

节俭是美德吗？ Is being thrifty a virtue?

Hello. This is 6 Minute English from BBC Learning English. I'm Neil.

大家好。这里是 BBC 学习英语栏目的六分钟英语。我是内尔。

And I'm Sam.

我是萨姆。

Are you a saver or a spender, Sam?

你喜欢存钱还是花钱，萨姆？

Well, I'm trying to limit my spending right now because I'm saving up for a deposit to buy a house.

嗯，我现在一直努力限制我的花费，因为我在攒钱付房子的首付。

Saving money is not always easy—as we'll find out in today's programme, which is all about 'thrift'.

存钱可不是那么容易的——正如我们会在今天节目里发现的那样，本期节目是关于“节俭”的。

'Thrift' is not a simple idea to define.

“节俭”不是个好定义的概念。

It's to do with living a simple life free from the need to constantly buy the latest products.

它指的是过简单的生活，不需要一直买最新的产品。

Today's consumer culture encourages us to 'spend, spend, spend', but it hasn't always been that way.

如今的消费文化鼓励我们“买，买，买”，但是并不是一直都这样。

The Victorians for example told people to 'save up for a rainy day', meaning to keep some money back in case of unforeseen emergencies.

比如维多利亚时代的人就告诉人们要“未雨绸缪”，意思是存一点钱以防不可预知的紧急情况。

But before we discover more about that, it's time for today's quiz question.

但是在我们进一步讨论之前，是时候公布今天的问题了。

If you're trying to save money you probably know how hard it can be.

如果你正在努力存钱，你可能知道这有多难。

So my question is: what percentage of people in the UK, do you think, have less than £1000 in savings?

所以我的问题是：你认为英国有百分之多少的人存款不到1000英镑？

Is it a) 5%, b) 15 %, or c) 30%?

是 A. 5%，B.15%，还是 C. 30%？

Well, if I'm anything to go by, I'd say c) 30%.

嗯，如果要我选的话，我要选 C. 30%。

OK. Well, we'll find the correct answer out later.

添加的词汇



扫码APP内查看
每日英语听力

好的。我们稍后会揭晓答案。

I mentioned before that 'thrift' is a difficult idea to define, so here's Alison Hulme, a lecturer at the University of Northampton, explaining more to BBC Radio 4's programme Thinking Allowed.

我之前提到过，“节俭”是一个很难定义的概念，所以下面请听北安普顿大学的讲师艾莉森·赫尔姆对 BBC 电台4频道的节目《Thinking Allowed》做进一步的解释。

There are two dictionary definitions of thrift.

词典上节俭有两个定义。

The older of the two comes from the word 'thrive' etymologically, and described thrift as the ability to live well and to flourish, so it's that sense of human flourishing.

其中更古老的那个从词源学角度来说来自于单词“蓬勃发展”，并且将节俭描述为能够过得很好，繁荣发展的能力，所以指的是人类繁荣。

And the more recent definition is the one we're probably more familiar with, which is about frugality.

更近的解释是我们比较熟悉的，即关于节约。

All of that said, it's been used historically of course by various people, in various moments, in various different places, in very different ways, and they've often had a social or religious agenda.

一切都表明这个解释自古以来就被各种人，在各种时刻，在不同的地点，以不同的方式被使用，而往往会有社会或宗教意味。

It seems the oldest definition of 'thrift' has nothing to do with saving money and is connected to the verbs 'thrive' and 'flourish' -meaning to grow or develop successfully.

似乎“thrift”这个词最古老的解释跟节约钱没有关系，而是跟动词“蓬勃发展”和“繁荣”有关——指的是成功地生长或发展。

It was only later with the Puritans-16th century English Christians with a reputation for strict discipline -that the meaning of thrift changed and became associated with frugality-being careful not to spend too much money or eat too much food.

直到因为后来的清教徒——16世纪的英国基督教徒，以严格的纪律而闻名——“thrift”的意思才发生了改变，跟节约产生了关系——即小心翼翼地不要花太多钱或吃太多食物。

The Puritans believed that being frugal was a religious virtue and that people ought to save money in order to give to others in need.

清教徒认为节约是一种宗教美德，而人们应该为了其它有需要的人而省钱。

Later on the meaning of 'thrift' changed again.

之后“thrift”这个词的意思又发生了变化。

During the Victorian era, it was connected to the idea of managing your own money in order to be a responsible citizen.

在维多利亚时代，它跟管理好自己的钱从而成为一名有责任感的公民有关。

Throughout history then, there have been different versions of 'thrift', and this may be because different religions or social groups had their own agenda-a specific aim or reason for a particular group to do something.

所以在历史进程中，“thrift”有不同的意思，而这可能是因为不同的宗教或社会团体拥有他们自己的教义——某个团体做一些事情的特定目标或原因。

For example, the Victorian definition of thrift was based on a social agenda about being a respectable member of society.

比如，维多利亚时代对“thrift”的定义是基于社会涵义的，强调做一名值得尊重的社会成员。

Ideas about frugality and thrift changed again during the Second World War, when the public was encouraged to avoid waste so that every material resource could go into the war effort.

二战的时候关于节约和节俭的想法又发生了变化，当时的公众被鼓励避免浪费，这样每一点材料资源都能够用于战争。

And in the post-war period, it changed again as people's wealth and standard of living increased.

而在战后时期，它又发生了变化，因为人们的财富和生活水平提高了。

Here's Alison Hulme again.

以下还是艾莉森·赫尔姆的话。

It's the idea that once people had enough to meet their kind of basic needs there was this kind of moral slide into consumerism.

有观点认为一旦人们有了足够的东西满足他们的基本需求，就会出现消费主义的道德滑坡。

It's not a view that I subscribe to in a simplistic sense myself-I think there's a very fine line to tread here.

我不太同意这个过于片面化的观点——我认为需要仔细拿捏分寸。

There's no point denying that, certainly in the developed world, there's been a rise in consumer capitalism, that's just a truism, but thrift hasn't declined.

毫无疑问在发达国家消费资本主义确实兴起了，但是这只是一种常理，而节俭并没有式微。

In modern times, people's motivation to save up and be thrifty declined once they had enough to meet their basic needs-the basic necessities needed to survive, like food, clothes and shelter and nothing extra.

在现代社会，人们一旦有了足够的东西满足他们的基本需求——生存所需的基本必需品，比如食物、衣服和栖身之地，再没有别的了——储蓄和节俭的动机就会消退。

Alison mentions that once these basic needs were satisfied, people moved away from thrift into consumerism, the desire to buy 'luxury' products which were not absolutely necessary.

艾莉森提到一旦这些基本需求得到了满足，人们就会从节俭转向消费主义，即购买完全不必要的“奢侈品”的欲望。

According to some, this created a moral slide-a decrease in the standards of behaving in good, fair and honest ways.

根据一些人的观点，这产生了一种道德滑坡——要求人们表现得体，公正和诚实的标准的下降。

The rise in consumer capitalism we have seen around the world is an example of a truism-something that is so obviously true it is not worth repeating.

我们看到的在世界各地出现的消费资本主义的兴起就是一种常理的体现——非常真实的不值得重复说的事情。

What is worth repeating is the quiz question, Neil.

值得重复的是今天的问题，内尔。

Yes, I asked you how many British people had savings of under £1000. And I said, c) 30%.

是的，我之前问你有多少英国人的存款不到1000英镑。我说的是 C. 30%。

In fact, Sam, it's b) 15%.

萨姆，事实上是 B. 15%。

So I guess I'm not such a bad saver after all!

所以我想我并不是个糟糕的储蓄者！

OK. Well, today we've been talking about the changing meanings of 'thrift', an idea connected to frugality-being careful not to spend too much money.

是的。好的，今天我们一直在讨论“thrift”意思的变化，这个词跟节约有关——小心不要花太多钱。

The original meaning of 'thrift' was to flourish-grow or develop successfully-but that definition changed as different religious groups, like the Puritans, promoted their own agenda-aim or reason for a particular group to do something.

“thrift”的本意是繁荣——成功地生长或发展——但是这个意思在不同的宗教团体，比如清教徒，推广他们的教义——某个团体做某事的目标或原因——时发生了变化。

In recent times, people's ability to meet their basic needs-the necessities for survival like food and shelter, have reduced the importance of 'thrift', which some believe has created a moral slide-a reduction in standards of moral behaviour.

在最近的年代，人们能够满足他们的基本需求的能力——生存必需品，比如食物和栖身之所，降低了“节俭”的重要性，很多人认为这造成了道德滑坡——道德行为标准的降低。

And the associated rise of consumer capitalism is an example of a truism-something that is obviously true and generally accepted by all.

而与之相关的消费资本主义的兴起只是一个常理——非常真实，被所有人广泛接受的事物。

That's all for now.

这就是今天的所有内容。

Join us again next time for more topical discussion and vocabulary.

请收听我们的下期节目，获得更多话题讨论和词汇。

Bye for now!

再见！

Bye bye!

再见！