

B3U4 Key & Transcript

Part I Pre-Reading Task

- The students being taught in the Chinese way at first appeared to be shocked, rebellious, disrespectful and arrogant.
- The students taught by teachers using the Chinese methods got better grades in maths, Mandarin, and science.
- The reporter said that this was not a scientific experiment. It is reality TV, designed to entertain, and to inform a little.
- The reporter said the experiment did not answer the question of which system was better. Instead, he seems to suggest that we should have a little bit of both.

Transcript:

Chinese Teaching Methods Shock British Schoolchildren

In Insight, we look at education, more specifically, the United Kingdom vs. China. Both countries were part of an extraordinary television experiment. It's called the Big Test. Between the Chinese way of teaching with the British approach, who won? CCTV's Richard Bestic holds up the report card.

The Chinese teaching methods came as a shock to the class of British schoolchildren and the students' rebellious response came as a shock to a horrified British nation.

"I have never seen a student like you!"

As the 50-strong class of 13-and-14-year-olds showed themselves, according to Britain's normally resilient Fleet Street press, to be disrespectful and arrogant.

As the weeks passed, and the big test neared, relations between teachers and students mellowed even if the academic regime was unrelenting.

"What is needed for photosynthesis to take place? Sophie."

"Carbon dioxide, water, and the sunlight."

"OK, you got it."

The Chinese students were gripped by a competitive fervor. "Guys, shush!" Would the Chinese or British teaching system come out on top? The pressure began to tell.

The English system was in their DNA, but would it deliver?

So what did the tale of the tests tell us? Which system works best in the cauldron of the examination hall when the students who'd undergone the Chinese system were tested against those who continued in the English style?

"And if Chinese School has won the day, then it's going to be quite interesting for us, I think, at Bohunt. The Chinese School, average mark for maths, 67.74%; Bohunt Year Nine, 54.84. There is more. Bohunt Year Nine, average mark for Mandarin, 36.46; Chinese School, 46.88. For science, Chinese School, 58.33; Bohunt Year Nine, 50. I have to attempt to be gracious and say to Chinese School, 'Very, very, well done.' And the enquiry will commence. Thank you very much. And well done, well done."

The Chinese system won resoundingly. "Three cheers for the teachers!" For the students and teachers, there was time for a tearful farewell, possibly leaving behind more questions than answers.

This was far from a scientific experiment. It was reality TV designed to entertain, and perhaps to inform a little. It is, though, getting us questioning and asking: which is the best system? The answer is, of course, perhaps a little bit of both. However, as UK teachers have already discovered, once students start questioning ideas to destruction, their first challenge is always authority itself. Is that a good thing or a bad thing? It's for you to decide.

Part II Text A

Comprehension

1. Text Analysis

Points for comparison/contrast	Chinese	Americans
1) problem solving	<u>Emphasis on the teacher's guidance (teaching by holding the pupil's hand)</u>	<u>Emphasis on self-reliance, having students learn through the process of trial-and-error</u>
2) art education	<u>Skills come before creativity in order of priority</u>	<u>Reversed priority: creativity before skills</u>

2. Structured Rewriting

(answer for your reference)

Benjamin, an 18-month-old boy, came to China with his parents and stayed in a hotel in Nanjing for some time. 1) After watching his parents put the key of their hotel room into a narrow slot when leaving their hotel, he would try to do the same. Because of his tender age, his efforts to accomplish the task were often unsuccessful.

His parents were not bothered in the least. 2) They just let Benjamin try by himself. They saw that Benjamin was having great fun, and believed that he would learn to accomplish the act on his own.

But any Chinese staff member who happened to be nearby would come to help Benjamin. 3) They would hold onto Benjamin's hand and patiently and gently guide it toward the key slot. Teaching by holding the hand seemed to them the right thing to do.

This anecdote throws light on the difference between the Chinese and American approach to education. 4) While American teachers and parents tend to think children should be left to learn largely on their own, their Chinese counterparts hold that learning should take place by continual careful shaping and molding.

3. Interpreting Difficult Sentences

- 1) It was not in the classroom but in the lobby of the Jinling Hotel in Nanjing that Ellen and I got one of the most significant lessons in the difference between Chinese and American ideas of education.
- 2) Benjamin was happy with his few successes when he inserted the key into the slot. But he was equally happy with the sounds the key made when his efforts were not successful.
- 3) More generally, he is less likely to view life the way Americans do, i.e., to view life as a series of situations in which he has to rely on his own thinking and work out his own solutions, and even to discover new problems that call for creative solutions.

- 4) Young Westerners and young Chinese differ in their attitudes to creativity, and the difference is one of priority. The former break away from the tradition first before gradually mastering it, while the latter start from the tradition and possibly evolve toward originality.
- 5) Can we find a better way to approach education by learning from both the Chinese and American extremes and by taking a middle course between the poles of creativity and basic skills?

4. Discussion Questions

Answers up to students.

Language Sense Enhancement

1.

One way of 1) summarizing the American position is to state that we 2) value originality and independence more than the Chinese do. The 3) contrast between our two cultures can also be seen 4) in terms of the fears we both 5) harbor. Chinese teachers are 6) fearful that if skills are not acquired early, they may never be acquired; there is, on the other hand, no 7) comparable hurry to 8) promote creativity. American educators fear that unless creativity has been acquired early, it may never 9) emerge; on the other hand, skills can be 10) picked up later.

Language Focus

I. Basic Practice

1.

- 1) To buy a drink from the machine, first insert the correct coins, then select the drink you want and press the button.
- 2) The economy is just one of the several critical problems the country is faced with.
- 3) The dean of our department is doing his best to foster a sense of unity among all the students.
- 4) The world is like a mirror: Frown at it and it frowns at you; smile, and it smiles too.
- 5) Video from security camera footage overlooking the driveway where the victim was shot appeared to contradict McManus' initial statement.
- 6) A basic understanding of mathematics is needed to explain a wide variety of natural phenomena.
- 7) They are doing a research project to investigate the harmful effects of air pollution in the city.
- 8) As for Laura and me, the colour of our skin has never mattered, either in the workplace or on social occasions.
- 9) A large crowd of reporters gathered outside the building to await the decision of the court.
- 10) She is not considered an outstanding student. But on occasion she has surprised her parents with her excellent performance.
- 11) The World Trade Organization was established to promote trade among its member states.
- 12) We are here to discuss how to proceed with our investigation. What you are saying is not relevant.
- 13) For the experiment to be valid, it is essential to record all data accurately.
- 14) Hard work can often make up for a lack of intelligence.
- 15) To reduce our reliance on foreign technology, we must invest more in research and

development.

2.

Model 1

- 1) I was not in the least dissatisfied with the exam results.
- 2) The film did not interest me in the least.
- 3) Coming from the south, Cindy is not in the least surprised to see trees blossom at this time of year.

Model 2

- 1) The project was a success, so much so that it won the first prize.
- 2) Mary is terrified of flying, so much so that she is even afraid of boarding the plane.
- 3) The author refused to answer any question about his book, so much so that people began to doubt whether he did write the book.

Model 3

- 1) These problems have been occurring all too often.
- 2) He remembers all too well how long the sense of disappointment lasted.
- 3) All too often the hard work and sacrifice of one amazing person in our families is taken for granted.
- 3.
- 1) Our team accomplished the goal of raising 2 million for charity this year. But in retrospect, I feel we could have worked harder and raised 3 million. Believe me, I am not exaggerating.
- 2) Money does not interest him in the least. He does not think that what he has acquired can be measured in terms of dollars and cents.
- 3) The performance of the pupils at school satisfied all parents. It was all too clear that the new teaching method was far superior to the traditional one.
- 4) Knowing that we had been left completely on our own, we proceeded in the dark with extreme caution.

II. Confusable Words

1.

- 1) I've had continual problems with this computer ever since I installed this new application.
- 2) Gas central heating provides instant warmth and a continuous supply of hot water.
- 3) Your continual interruptions are making it very difficult for me to concentrate.
- 4) The traffic was awful, a continuous line of vehicles extending as far as the eye could see.
- 5) The pressure was building slowly and continuously for several hours.
- 6) We had endured a series of dark, gloomy, winter days, during which the sun had been continually hidden behind dense, rain clouds.

2.

- 1) A diamond's worth is determined partly by its cut and clarity.
- 2) What? To walk three miles to see the movie? It is not worthwhile!
- 3) His proposal is worthy of our serious consideration.
- 4) A well-written resume is always worth the effort.
- 5) He is not a worthy candidate and does not stand a chance of winning.
- 6) A flashlight is definitely a worthwhile inclusion among your safety and survival equipment.
- 7) I try to raise money for a worthy cause each year and plan to do so for the rest of my life.

- 8) If something is worth doing, it's worth doing well.

III. Usage

1. He is not a narrow-minded person. He welcomes criticism.
2. How do you explain the phenomenon that some people are born left-handed?
3. She gave a clear-headed (clear-sighted) assessment of the situation.
4. Her apology sounds half-hearted, but I will forgive her anyway.
5. We need some able-bodied men and women to help with the project.
6. Jessie is a sharp-witted (sharp-tongued, sharp-eyed) girl.
7. Now I opened the door to a white-haired lady carrying a portable tape recorder, a small box of tapes and a book.
8. The manager admitted that he was a bit quick-tempered on that occasion.

Comprehensive Exercises

I. Cloze

Recently a group of teachers from Britain were 1) assigned the task of going to Shanghai to discover the secret of the successful 2) performance of Chinese students in international tests of educational achievement. 3) In due course they came up with a report in which they suggested that one of the 4) principal reasons for China's success might be the use of teaching methods the UK has been moving away from for the past 50 years.

From 5) observing classroom teaching, the British teachers saw that their Chinese colleagues 6) proceeded more on the basis of a teacher-centered "chalk and talk" approach to learning than they did themselves. For since the 1970s educators in both the UK and US have 7) promoted a move towards a method of learning that is more student-centered.

So, were Britain and America misguided in moving away from a 8) reliance on traditional teacher-directed methods of learning? With traditionalists and reformists 9) all too often taking up 10) extreme positions it can be difficult to judge, but the truth is surely that there never has been just one path to learning that is 11) superior to all others. By learning from each other, both sides can find ways to 12) perfect their teaching.

II. Translation

I acquired the habit of reading early in life. My mother, who once taught grade school, knows all too well that reading is not only a principal tool to boost academic performance but also plays a critical role in promoting a child's intellectual growth. She used to read to me before I could read on my own. As soon as I knew enough words, she assigned me a book to read every week. Before I proceeded to the next one, she would encourage me to summarize, in spoken or written words, what I had learned from it, and it was through this practice that I expanded my knowledge of the world and perfected my language skills. For some time in my teens, I even harbored an ambition of becoming a professional writer.

Over time, reading became not only a habit but a passion for me, so much so that I ended up being a head librarian in the city library, working with and among books all day long.

Part III Text B

Comprehension Check

1. C 2. B 3. D 4. A 5. C 6. C

Language Practice

1. The investment fund has achieved annual compound returns of 18.2%.
2. Workers in big firms receive a big part of their pay in the form of bonuses and overtime.
3. You need to think twice before you decide to buy anything on credit.
4. As CFO of this project, it is his job to calculate its cost.
5. The house is too small for a family of seven, and furthermore, it's too far from the city.
6. I will post the letter for you. I have to go to the post office anyway.
7. Don't put boiling water in the glass or it will crack.
8. It's bad policy to lock up all one's money in long-term investments.
9. Bank statements help you keep track of where your money is going.
10. The system needs to be in operation for six months before it can be assessed.
11. The pair of shoes that I bought at the weekend sales fell apart after a couple of weeks.
12. I bought another safety lock as an additional insurance against thieves.
13. She is a shrewd judge of character.
14. We intend to proceed with the plan at whatever cost.
15. The leaves start out a pale green, and get darker a couple of days later.

Part IV Comprehensive Language Practice

Viewing & Comprehension Practice

1.

1) F 2) F 3) T 4) T 5) T

2.

- 1) A few years ago, a mom wrote a parenting book that freaked out a lot of people. "Extreme Parenting", they were upset about the woman who called herself "tiger mom". "The surprising details of her strict parenting methods ... causing quite a controversy." Controversy because of her strict rules.
- 2) "I don't think so at all. I think the message is, you know, 'I believe in you. You are capable of so much more than you realize. And if you just stop whining, and you know, don't give up, and don't make excuses, you can do anything you want in your life.'"
- 3) "Yes, we want our children to be happy, but it's not the secret to happiness to say 'Do whatever you want. Just enjoy yourself.'"

Transcript:

Battle Hymn of the Tiger Mother

A few years ago, a Mom wrote a parenting book that freaked out a lot of people. "Extreme Parenting", they were upset about the woman who called herself "tiger mom". "The surprising details of her strict parenting methods ... causing quite a controversy." Controversy because of her strict rules.

"Your daughters were not allowed to attend a sleepover, have a playdate, be at a school play, complain about not being in a play, watch TV or play computer games."

"Right."

"This seems mean."

"I don't think so at all. I think the message is, you know, 'I believe in you. You are capable of so much more than you realize. And if you just stop whining, and you know, don't give up, and don't make excuses, you can do anything you want in your life.'"

To teach her two daughters that, she forced them to practice violin and piano for hours.

"The kids have to practice 2, 3, 4, 5 hours a day, and I think for a lot of normal American parents that's inconceivable."

Her kids excel. Here they are at ages 11 and 14, performing at a grown-up concert. One daughter also excelled in tennis. At school the other made valedictorian. But the tiger mom's book got lots of criticism.

"She doesn't let kids make their own decisions."

"A manual for parents who want to systematically weed out any genuine interest or passion for life."

"The dream is you just give a child a clarinet, and an amazing jazz pops out. Or you give the child a piece of paper and you know, string theory will come out. But before you can invent string theory or invent the theory of relativity, you need to be able to multiply, really well."

"But like, where is childhood?"

"Yes, we want our children to be happy, but it's not the secret to happiness to say 'Do whatever you want. Just enjoy yourself.'"

"You called your daughter garbage once."

"I mentioned this at a dinner party and several people walked out."

"Yeah I would think so. You are just destroying your child's spirit."

"To me the message is: 'You know what, I think you are better than that. I think you should hold yourself to a higher standard.' And honestly I think, you know, parents, these days, they are so terrified of making their children feel bad."

Yes, maybe for a good reason. Everyone knows Asians are more likely to commit suicide except whatever one knows is wrong.

"Asian Americans actually have, among the lowest suicide rates of any group."

It's true. The Asian suicide rate is half that of the general population. Maybe tiger moms are better at instilling self-esteem.

"You can tell your child you are amazing all you want. But that doesn't instill true confidence. True self-esteem has to be earned."

Amy says Asian parents are more likely to be tiger moms and that's why Asian Americans get better grades and have higher average income.