**Animals join Crusoe**

The tale of Robinson Crusoe, a British sailor who gets trapped (困住) on a faraway island, has been told for hundreds of years. Since British writer Daniel Defoe’s 1719 novel came out, the story has been made into **numerous** plays, films and TV series.  
  
But just when you think there is nothing more you can get from this **classic adventure tale**, here is yet another Robinson Crusoe film – The Wild Life by Belgium’s nWave animation studio. It’s been out in the Chinese mainland since Oct 4.  
  
The Wild Life tells the story in a quite different way. Yes, there is a guy named Robinson Crusoe who **finds himself trapped** on an island after a terrible storm on the sea. But that’s it. There are no cannibals (食人族), no murders and no slaves being traded.  
  
Instead, the narrator (旁白) has changed from Crusoe himself to a chatty parrot named Mak. The whole story is also told **from the animals’ point of view,** including a chameleon (变色龙), a hedgehog (刺猬) and a goat. They go from seeing their homeland **invade**d **(入侵)** by a human to slowly becoming friends with him.  
  
**This is actually quite a smart move, considering（鉴于，考虑到） this year’s animal fever in movies from Zootopia to The Secret Life of Pets.** Even the villains (反派) in The Wild Life have been changed from dangerous local island people to a group of evil cats from a ship.  
  
Animals seem to make films more family-friendly, especially for an **original** story as dark and cruel as Robinson Crusoe. **There is no doubt that** kids will be drawn to the colorful animal characters.  
  
But unfortunately, this alone does not mean a story will be great – The Wild Life isn’t as **in-depth** as Zootopia. The animal characters may make it hard for audiences to relate to them emotionally.

**be hooked on 着迷于…**  
“Without much humor, and with a very straightforward (直白的) story, there isn’t a lot to **hook (迷住) you into** the tale,” noted US film writer Katie Walsh in the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette. “There’s a message about accepting outsiders without judgment and working together as a team, and another message about an island life versus (对抗) a civilized (文明的) one, but it’s all presented without much complication.”

**Buildings still stand（经受） test of time**

They are the great modern designs that were built in the last century. But due to **a lack of** proper protection, many of them have been destroyed. Luckily, some have stood the test of time.   
  
A national list of architectural (建筑的) masterpieces was released in Beijing on Sept 29 to **remind people of** disappearing heritage (遗产), reported China Daily.  
  
**A total of** 98 unique structures (建筑) have been included in the first edition of the 20th Century Chinese Architectural Heritage List, which was **release**d by the Architectural Society of China and the China Cultural Relic Academy.  
  
Famous Beijing **landmark**s **rank high** on the list, such as the Great Hall of the People and the Monument (纪念碑) to the People’s Heroes.  
  
It includes famous Western-style architecture from the early 20th century, such as the Bund (外滩) in Shanghai, the Russian-style Saint Sofia Cathedral (圣·索菲亚教堂) in Harbin, Heilongjiang, and Tianjin’s Marco Polo Square, a former Italian community.  
  
Old buildings found **on college campuses** such as Peking University, Tsinghua University and Nanjing University are also named on the list.  
  
“Many of the included structures have many stories to tell and have seen historical events, so they are alive,” Shan Jixiang, head of the Chinese Society of Cultural Relics, told China Daily.  
  
For example, **Tsinghua University Library**, built in 1912, **saw/withnessed many key events in the nation’s history**. During the War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression (抗日战争), the library building became a Japanese military hospital in Beijing.  
  
**Despite China’s recent efforts to** protect its traditional architecture, a lot of it has been destroyed, **partly because** there is not enough **public awareness**.  
  
For example, the Jü’er Hutong Courtyard Housing Project, which won the 1992 United Nations World Habitat Award, has lost its **original features** because it was not rebuilt properly.  
  
“To architects, the buildings we designed are like daughters to us. We married off our **beloved daughters**, but then discovered **the heartbreaking fact** that they are not being taken care of,” Ma Guoyong, an expert at the Chinese Academy of Engineering, said in an interview with Chinanews website.  
  
The new list will **make people realize the importance of** keeping more recent architectural sites (场所) for future generations.

**Make sb aware of the importance of 让某人意识到…的重要性**  
“When they restore them, they should be treated as cultural heritage sites rather than general construction. Otherwise, historical information will be lost,” said Shan.  
  
“Masterpieces of the 20th century prove that Chinese architects’ spirit and skills were passed down well,” he added. “And they **deserve (值得) to be passed on to** modern times.” **deserve doing=deserve to be done 值得做**

**pass on sth to 把…传承下去**

**Young writer joins site**

As if Lauren Peller doesn’t have enough on her plate this fall – college applications are **due (到期的)** and she’s editor-in-chief of her high school newspaper – she’s **take**n **on** the role of the editorial (编辑的) director of the new high school section (部分) of the US’ Spoon University foodie (美食家) website.  
  
Spoon University was started in 2014 at Northwestern University in Illinois, US. The startup created by two then-college students has now spread to 160 college campuses. **It aims to** help young people learn how to eat well – whether they cook for themselves in **off-campus（校外的）** housing or eat at restaurants and cafeterias **on their campuses**. It offers recipes, restaurant reviews, fun food-related quizzes and more.  
  
Peller, 17, is studying at Half Hollow Hills High School East in Dix Hills, New York. She emailed the chief executive (主管) of Spoon U last winter, asking, “Are there any opportunities for high school students to work with Spoon University?” Fast forward nine months – during which Peller wrote stories for the college sections, then worked with editors to **come up with（提出）** a high school writers application process (流程), then started editing (编辑) stories by high school writers. Spoon University’s nationwide high school section started in August.  
  
While the college sections are different for each campus, the high school section is for all high schools nationwide. The goal is for the high school section to have at least 15 articles a month, said Britney Chu, who was Spoon University’s community growth manager.  
  
Peller learned about Spoon University because her older brother, Evan, is a senior at Northwestern, where Spoon U started. There, the website also has a print magazine **version(版本)**. “He brought the magazine home for me. He knew that I would like it,” Peller said. “When I saw it, I knew it was something I would like to **get involved in（参与其中）**.”  
  
Then she thought, “Why wait?”  
  
Peller has **relied** heavily **on** **（依赖）**the help from other students at her high school to start the new part of the website – for example, she chose senior Hallie Schuster, 17, as a writer, and senior Matthew Gillam as a graphic (绘画的) artist.  
  
Though they don’t **get paid**, they do get valuable experience, they say.

**Answering questions about tuition fees（学费）**

Deng Ning holds an MBA degree from the University of Akron and a college counseling certificate from UCLA, and **work**s **as （担任）guidance counselor （指导老师）** at top high schools in China. She has helped Chinese students to **enroll in** famous universities in the United States for many years. Now she writes for this **column（专栏）** to solve students’ problems.  
  
Q:  
  
Are there any chances for us applicants to get financial (财政的) aid with tuition fees (学费) or **living expense**s?(**生活费**)  
  
University tuition fees are quite high in the US. Which universities give the most financial aid and **scholarship**s **(奖学金)** to international students?  
  
The total cost of attending US universities and colleges is becoming more expensive as tuition is increasing every year. To **reduce** **the** financial **pressure on** （**减轻…的压力**）families, some schools offer financial aid.  
  
Need-based aid and merit-based scholarships are very common for international students. Need-based aid fully or partially **meets a student’s need**s if the student is admitted, along with a family contribution (资助). The top 20 national **liberal arts colleges（文科学校）** and research universities **are more likely to** provide need-based financial aid.  
  
Merit-based scholarships are decided by the excellence of a student’s **academic achievement**s（**学习成绩**） or special talents in arts, athletics, leadership and so on. Merit-based scholarships are automatically (自然地) considered with an application, except at only a few schools that need special applications.  
  
Liberal arts colleges are more likely to offer merit-based scholarships **ranging from** 30 percent **to** （**在…和…间变动**）full tuition. Big public universities are less likely to offer financial aid to international students, but some will freeze (冻结) tuition for four years as financial aid. Some scholarships for special majors, such as engineering, can be suggested by a high school guidance counselor.

## Back to love story

Before many readers in China had heard of Romeo and Juliet, they **were charmed by（被吸引）** a sad love story between Jia Baoyu and his cousin Lin Daiyu.  
  
The two characters are from A Dream of Red Mansions, also known as The Story of the Stone. Written by Cao Xueqin (1715-1763), it is one of four ancient Chinese classic novels.  
  
During the National Holiday, the seventh Cao Xueqin Cultural and Art Festival was held in Beijing. The theme for this year was finding the essence (精髓) of A Dream of Red Mansions.  
  
The novel follows the rise and fall of the noble Jia clan (家族). In the beginning, the family is wealthy and powerful, **thanks in part to** its close relationships with the royal family. But the heir to the family fortune, Jia Baoyu, is a “problem”. He has no interest in politics and prefers to **live a pure, carefree (无忧无虑的) life.**His family hopes to pair Jia with Xue Baochai, a **mature (成熟的)**, clever cousin who could connect them to her wealthy family. But he falls in love with his brilliant, yet **delicate (纤弱的)**, cousin Lin.  
  
As the lovers head toward a sad end, the family falls on hard times because of sophisticated (复杂的) political reasons.Œ Its wealth and power **fade away（逐渐消退）**.  
  
The novel **is set in(以…为背景)** a fictional time, which many believe was inspired by the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911). And it **offers key insights (视角) into** Chinese traditional culture.  
  
The story tells readers that the source of water is important when brewing (沏) tea. **For instance**, the nun Miaoyu treats noble friends with either rainwater from the previous summer or with snow water collected from snow on plum (梅) blossoms.  
  
While people of different ages and social statuses (地位) make tea with different water and equipment, the name for each place in the **magnificent** **（宏伟的）**Grand View Garden also has a special spiritual element (要素) in it. Lin’s quarters is surrounded by bamboo that grows straight up toward the sky. This shows her characteristics of purity and **honesty**. Meanwhile, Xue’s house is full of rare herbs and plants with smells that attract people. This suggests that Xue is quite a social person.v  
  
“**A Dream of Red Mansions is an encyclopedia (百科全书) of Chinese culture: poetry, painting, music, medicine, cuisine, clothing, architecture (建筑), Buddhism (佛教) and Daoism, all included in the plot**,ω” The Economist magazine noted. “It is even modern in the way it invites readers to take part: Riddles (谜语) and puns suggest the development of the story and the fate (命运) of the characters.”

**UK seafood celebrated**

For a long time, seafood has pleased British taste buds (味蕾). And **Oct 7 saw the beginning of the yearly National Seafood Week in the UK.**  
National Seafood Week is about giving seafood recognition and thanking the people who produce it.  
  
There is **a variety of** seafood in the UK. Take fish as an example. They are usually battered (裹炸) or smoked before being served. One of the classic British breakfast foods is a plate of kippers. They are made from a whole fish that has been cut in half from head to tail, gutted (去内脏的), salted or pickled (腌制的), then smoked.  
  
Don’t forget the traditional national dish: fish and chips. How is it made? A boneless fish, usually cod (鳕鱼) or haddock (黑线鳕), is covered in batter – a mixture of eggs, flour and milk – and deep-fried. The chips are thick slices of potato, fried until they are soft and golden brown.

**Small talk makes us happy**

Small talk – the likes of “What do you have there? Popcorn?” or “The weather today is beautiful, isn’t it?” – is meaningless and a waste of time, according to some people. But scientists believe that it is actually more useful than it may appear to be.  
  
One example comes when you are on a train or a plane. The thought of talking to the stranger sitting beside you can be scary, because you know the conversation is sure to be awkward (尴尬的). But a study by the University of Chicago in the US found that people who chat to strangers enjoy a better ride than those who sit in silence or **bury themselves in** （**沉浸在**）their phones.  
  
In the study, researchers asked real-life people at Chicago train stations to start conversations with fellow travelers. Most of them refused to do so at first because they expected not to get a friendly answer. But the result **turned out to be（结果是）** just the opposite – most strangers were not only willing to be talked to, but also pleasant to talk to.  
  
“Human beings are social animals,” Nicholas Epley, one of the lead researchers, told Live Science. “Other people are people, too. And **it turns out that** they’d like to get to know you.”  
  
**Apart from** making you happier, small talk with strangers can also help you feel connected to your surroundings (周围环境). Previous (以前的) studies found that when people are frequently smiled at, **made eye contact with** and spoken to at coffee shops, they tend to **have a stronger sense of** belonging instead of feeling like they are being ignored and left out.  
  
And if you are already comfortable enough to make small talk with strangers, you should try to develop it into something “bigger”.  
  
A 2010 study proved that having a deep and meaningful conversation gives you even more happiness than small talk. Participants in the study – 79 college students – reported after the four-day experiment that they were much happier when they had a third as much small talk and twice as many in-depth conversations.  
  
But deep conversations can start with small talk, can’t they? So the first step is to start talking, no matter how **casual** (随意的) the topic is. And who knows, maybe an opening line as simple as “I like your hat” could lead to a serious conversation in which you learn something new from a stranger.

## Experts say Korean skin care has good and bad points

You may have heard that South Korean products are one of the hottest **trend**s (潮流) in skin care, but using them can be hard work.  
  
It’s not uncommon for their **routine**s (常规) to include 10 steps. Furthermore, many of these products come with unusual ingredients, like donkey milk.  
  
So is South Korean skin care worth it? **In general**, experts have said there are some high-quality products, but you should do research before buying.  
  
Dr Lauren Ploch, from Augusta, Georgia, US, said the biggest difference in South Korean beauty products is the focus (关注) on “having clear skin”.  
  
Beauty is a big business in South Korea and **is aimed at** both men and women. Because of this, companies spend a lot of money on research and development, said US beauty historian Rachel Weingarten.  
  
Weingarten said Korean creams became popular partly because of high-definition (高精度) television, meaning news reporters needed more makeup (化妆). The “selfie (自拍) culture” of taking photos up close has also focused people on their skin, she added.  
  
But not everyone agrees that all the steps are needed. “The more you do to your skin, the worse it’s likely to get … I find it completely unnecessary,” Weingarten said.  
  
Ploch also suggested that people who want to try out Korean products should look for gentle ones **based on** their skin type.  
  
For the unusual ingredients like donkey milk, Weingarten added: “The old rule is, how far down the list are they? Is the ingredient in the first three?”  
  
Dr Marie Jhin, a doctor with the Dermatology Medical Group in San Francisco, US, agrees. Over-the-counter (柜台上可买到的) products don’t have the same testing as products doctors give you, Jhin said.  
  
These products may be tested, but they may not be testing for effectiveness. “Instead they may be tested for things like their smell,” according to Jhin.  
  
Generally, though, Ploch said there is a lot to like about Korean beauty products. “The thing to take away from Korean skin care is, enjoy your skin care. Don’t limit yourself to a few products and don’t hurry through it,” Ploch said.

## Happy to check up

I called my mother-in-law this morning just to check up on her. While we were speaking **on the phone**, someone knocked on her door. She was obviously worried and asked me what she should do. I told her not to open the door, and if it was someone who knew her well they would knock on the living room window. I rang back about 10 minutes later to check on her. She was really cheerful and told me a friend had called. I was pleased but thought this was a bit mysterious as she did not identify her “friend”. A short while later she called me back. She sounded so happy. Her friend had just left.  
  
**It turned out that** her friend was a policeman from the local police station. A few weeks before, he had come to her house when someone attempted to break in. Since then he had returned with alarms for all her windows and doors. He came back when he was off-duty and fitted them for her. He also gave her his private cellphone number and told her to phone him any time of day or night if she is frightened.  
  
Today’s visit was to let her know that he patrols (巡逻) her street and checks up on her. He told her not to **be concerned** if she heard a motorcycle outside her house in the early hours of the morning, it would only be him checking up on her. He has also told the other officers about her and has asked them to patrol her street. This was so reassuring (宽慰的) for her.  
  
He has told her she **is admirable for** a woman **in her 80s** and that she keeps her house in great order. She was so proud telling me this. Today when he called she was getting ready to go to a family funeral (葬礼), and she was painting her nails at the time. She has arthritis (关节炎) and she told me there was more nail varnish (指甲油) over her fingers than there was on her nails. Still displays of vanity (虚荣心), even at that age! I told her he probably thinks she’s not really a **vulnerable** (脆弱的) old lady and he’s probably thinking if he’d been there 10 minutes later she would have her high heels on! She laughed **at the thought of** it!  
  
What **a caring friend**! At the end of the day, most of us are just people looking out for other people.