open-concept kitchen (开放式概念的厨房) , it would be an all-white kitchen (全白厨房) , a little bit vintage style (有一点小复古风) , and there would be a big island (岛台) in the middle, with a beautiful marble countertop (大理石台面) . It would be a place where all my family members could cook together and enjoy nice food together.

Oh, another thing (还有一件事儿) , I wish I could (我很希望) have is a home library (家庭图书馆) where I can put tons of books on the book shelves, you know, just like those you see in the movies. I might not read all of them, but they definitely look pretty cool. I would have a reading corner/nook in the room with a beautiful yellow fabric armchair and a reading lamp. I would spend

a lot of time snuggling up (蜷缩) with a good book in that chair, reading and enjoying my time alone.

What's more, I would love to have a big back yard where I could grow some plants and flowers, and the whole back yard would be filled with a sweet scent/fragrance (芳香) of different flowers in spring time.

So yeh, I would love to live in a nice place like what I've just described. It would be in a great location and everything would be designed to my liking (按照我的喜好). It would be my sanctuary/ my retreat (我的内心疗养基地) where I could enjoy the tranquility in life and quality time with my family.

3.4.6 City

an interesting city



Today, I'd like to talk about an **interesting city** that I've had the pleasure of visiting — **Shanghai**, which is located on the eastern coast of China. Shanghai is not only one of the largest cities in the world but also one of the most vibrant and diverse. It seamlessly blends **traditional Chinese culture** with modern, cutting-edge development, making it a truly fascinating place to explore.

One of the things that immediately struck me about Shanghai is its iconic **skyline**, especially the area known as the **Bund**. On one side, you have historic colonial-era buildings, and on the other, the futuristic skyscrapers of **Pudong**, like the **Oriental Pearl Tower** and the **Shanghai Tower**, which is one of the tallest buildings in the world. At night, the cityscape lights up with colorful displays, creating a breathtaking view that's almost *surreal*.

What I find most interesting about Shanghai is its unique blend of **old and new**. For instance, you can visit the ancient **Yu Garden**, which dates back to the Ming Dynasty, and within minutes, you can find yourself in the bustling, high-tech shopping district of **Nanjing Road**. It's a city where tradition and modernity coexist harmoniously, offering a rich cultural experience.

Another thing I absolutely love about Shanghai is its **diverse food scene**. Whether you're sampling street food like the famous **xiaolongbao**, which are juicy soup dumplings, or dining at upscale restaurants, there's something for every *palate*. The city is also known for its vibrant nightlife, with trendy bars and rooftop lounges that offer stunning views of the cityscape.

Beyond its sights and cuisine, what makes Shanghai truly captivating is its **dynamic energy**. The city never seems to sleep, and there's always something happening, whether it's a cultural festival, an art exhibition, or a live music performance. It's a place that attracts people from all over the world, making it a melting pot of different cultures and ideas.

Personally, I find Shanghai inspiring because it's constantly evolving while still preserving its rich cultural heritage. It's a city that reflects China's rapid modernization but also honors its past. It's a place that leaves a lasting impression and makes you want to return again and again. For anyone looking to experience the best of what a modern metropolis can offer, Shanghai is definitely a must-visit destination.

3.5 经历 Experiences

3.5.1 Important things

用手机做重要的事情

介绍: an offline academic lecture, ran out of battery

过程: salvage the situation, jot down key points,

感受: relief,

I'd like to talk about a time when I used my smartphone to do something really important. This happened just a few months ago during an online academic lecture. It was an important session for one of my courses, and I was relying on my laptop to take notes. But, unfortunately, halfway through the lecture, my laptop suddenly ran out of battery. I hadn't realized it was so low, and I didn't have my charger with me at that moment.

At first, I panicked because I didn't want to miss any critical information from the lecture. It was a session led by a guest lecturer, so I knew it wasn't something that would be easily repeated. That's when I decided to use my smartphone to salvage the situation. I quickly joined the lecture from my phone and, without wasting any time, switched to using the notes app to jot down key points.

What really surprised me was how effective my phone turned out to be for taking notes. Of course, the screen was much smaller than my laptop's, but the phone's keyboard was responsive, and I was able to type relatively quickly. I even found it convenient to use voice typing for some parts, which allowed me to capture information even faster. Additionally, I could switch between apps seamlessly to check references and details the lecturer mentioned during the talk.

In the end, I managed to take detailed notes without missing much of the lecture, which was a huge relief. I was actually proud of myself for staying calm and adapting to the situation. I realized that my phone is more than just a device for communication or entertainment; it's a powerful tool that can be incredibly useful in unexpected situations.

After that experience, I made it a habit to keep my phone fully charged during important events, and I've even started using it more often for taking notes or accessing online resources when I'm on the go. It was a lesson in being resourceful and making the most of what I had at the moment. It might have been a small incident, but it definitely left a lasting impression on how versatile smartphones can be for academic purposes.

3.5.2 Eating

套题: **和朋友去过的有趣的地方** (和朋友吃墨西哥菜); 别人做的特殊的一餐; 嘈杂之地; 周围人制造噪音

餐厅特征: Mexican place, newly opened, had never been to, don't know what to expect

吃了什么: tacos, burritos, fajita -- unusual -- tortillas 对比 rice -- surprising delicious, mouth-watering

感受: filling -- stomach was about to explode, music & atmosphere -- pretty unique

套题: **有趣地方的经历**

活动: dinner with strangers -- self-explanatory

时间: 2 years ago

特点: hole-in-the-wall, Japanese food(Sashimi, nigiris, rolls) -- incredible, scrumptious

点题 (interesting) : bizarre idea, gradually, warm up & got more relaxed

感受: push me out of the comfort zone, life experiences(eye-opening),
conversations(informative and inspiring) , open my mind

套题: 别人给你做的特殊的一餐

who: ex-boyfriend -- romantic gesture

how: came up with the idea of cooking Mexican food, did online search, recipe

what: tacos, burritos & Fajita; corn tortillas

feeling: enjoy, had a great time, beyond memory(特别难忘)

3.5.3 Breakup

3.5.3.1 困难决定终成功 make a difficult decision but have good results

something changed your life in good ways

turning point

Last year, I made a very hard decision of breaking up with (提分手) my boyfriend. Now he's my ex-boyfriend, and, come to think of it, even though it was really hard, still it was the right thing to do/ it was a good call (是正确的选择) .

We had been together for about three years, and during that period of time, I was in two minds (犹豫, 纠结) all the time. On one hand, he was funny and charming. He could really make me laugh. I loved his sense of humour (我喜欢他的幽默感) and his charisma. On the other hand, he was a control freak. He always wanted me to listen to him, and say yes to him. He really put a lot of pressure on me. I mean, I'm an independent woman with an independent mind, so I couldn't just blindly follow his commands (跟随他的指令) , like a slave. He was very bossy (霸道的) and macho (大男子主义的) .

I was torn between (很纠结) leaving and staying. I didn't want to rush into the decision (匆忙做决定) , so I waited long enough, because I wanted to give it a chance. After being together for three years, I was very unhappy, so I finally made up my mind (彻底下决定) to leave him. I told him about my decision. It wasn't easy for me. I was crying and having a meltdown when I saw him for the last time. And he refused to take it. We were not on the same page at all (意见不一致, 他不想分手) .

After the breakup, in the beginning, he was still trying to influence my decision by constantly calling me and trying to see me. It was extremely difficult for me to not pick up the phone. But I pulled myself together (振作起来) . I didn't give him any chances to talk to me. And eventually, after 6 months, he gave up.

I'm now feeling so much better without him. Everything is water under the bridge (事情都过去了) . Even though I still miss him sometimes, I know it will all be over one day. Time will heal everything (时间会治愈一切) . It was a tough decision to make, but it was the right thing to do.

3.5.3.2 ask for opinion 征求意见

介绍: was torn about

funny, charming but controlling and overly domineering

建议: tough suggestion, right call, cut off all communication

感受: grateful, lighter and happier

I'd like to talk about a time when one of my close friends came to me for advice about a difficult decision she was facing. It happened last year when she was really struggling in her relationship and was torn about whether to break up with her boyfriend or not. She asked me for my honest opinion, and after hearing her out, I suggested that she end the relationship.

My friend had been with her boyfriend for nearly three years, but during that time, she often felt conflicted. On one hand, she told me he was funny, charming, and could always make her laugh. She appreciated his sense of humor and charisma, which had initially drawn her to him. But on the other hand, she described him as controlling and overly domineering. He constantly wanted things to go his way and pressured her to always agree with him. It was clear that he was quite bossy and had a very macho attitude.

As my friend shared all this with me, she was obviously distressed. She explained that she felt suffocated in the relationship because he expected her to follow his commands, which didn't align with her independent nature. I could see how this was affecting her mental and emotional well-being. She was hesitant about making a decision because they had been together for so long, and she felt that ending things might be too drastic. But at the same time, she was unhappy and didn't feel like she could truly be herself around him.

After listening to her, I told her that if the relationship was making her miserable, it was probably better for her to walk away. I reminded her that staying in a relationship out of fear of being alone is never a good reason. She needed to prioritize her own happiness and mental health. Although it was a tough suggestion to make, I believed it was the right call.

In the end, she decided to take my advice and broke up with him. The breakup was really hard on her at first because her ex-boyfriend kept trying to reach out, calling her and asking to meet. I remember she had a hard time resisting the urge to answer his calls, but she stayed strong and eventually cut off all communication. After several months, he finally stopped contacting her, and she began to heal.

Now, she often tells me how grateful she is for my advice. She feels much lighter and happier without the constant stress he brought into her life. While it wasn't easy for her to go through, she now realizes it was the right thing to do. Seeing her in a much better place now confirms that sometimes, giving difficult advice is necessary, even if it's hard for someone to hear.

3.5.4 Repair

介绍: kitchen tap

过程: tutorial videos, worn-out washer, unscrewed the tap handle

感受: thrilled, accomplishment

"I'd like to talk about a time when the **kitchen tap** in our home broke, and I managed to fix it on my own. It wasn't anything too complicated, but it was definitely a challenge at first, especially since I had never attempted any plumbing repairs before.

One day, while I was washing dishes, I noticed that the tap was leaking, and water kept dripping even after turning it off completely. This was not only wasteful but also pretty annoying, so I decided to take matters into my own hands. At first, I thought about asking my parents to call a plumber, but then I figured it would be a good learning experience to try and fix it myself.

The first thing I did was watch a couple of **tutorial videos** online to understand the basics of how a tap works and what might be causing the issue. After some research, I realized that the problem was most likely a **worn-out washer** inside the tap. Luckily, we had a set of basic tools and some spare washers at home.

I turned off the water supply and carefully unscrewed the tap handle. I was a bit nervous at first, worried that I might make the problem worse, but I managed to remove the faulty washer and replace it with a new one. Once I put everything back together and turned on the water supply again, I was thrilled to see that the leak had stopped!

Honestly, fixing the tap gave me a real sense of accomplishment. It wasn't just about saving the cost of hiring a professional, but also about gaining the confidence to handle small repairs around the house. Plus, it felt good to be able to contribute to maintaining our home, especially since I'm usually not very handy with tools.

In conclusion, what started as a minor household inconvenience turned into a valuable learning experience. It made me realize that with the right resources and a bit of patience, even a teenager like me can handle simple repairs.

3.5.5 Study method

3.5.5.1 提高注意力 something helps you concentrate on study

介绍: Pomodoro Technique, 25-minute intervals

without breaks, wander -- manageable, recharge mentally

1. high level of focus, feeling burnt out
2. motivated

" I'd like to talk about a **technique** that has really helped me stay focused during my studies, and that's using the **Pomodoro Technique**. It might sound simple, but it has had a huge impact on my productivity. Essentially, this method involves breaking down my study time into **25-minute intervals**, known as 'Pomodoros', followed by a short 5-minute break. After four cycles, I take a longer break, usually around 15 to 20 minutes.

I discovered this technique a couple of years ago when I was struggling to stay concentrated while preparing for a major exam. I noticed that whenever I tried to study for long hours without breaks, my mind would start wandering, and I would become easily distracted. However, once I started using the Pomodoro Technique, it was like a game-changer for me. Knowing that I only have to focus for 25 minutes at a time makes the task seem more manageable, and the short breaks help me recharge mentally.

What I find particularly effective about this method is that it helps me maintain a **high level of focus** during those short bursts of time. I often turn off my phone and eliminate any distractions during each session. Surprisingly, I can accomplish much more in those concentrated intervals than when I try to study for hours on end without a clear structure. The breaks also prevent me from feeling burnt out, allowing me to sustain my energy levels throughout the day.

Besides, the Pomodoro Technique helps me stay motivated because it adds a sense of urgency. I try to challenge myself to complete a specific task before the timer runs out, which keeps me engaged. Additionally, after a few cycles, I reward myself with something small, like a cup of coffee or some snacks, which helps me stay refreshed and ready to continue.

In conclusion, this simple yet effective technique has greatly improved my ability to concentrate and manage my time efficiently. It's definitely something I would recommend to anyone struggling to stay focused, whether it's for studying or even working on other projects.

3.5.5.2 节约时间的方法 a way/change that helps you save a lot of time

Introduction (General introduction of the topic)

- Briefly mention what you're going to talk about.
- *"I'd like to talk about a time-management method called the Pomodoro Technique that has really helped me save a lot of time and work more efficiently."*

Describe the technique (Explain how it works)

- Introduce the Pomodoro Technique.
- *"The Pomodoro Technique involves working in short bursts of 25 minutes, followed by a 5-minute break. After completing four of these 25-minute sessions, you take a longer break, usually 15-30 minutes."*

When and why you started using it (Context and personal experience)

- *"I first came across the Pomodoro Technique during my time at university when I was struggling with procrastination and managing my study time effectively."*

How it helped you save time (Impact and benefits)

- *"Before I started using it, I would often find myself procrastinating or working for long hours without much progress. The Pomodoro Technique changed that by helping me stay focused and avoid distractions."*

Specific examples or outcomes (Real-life application)

- *"For instance, when I used to study for exams, I would often lose track of time. But with Pomodoro, I stay focused for 25 minutes, and I always feel more productive at the end of each session."*

Why it's effective for you (Reason for success)

- *"The short bursts of focused work make it easier to tackle tasks without feeling overwhelmed, and the breaks prevent burnout. This balance of work and rest has made me much more efficient with my time."*

Conclusion (Wrap up your response)

- *"Overall, I've found that the Pomodoro Technique has not only saved me time, but it has also improved the quality of my work and helped me manage my tasks more effectively."*

One change that has significantly helped me save time and increase my productivity is using the Pomodoro Technique. This is a time-management method that involves working in focused bursts of 25 minutes, followed by a 5-minute break. After completing four 'Pomodoros', you take a longer break of 15-30 minutes. I first came across the Pomodoro Technique during university when I was struggling to balance studying with other commitments.

Before I started using it, I would often find myself procrastinating or working inefficiently for long hours without getting much done. The Pomodoro Technique has completely transformed the way I approach tasks. It breaks down the work into manageable chunks, so I never feel overwhelmed, and the short breaks allow me to recharge before diving back into the task.

One of the major advantages is that it helps me stay highly focused. Knowing that I only need to work for a short, set period means that I'm less likely to get distracted or lose motivation. I find that I'm able to maintain a higher level of concentration compared to when I try to work for several hours straight. Over time, I've found that I'm able to complete tasks much faster, without compromising the quality of my work.

In addition, the Pomodoro Technique also encourages me to be more mindful about how I use my time. Because I have these short breaks, I've become more conscious of my productivity patterns and can adjust my workflow if I feel I'm not being as efficient as I could be. Overall, adopting the Pomodoro Technique has saved me a lot of time by helping me work more effectively, stay organized, and reduce burnout.

3.5.6 Countryside

去过的乡村

安静的地方

介绍: St. Petersburg, Pavlovsk

I'd like to talk about a trip I once took to the countryside outside of St. Petersburg, Russia. It was during the summer a few years ago when I had the opportunity to visit this serene and picturesque area. As you might know, the outskirts of St. Petersburg are filled with lush green landscapes, dense forests, and a series of tranquil lakes, which are especially beautiful in the warmer months.

The place I visited was a small village called Pavlovsk, about an hour's drive from the city. It's famous for its stunning imperial park and palace, which were once the summer residence of the Russian Tsars. The village itself had an old-world charm, with quaint wooden houses, gardens bursting with colorful flowers, and narrow, winding roads. It was such a refreshing change from the busy and bustling city life of St. Petersburg.

What struck me most about the countryside there was how peaceful and quiet it was. As I walked along the park's shaded paths, I could hear nothing but the rustle of leaves and birds chirping. The air was incredibly fresh, and the scent of pine trees and wildflowers was everywhere. I remember taking a boat ride on the park's lake, surrounded by tall birch trees reflected in the calm, mirror-like water. It felt like I was stepping back in time to a simpler, more relaxed era.

I also had the chance to interact with some of the locals, who were warm and welcoming. They even invited me to try some traditional Russian dishes, like blini and borscht, made from fresh ingredients grown in their gardens. This experience made the trip even more memorable because it gave me a glimpse into their way of life, which is so deeply connected to nature.

Overall, visiting the countryside near St. Petersburg was a truly unforgettable experience. It gave me a much-needed break from the city's fast-paced environment and allowed me to immerse myself in the natural beauty and history of the area. I would love to go back one day, especially in autumn when the leaves change color, as I imagine it would be even more breathtaking.

3.5.7 Traffic jam

traffic jam

I'd like to talk about a time when I was stuck in a traffic jam, but it wasn't the typical car traffic you might imagine. This happened on my university campus, and it involved electric bikes rather than cars. Since I'm a student, I commute to different classes on my electric bike every day because our campus is quite large. There's a long break between classes, and during this time, many students, including myself, need to move between buildings. Unfortunately, this often leads to a chaotic situation.

The main issue is that there's only one main road connecting the east and west sides of the campus, and it's the shortest route. Taking any other path would be three times longer, so naturally, everyone prefers using this route. One day, I had a class in a building on the west side, and I had just finished a class in the east. The teacher delayed the class for 5 minutes, so as soon as the class was over, I jumped on my bike and headed towards the other building.

However, as soon as I reached the main road, I found myself stuck in a bike traffic jam. There were dozens, if not hundreds, of students on electric bikes, all trying to use the same narrow path at the same time. The university guard was trying to manage the flow, but many students were impatient and didn't listen to his instructions. This only made the situation worse, as everyone was trying to squeeze through, making the road even more congested.

I was frustrated because I knew I was running late. At one point, we were all at a standstill, unable to move forward or backward. When the traffic finally started moving again, I still had to struggle to find a parking spot near my class building. Most of the parking spaces were already full, so I ended up circling around, wasting even more time. In the end, I arrived five minutes late for my class, which was quite embarrassing.

Looking back, it was a stressful experience, but it also taught me to plan my commute better during those peak times. Now, if I know I have back-to-back classes in different buildings, I try to leave a bit earlier to avoid getting stuck in that bike traffic jam. It's definitely one of those unique challenges of being a student on a large campus.

3.5.8 Advice about study

学习中的积极建议

I'd like to share an experience from my senior high school years when my Chinese teacher gave me some invaluable advice that really helped me with my studies. At that time, I was struggling a lot with Chinese. No matter how hard I tried, my grades just weren't improving. It was incredibly frustrating because I was putting in so much effort, yet I wasn't seeing the results I hoped for.

One day, after receiving another disappointing test score, I stayed behind after class to talk to my Chinese teacher. She had noticed that I was feeling discouraged, so she invited me to have a conversation. I explained how I was constantly trying to memorize long passages, but somehow, my comprehension and exam scores weren't getting any better.

She listened patiently and then gave me some really thoughtful advice that completely changed my approach. She told me that instead of focusing on rote memorization, I should focus more on understanding the themes, context, and literary techniques used in the texts. She encouraged me to read more critically, to think about the deeper meanings behind the passages, and to connect them with real-life experiences or historical contexts. She even suggested keeping a reading journal where I could write down my reflections after reading each text.

At first, I was a bit skeptical because I had always relied on memorization to get through exams. But I decided to give her method a try. I started analyzing the texts more thoughtfully, trying to grasp the author's intention and the cultural background. I also began writing summaries in my own words and jotting down any insights I had while reading.

Gradually, I started to see a change. Not only did my grades improve, but I also found that I enjoyed studying Chinese literature much more. The advice my teacher gave me made me realize that true learning is about understanding, not just memorizing. This shift in mindset not only helped me in Chinese but also in other subjects as well, where I began applying the same principles.

In the end, that conversation with my Chinese teacher was a turning point for me. It taught me that sometimes, it's not about working harder but about working smarter. I'm really grateful for her advice because it helped me regain my confidence in my studies and changed my perspective on learning. Her positive encouragement and practical guidance are something I still carry with me today.

3.5.9 Busy time

一次非常忙碌的经历

I'd like to talk about a time when I was extremely busy, which happened during the exams week in college last semester. It was one of the most stressful periods I've ever experienced because I had to prepare for nine exams, and I only had a week to do it. To be honest, I got myself into that situation because I had procrastinated on my review schedule and left everything until the last minute.

At the start of that week, I realized how much I needed to catch up on. Each subject required intensive preparation, and the topics were quite challenging. I was overwhelmed, but there was no time to waste, so I quickly created a strict study plan. I divided my time into blocks, dedicating several hours each day to each subject, and even sacrificed sleep to make more time for studying. There were days when I was up until 3 or 4 in the morning, only to wake up a few hours later and continue revising.

To make things even more stressful, all the exams were back-to-back with no breaks in between. I remember one particular day when I had two exams, one in the morning and another in the afternoon. As soon as I finished the first exam, I rushed to the library to cram for the next one. I had to juggle multiple textbooks, class notes, and online resources, trying to digest as much information as possible in a short time.

What made it even more difficult was that each subject required a different approach. For subjects like mathematics and physics, I had to focus on solving practice problems, while for literature and history, I had to memorize facts and analyze texts. I was mentally exhausted, but I kept pushing through because I knew I didn't have any other option.

In the end, it was an exhausting week, but it paid off. I managed to get through all nine exams, and although I didn't get perfect scores, I was able to pass them all with decent grades. The experience taught me a valuable lesson about time management and the importance of starting my preparation early. I realized that the stress and sleepless nights could have been avoided if I had been more disciplined with my study schedule from the beginning.

Looking back, it was definitely one of the busiest and most intense weeks of my college life. But it also showed me that when pushed to the limit, I'm capable of focusing and working hard under pressure. Now, I always try to plan ahead to avoid getting into such stressful situations again.

3.5.10 Competition/Reward

3.5.10.1 想参加的比赛

想参加的比赛: **bicycle slow-riding contest**

Introduction

- Briefly introduce the competition you would like to participate in.
- *"I would like to talk about a bicycle slow-riding competition that takes place at my school."*

Describe the competition

- Explain how the competition works.
- *"In this contest, participants have to ride a bicycle as slowly as possible without losing balance or touching the ground."*

When and why you first learned about it

- Mention when you first heard about it or saw someone participate.
- *"I first became interested in this competition when my roommate participated last year and won first place."*

Why you want to participate

- Explain why this competition attracts you or why you think you'd do well.
- *"I've always been good at balancing on a bike, and I believe I can do well in this competition because I have the skills to maintain control at slow speeds."*

Benefits of participating

- Discuss what you hope to gain from participating.
- *"I think it would be a fun challenge, and it would help me improve my focus and patience. Plus, it would be exciting to compete and maybe even win a prize."*

Conclusion

- Wrap up with your excitement or motivation.
- *"Overall, I think it would be a great experience to take part in this competition and test my balance and skills."*

One competition I would really like to participate in is the **bicycle slow-riding contest** held at my school. This competition is quite unique because it challenges participants to ride their bicycles as slowly as possible without losing balance or touching the ground. I first got interested in this competition when my roommate participated in it last year and ended up winning first place. I was really impressed by how skillfully she managed to maintain her balance while riding at such a slow pace, and it inspired me to give it a try myself.

What makes this competition so intriguing to me is that it's not about speed or endurance, but rather about balance, control, and patience. The riders are required to pedal slowly and steadily, and if you stop or put your feet on the ground, you're disqualified. It's a real test of your ability to stay focused and maintain steady control of the bike, which I think is a fun and challenging way to

compete.

I believe I would be able to do well in this competition because I have a good sense of balance. I've been riding bicycles since I was quite young, and over the years, I've developed a pretty solid skill set for balancing and controlling my bike in different situations. I've also been practicing riding more slowly around my neighborhood and feel that I could probably perform well in this type of contest.

One of the things I like most about this competition is that it's accessible to everyone, regardless of age or physical ability. It's not about how fast you can go, but how well you can manage your balance and stay calm under pressure. I'm excited about the idea of participating because it would be a great way to test my limits, improve my concentration, and also have a bit of fun with my friends. I'd definitely be proud to take part in such a competition and maybe even bring home a trophy like my roommate did.

3.5.10.2 比赛得奖

So, a few months ago, I won a prize at a university event.

It wasn't anything huge like a scholarship (奖学金), but it was still really exciting. I took part in (参加) this public speaking competition organized by my university. I had never entered anything like that before, so it was a bit of a challenge for me, but I thought it would be fun and a good way to improve my public speaking skills. I said to myself, why not give it a shot (为何不试试)? I have nothing to lose (没什么好怕的).

The event was held in one of the big lecture halls on campus, and there were about 30 students competing and 300 people in the audience. A pretty big crowd! I decided to talk about the importance of mental health for students (大学生心理健康的重要性。可以改成任何其他话题) because it's something I feel really passionate about. I spent two weeks preparing, and rehearsed over and over again (一遍遍彩排), probably 100 times! Initially, I felt very anxious on the stage, but I managed to calm down and gave the speech in an engaging way with a lot of confidence.

To my surprise, I ended up winning third place (得了第三)! I received a little trophy and a gift card (奖杯和礼品卡).

To be honest, I wasn't expecting to win anything. I just thought it would be a fun experience. But getting third place felt like such an achievement, not just because of the trophy and gift card, but because I pushed myself out of my comfort zone (不仅仅是因为奖杯和礼品卡, 还因为我推着自己走出舒适区). I feel pretty proud of myself. So yeh, that's the story. Thank you!

3.5.11 Day cost little money

花费甚少的外出日

I'd like to talk about a special day I had recently that cost me almost nothing, but it was truly memorable. This happened a few months ago when my friends and I decided to have a picnic at a nearby park. We were all feeling a bit overwhelmed with our studies and assignments, so we thought it would be a great idea to take a break and relax outdoors. Since we were all on a tight budget, we wanted to do something fun without spending much money.

We planned it quite simply. Each of us brought some **homemade food**, like sandwiches, fruit, and snacks. I made a batch of cookies from ingredients I already had at home, so it didn't cost me anything extra. One of my friends brought a thermos of homemade iced tea, while another brought some fruits that were already in season. It was a perfect potluck-style picnic where

everyone contributed something small.

On the day of the picnic, we headed to a large park near our university. The weather was perfect—it was sunny but not too hot, with a gentle breeze that made it really pleasant to sit outside. We found a nice shady spot under a big tree where we could spread out our blankets. We spent hours just chatting, laughing, and enjoying each other's company. It felt so refreshing to be away from the usual hustle and bustle of daily life.

What made the day even more special was that we brought along some **game**s. One of my friends brought a deck of cards, and we ended up playing card games and even a few rounds of charades. It was so much fun, and we were all laughing so hard that we completely lost track of time. At one point, we even took a short walk around the park, enjoying the beautiful scenery and the blooming flowers.

The best part about that day was that it didn't cost us much at all. Apart from the small cost of the ingredients we used to make the food, everything else was completely free. It made me realize that sometimes, you don't need to spend a lot of money to have a great time. What truly matters is the people you're with and the quality of the time you spend together.

Looking back, it was one of the most enjoyable and relaxing days I've had in a long time. It reminded me that sometimes, the simplest things in life can bring the most joy. I think that's a lesson I've carried with me ever since—that you can create beautiful memories without needing to splurge.

3.5.12 Lost something

丢东西

Normally I'm not a scatterbrain (马虎健忘之人). I don't lose things easily. I'm always double checking (反复确认) my stuff before I leave a place, super mindful. That's why I remember this experience so well, that was one of the only few times that I lost my stuff.

It was my dear iPad (我最亲爱的 iPad, 你可以改成 mobile phone, kindle, 或者 laptop). Last month, I took the train to another city to visit a friend. And in order to kill the time/ while away the time (为了更好地消磨时光) on my way, I brought my iPad with me. In the beginning, I was watching a movie. And then, I started feeling very sleepy. It was a long trip, and that's why I decided to take a nap (打个盹).

I felt lazy (犯懒) to put the iPad back into my suitcase, as I knew later, I would use it again after the nap. So, I put the iPad in the pocket in front of me. You know, there's always a thin pocket behind the seat in front of you (你前面座位的后方的薄薄的口袋)? So, yeh, I put it there. The pocket was not big, so I could still see the tip of my tablet (平板电脑的上方一角). I thought that would remind me that there was my tablet in the pocket. But NOOOOO, I completely forgot my iPad after the nap. Like it was never there. I just removed the memory out of my brain (从记忆力删除了这个信息).

After I got off the train, several hours passed by, and suddenly I jumped out of my skin (跳出我的皮肤, 吓得灵魂出窍). "Where is my iPad?!" And that was when I remembered it was still on the train!!!! I called the lost and found office (失物招领办公室) at the train station, told them about my tragedy (悲剧). The customer service representative (客服代表) comforted me (安抚了我), and helped me call the head of the train (火车的车长) / the conductor of the train (一个意思, 车长), anyway, he said he would search it for me.

Several days later, I got a phone call from him and was told that he found the iPad! I felt so lucky and grateful to get my baby back. And at the same time, I felt very guilty for being so unmindful. I hate troubling people (我讨厌麻烦别人). So, yeh, that was the story.

3.5.13 Keep healthy

保持身体健康

One activity I regularly do to stay fit is **following an online streamer for exercise routines**. I started this habit around a year ago when I realized I needed to improve my fitness level but didn't have the motivation to go to a gym or fitness class. The convenience of exercising at home with the guidance of a live streamer was a game-changer for me.

The streamer I follow specializes in **HIIT workouts**, which stand for High-Intensity Interval Training. These sessions typically last about 30 to 45 minutes and combine cardio exercises with strength training, which helps me not only burn calories but also build muscle. What I find particularly motivating is that the streamer often **interacts with viewers**, offering words of encouragement and answering questions in real-time. This interactive aspect makes the experience much more engaging than simply following a pre-recorded video.

One of the main reasons I enjoy exercising this way is that it fits easily into my schedule. I can join the live stream whenever it's convenient for me, and if I miss a session, I can always watch the recording later. Plus, the **variety of workouts** keeps things interesting. The streamer mixes things up by incorporating different types of exercises, like yoga stretches or core workouts, so it never feels monotonous.

I've noticed significant benefits since I started these workouts. I've become more **energetic**, and my **endurance** has improved considerably. Additionally, it's been great for my **mental health**, especially when I've had a long, stressful day. Following along with someone who's both knowledgeable and enthusiastic really helps me stay consistent and motivated.

In the future, I'd like to explore other fitness routines, but for now, **following this online streamer** is definitely my favorite way to stay fit. It's practical, effective, and, most importantly, enjoyable.

3.5.14 Celebrating event

庆祝过的活动

One of the most **memorable events** I celebrated recently was **New Year's Eve on December 31st, 2023**, which coincided with an annual celebration called **Student's Day** on our university campus. This event is something I look forward to every year because it's a unique combination of welcoming the new year and celebrating the vibrancy of student life.

The celebration is truly a full-day affair, packed with a variety of activities. The day began with a **student parade** in the morning. It was incredible to watch the students marching in colorful costumes, holding banners, and showcasing different performances representing various clubs and departments. The parade had a lively and festive atmosphere, and you could feel the energy and excitement in the air. Everyone was cheering, taking photos, and soaking in the festive spirit.

In the afternoon, the campus was bustling with **small games and competitions** organized by different student organizations. I participated in a few games with my friends, like tug-of-war and a trivia quiz, which was a lot of fun. These activities brought everyone together, and it was a great way to bond with classmates and even make new friends. I especially enjoyed the friendly, competitive spirit that filled the air.

However, the highlight of the day was definitely the **party performances** held on the playground in the evening. As night fell, the entire campus was lit up with fairy lights and decorations, creating a magical ambiance. There were performances by student bands, dance groups, and even some comedy sketches, which had everyone laughing and clapping. The atmosphere was electric, especially when the clock struck midnight. Everyone gathered to count down to the new year, and the sky was suddenly filled with **fireworks**, lighting up the night.

What made this event so special was not just the celebration itself but also the feeling of **togetherness**. It was the perfect way to wrap up the year and welcome a new one surrounded by friends, laughter, and a sense of community. I felt genuinely happy and grateful to be a part of such a lively and positive environment.

This celebration will always hold a special place in my heart because it reminded me of the joy of being in college, surrounded by people who are not just classmates but a second family. It was a day full of **fun, excitement, and unforgettable memories**.

3.5.15 Organizing event

成功组织一场活动

One event that I organized successfully was an **icebreaker activity** for a student society that I'm part of. This took place last semester when our society was welcoming new members, and we wanted to create a warm and friendly atmosphere where everyone could get to know each other better.

The idea of organizing this event came to me because I noticed that new members often felt a bit **shy and hesitant** to interact with others during our meetings. Since I was in charge of member engagement, I decided that an icebreaker activity would be the perfect way to help everyone feel more comfortable and connected right from the start.

To organize the event, I first spent some time **researching fun and engaging icebreaker games** that would be suitable for a group of around 30 people. I eventually settled on a mix of activities, such as "Two Truths and a Lie" and a team-based scavenger hunt. These games were chosen because they were interactive, easy to participate in, and didn't require any special equipment, which made it practical given our limited resources.

Next, I planned out the logistics. I reserved a spacious room on campus, made sure we had all the necessary materials like notepads and small prizes for the winners, and even arranged for some **snacks and refreshments** to keep the energy levels high. I also created a schedule to ensure that everything ran smoothly, starting with a quick introduction, followed by the games, and ending with some free time for everyone to chat.

On the day of the event, I was a bit nervous about whether everything would go as planned. However, to my relief, the activities turned out to be a **huge success**. The new members were initially a bit reserved, but once the games began, everyone started laughing, interacting, and forming new friendships. The "Two Truths and a Lie" game was particularly effective because it encouraged people to share interesting facts about themselves, which led to some lively discussions.

The feedback I received afterward was overwhelmingly positive. Many members told me that the icebreaker activities helped them feel **more at ease** and excited to participate in future society events. This made me feel incredibly proud because I had achieved my goal of fostering a welcoming and inclusive environment.

In hindsight, organizing this event taught me a lot about **planning and time management**. It also boosted my confidence in my organizational skills, and I felt a great sense of accomplishment knowing that I had brought people together and helped create a sense of community. It's definitely an experience I would love to repeat, and I'm already thinking of ways to make the next event even more engaging.

3.5.16 Skill learned from a senior

向长者学习技能

One skill that I learned from an older person is **how to make rice dumplings**, which I learned from my grandmother. In my culture, rice dumplings, or "zongzi" as we call them, are traditionally made to celebrate the Dragon Boat Festival, and it's a skill that's been passed down through generations.

I first learned this skill a few years ago when I visited my grandmother during one of my school holidays. Growing up, I had always been fascinated by how she would so effortlessly wrap the dumplings with bamboo leaves, filling them with sticky rice, red beans, and pieces of marinated meat. So, one day, I asked her to teach me how to make them, and she was more than happy to pass on her knowledge.

The process was much more **challenging** than I had anticipated. First, my grandmother showed me how to **soak the sticky rice overnight** and prepare the fillings, making sure they were well-seasoned. The most difficult part, though, was **folding the bamboo leaves into a neat triangular shape** and securing them with string. My initial attempts were clumsy; the leaves would slip, and the filling would spill out. However, my grandmother was very patient. She guided me step by step, demonstrating how to fold the leaves tightly and tie the string so that the dumplings wouldn't fall apart during boiling.

What I really appreciated about learning this skill from my grandmother was not just mastering the technique but also hearing the **stories and traditions** behind it. She shared how her mother taught her, and how, back in the day, families would gather to make these dumplings together, turning it into a cherished tradition. It made me realize that making rice dumplings isn't just about the food itself, but also about **family bonding and preserving cultural heritage**.

Since learning this skill, I've tried making rice dumplings on my own a few times, especially during the Dragon Boat Festival, to share with friends and family. Although I'm not nearly as skilled as my grandmother, I've definitely improved. What makes me happiest is seeing the smiles on people's faces when they taste the dumplings I've made—it's a small way for me to **keep our family tradition alive**.

Looking back, I'm grateful for the time I spent with my grandmother learning this skill. It's not just a practical cooking technique but also a **connection to my roots** and a way to honor the past. I hope to continue making rice dumplings and maybe one day pass on this skill to younger members of my family.

3.5.17 Show something new to young

向小辈展示新东西

One memorable experience when I showed something new to someone younger than me was **introducing my younger cousin** to the basics of **coding**. This happened last summer when he visited me for a week during his school break. At that time, I had already been studying **computer science** in college, and my cousin, who is about 14 years old, had shown an interest in technology but had never tried coding before.

I decided to introduce him to **Python**, as it's one of the easiest programming languages for beginners. I could see that he was really curious, so I thought it would be a great opportunity to share something useful and fun with him. To make it engaging, I planned a few simple projects that I thought he would enjoy, such as creating a basic **quiz game** and a simple program to draw shapes using Python's turtle module.

At first, he was a bit overwhelmed by the **syntax and commands**, but I made sure to break everything down into simple steps. I explained how each line of code worked and encouraged him to try writing it himself. What really surprised me was how quickly he caught on. Within an hour, he was already experimenting with changing the code to customize the quiz questions and add new shapes to the drawing program. Seeing his excitement and creativity was incredibly rewarding for me.

Throughout the process, I tried to **encourage him** by emphasizing that making mistakes was a natural part of learning. I shared stories about how I had also struggled with coding when I first started and how perseverance was key. He seemed to appreciate hearing about my experiences, which made him more **confident** and willing to experiment on his own.

By the end of the week, he had not only completed the projects I had planned but also started exploring some **online tutorials** on his own. It was really fulfilling to see how something I had shared sparked a genuine interest in him. In fact, after returning home, he called me a few weeks later to show me a small game he had created all by himself.

This experience taught me that sharing knowledge can be incredibly **rewarding**. It's not just about teaching someone a new skill, but also about inspiring them and **nurturing their curiosity**. I was really happy to see that I had made a positive impact on my cousin, and I realized that I enjoyed mentoring others. It even got me thinking about possibly pursuing a role in education or mentoring in the future.

3.5.18 Remeet old friend

老友又见

I remember, back in primary school, I had a little crush (暗恋) on one of my classmates. Funny thing is (有意思的是), we barely spoke to each other at the time. I was quite short, and he was really tall, so I always sat in the front row, while he was always at the back of the classroom (在教室后方). We never really had a chance to interact much.

After we graduated from primary school, we ended up going to different middle schools, and naturally, we just lost touch (失联). Back then, there wasn't social media, and we didn't even have our own phones, so we never exchanged contact information (交换联系方式) or stayed in touch (保持联系). Plus, we weren't exactly close friends in the first place (本来).

Fast forward to 6 years later, I went to a primary school reunion (小学同学聚会), which was actually my first time going to one of these events. Normally, I don't really go to reunions, but this time I decided to. And guess what? I ran into him (偶遇) again, my old crush (曾经的暗恋对象). He had grown into a young, handsome man. Still very tall, even taller than before. And he had this really charming, charismatic (迷人、有人格魅力的) personality. We naturally started chatting,

caught up (叙旧) a bit, and ended up exchanging phone numbers. Now, I wouldn't say we're super close friends, but we do stay in touch (保持联系). From time to time, we text or meet up. What's funny is, once I jokingly told (开玩笑似的告诉) him my little secret, that I had a crush on him back in primary school. I thought it was just a cute, funny story and didn't feel embarrassed about it at all. But to my surprise (让我意外的是), he told me that he had a crush on me as well! I couldn't believe it. It was honestly one of the sweetest moments! Can you imagine, two kids with secret crushes on each other, and years later, they reconnected (重新联系上) and now they're friends.

3.5.19 Answer a phone call

公共场所接陌生人电话

时间: last week, on the underground heading to school, crowded

过程: a number I didn't recognize, maybe important, cold calls

enthusiastic introduction, prolonged phone calls -- insurance product, not in the mood for

反应: polite -> frustrating, didn't want to make a

scene -> tried to stay calm, but my patience was

wearing thin -> cut him off

感受: annoyed and fed up with this guy, didn't respect my time or my boundary

3.5.20 Discussion

有趣的讨论

主题: predicting the future

One interesting discussion I had with my best friend took place in secondary school. It was a spontaneous conversation we had one afternoon while we were walking around the playground, just enjoying the fresh air and chatting. The topic of our discussion was "predicting the future", which might sound a bit strange, but at the time, it felt like such a thought-provoking subject that we'd never really discussed before.

The conversation started when I casually mentioned that I thought I had the ability to predict my own future, at least in the short term. This might seem a bit odd, but what I meant was that I had a clear idea of what was going to happen on a daily basis. I knew my class schedule, when I would have breaks, what homework I needed to do, and even which teacher would be teaching each subject. To me, this gave me a sense of predicting the flow of my day, almost as if I could foresee every detail of the next few hours. I jokingly said that if I could predict my own timetable with such certainty, maybe I had some hidden ability to predict other aspects of the future as well.

However, my best friend didn't agree with me at all. She thought I was being a bit too literal and said that predicting the future was much more complex than knowing what classes you're going to take. She argued that true prediction had to go beyond just routine events and needed to involve a deeper understanding of life, people, and the world around us. To her, predicting the future meant understanding things like global events, personal relationships, or even life-changing decisions—things that weren't just a matter of knowing a schedule or plan.

As we continued our discussion, I found it really interesting to hear her point of view. She started to tell me that some people, like scientists or philosophers, might be able to predict things based on data and research, but she felt that true prediction required more than just logical reasoning. It had to involve a kind of intuition or foresight that went beyond the rational understanding of the present. We both laughed because we realized that we had very different ideas about what it meant to predict the future, but we also recognized that both views could be valid in their own way.

What made this discussion so fascinating was that we both tried to make sense of something that seemed very abstract. I remember feeling challenged by her views, and I could tell she was equally intrigued by mine. We didn't come to any final conclusions, but the conversation sparked a deeper interest in how we think about time, destiny, and control over our lives. It made me realize that predicting the future is not as simple as I once thought—it involves many layers of thinking, from knowing our routines to trying to understand bigger life events.

After that day, I found myself thinking a lot about how we define the future and whether we have control over it, or if it's something entirely beyond our understanding. We still talk about similar topics now, but that walk around the playground remains one of the most interesting and thought-provoking conversations we've had.

3.5.21 Service

介绍: exceptional service at clothing shop

So, ok, today so I'd like to talk about a time when I received some really exceptional service (超级棒的服务) at this little **clothing shop** near my house. It's not a big brand or anything, just a local store that sells trendy, stylish but affordable clothes. The shop's a stone's throw away from (非常近) where I live, so I go there every now and then (时不时地) when I need something new to wear.

And a few months back, around my mom's birthday. I was looking for something nice to gift her, and I wasn't quite sure what to get, so I went to that shop. As soon as I walked in, I was greeted with a big smile (被一个大大的微笑问候) by a new staff member (新的店员), whose name was Lili.

She asked me if I needed any help. One thing you should know about me is that (关于我你需要知道的一件事是, 这是这样一种人), I don't usually like it when people are all over me (全扑在我身上) when I'm shopping, but there was just something really approachable and likeable about Lili (但是 Lili 就是有一种说不出的亲切和讨喜劲儿) that made me very comfortable with her company (她的陪伴让我感到很自在). She wasn't pushy (强势) at all, just genuinely wanted to help.

I told her I was shopping for my mom's birthday, and she spent a good amount of time showing me different styles and options. She even explained the materials and sizes, which was actually super helpful. I ended up picking out a dress (选了一条连衣裙) for her, but I wasn't sure if it would fit or if my mom would like the color, and Lili told me I could easily exchange it later which put my mind at ease (让我放心).

At the end, when I was paying for the dress, Lili offered to wrap it up (包装起来) as a gift, free of charge (不收费). She even added a little ribbon on top (在上方放了一个小蝴蝶结), which I thought was so cute and such a nice gesture (很棒的姿态). It felt really personal (感觉很个人化). I left the shop with a big grin (大大的咧嘴笑) on my face. Lili's service was so top-notch and thoughtful (一流水准以及考虑周到). So yeh, that was the experience. Thank you!

3.5.22 Long walk

最长的步行

介绍: military training

The longest walk I've ever had was during my senior high school military training, which was an intense and memorable experience. It was part of a mandatory program designed to build endurance, discipline, and teamwork among students. The walk was about 10 kilometers, and we had to march from our school all the way to an outdoor tourist attraction called the **Oriental Oasis**, which is a well-known park and scenic area.

The walk itself was part of a larger training activity, so we had to follow a strict schedule and walk in formation with a large group of fellow students. I remember the morning we set off – it was still early, and the air was cool and fresh, but I could already feel a sense of excitement and anticipation. At first, it seemed manageable, but as we walked further from the school and into the countryside, the distance started to feel longer and the landscape began to change. We passed through fields, small villages, and eventually, the road led us into a more wooded area, which was quite beautiful but also quite tiring.

The route wasn't particularly difficult, but the challenge was maintaining a steady pace, especially because the military training required us to walk in perfect formation, which meant no one could stop for rest unless instructed to do so. The whole thing was very demanding physically, and after a while, my legs started to feel sore. However, there was a sense of camaraderie among my classmates, and we encouraged each other to keep going. We would often sing songs or share jokes to distract ourselves from the exhaustion, and that definitely helped keep our spirits up.

When we finally reached the **Oriental Oasis**, it felt like a huge accomplishment. Noone was straggling. The sense of relief was overwhelming, and we were able to relax and enjoy the beautiful surroundings.

In retrospect, that 10-kilometer walk was one of the most challenging yet rewarding experiences of my life. It taught me a lot about physical endurance, teamwork, and the importance of perseverance. Even though it was tough at times, I'm glad I had the chance to do it, as it not only built my stamina but also gave me a sense of achievement that I still carry with me today.

3.5.23 Language learning

语言学习

One effective thing I did to learn English was to immerse myself in the language by **watching movies and TV shows in English**. I started doing this a few years ago, as I felt that my reading and writing skills were improving, but my listening and speaking abilities were still not at the level I wanted.

At first, I watched with subtitles in my native language to understand the context and storyline, but gradually, I switched to English subtitles. This helped me connect the spoken words with their written form, and it also allowed me to learn new vocabulary and expressions. The great thing about watching movies and TV shows is that they expose you to various accents and colloquial language, which is often not covered in traditional language lessons.

I chose to watch a variety of genres, from dramas to comedies, and even documentaries, to get used to different tones, speeds of speaking, and formal versus informal language. For example, I watched *2 Broke Girls*. They use everyday, conversational English, which helped me sound more natural in casual conversations. On the other hand, watching documentaries or news programs helped me improve my formal language and understanding of more complex vocabulary.

Another benefit of this approach was that it made learning English more enjoyable. Instead of seeing it as a chore, I started to look forward to the next episode or movie, and without realizing it, I was learning new phrases and improving my listening skills. It also gave me a better understanding of culture and the way people interact in different contexts, which I think is crucial for mastering any language.

Overall, watching TV shows and movies in English was a fun and effective way for me to enhance my language skills. It allowed me to practice listening, pick up new words, and become more familiar with English-speaking cultures, all while keeping my learning process engaging.

3.5.24 Story

a story someone told you and you remember

介绍: our **French Bulldog**, Gama

Today, I'd like to share a story that my mom told me while I was away at school. It's about our **French Bulldog**, Gama, and his funny encounters with the neighborhood **cats**. I couldn't stop laughing when I heard it!

So, here's what happened. Gama is a curious little guy—full of energy and always eager to explore. One day, while I was busy at school, my mom took him out for his usual walk around our neighborhood. As they were strolling down a quiet street, they came across a group of **three or four cats** lounging in the sun.

Now, Gama, being his usual friendly self, decided to approach them. He perked up his little **stubby tail**, wiggling his entire backside in excitement as he tried to greet them. However, the cats, being aloof as they often are, weren't too impressed with Gama's enthusiasm. According to my mom, one of the cats even **gave a warning hiss**. But instead of getting scared, Gama just tilted his head, almost like he was trying to figure out why they weren't as happy to see him.

My mom was a bit nervous that the situation might **escalate**, but instead of attacking, the cats just stared at Gama, clearly perplexed. Eventually, one of the cats, probably the leader, cautiously approached him, gave him a quick sniff, and then walked off as if to say, "You're not worth my time."

What I found most **hilarious** about this story is that Gama, despite his confident attitude, ended up looking so puzzled when the cats ignored him. My mom described how he kept tilting his head from side to side, trying to make sense of what had just happened. It was like he was expecting some sort of grand interaction, but instead, he got a cold shoulder.

This story really stuck with me because it perfectly captures Gama's personality—he's always so enthusiastic and eager to make friends, even if the other animals don't quite reciprocate. Hearing my mom describe it so vividly made me feel like I was right there with them, and it reminded me of how much I miss those little moments with Gama when I'm away.

3.5.25 Video

学到新东西的网络视频

Ok, off the top of my head (首先想到的), I'm thinking about my experience of learning how to bake a cake through an online video on social media.

I'm not much of a baker, but I had a very good friend's birthday coming up, and I thought, why not give it a try (为什么不试试呢)? I found this short tutorial (教程) on TikTok, maybe around 25 minutes long, where the chef explained everything step by step (一步步) in such a clear and easy way. I watched it at home on my phone and decided to follow the steps.

The video covered everything (包含了所有事情), from how to properly whisk the eggs (打鸡蛋) to how to fold in the flour without overmixing (掺水和面, 避免比例失衡), which is super important for getting that light, fluffy texture (轻盈、松软的质地). I also learned how to decorate the cake once it's done. I learned a lot of things. Thank God it was easy to follow.

I followed the recipe step by step religiously (虔诚地一步步跟下来), and to my surprise (让我惊喜的是), the cake turned out great! It was light, soft, airy (轻盈、绵软、透气的), and most importantly, delicious. Honestly, I didn't build/ get my hopes up (没有把期待设高) too much because it was my first time baking a cake from scratch (从头开始), but the video made it feel pretty easy. It gave me confidence to try baking more in the future.

So yeah, I was really proud of the result. And, my friend/ girlfriend loved it, which made me over the moon (开心坏了)! Thank you!