

## 【守株待兔】

shǒu zhū dài tù

白话直译：株：露出地面的树根。在树根旁边等兔子。

比喻意义：比喻死守狭隘的经验，不知变通。也比喻妄想不通过努力而侥幸得到意外的收获。

英文直译：Hope for gains without pains.

英文解释：A farmer was one day working in the fields when he saw a rabbit bump into a tree stump accidentally and break its neck. He took the rabbit home and cooked himself a delicious meal. That night he thought, "I needn't work so hard. All I have to do is waiting for a rabbit each day by the stump." So from then on he



**成语来源：**《韩非子·五蠹》：“宋人有耕者，田中有株，兔走触株，折颈而死，因释其耒而守株，冀复得兔，兔不可复得，而身为宋国笑。”

**成语故事：**宋国有个农夫正在田里干活。突然，他看见一只野兔从旁边的草丛里慌慌张张地窜出来，一头撞在田边的树桩上，便倒在那儿死了。农民高兴极了，他一点力气没花，就白捡了一只又肥又大的野兔。他心想：要是天天都能捡到野兔，日子就好过了。从此，他再也不肯出力气种地了。每天，他就躺在树桩跟前，等待着第二只、第三只野兔自己撞到这树桩上来。世上哪有那么多好事啊。农民当然没有再捡到撞死的野兔，而他的田地却荒芜了。

gave up farming, and simply sat by the stump waiting for rabbits to come and run into it. This idiom satirises those who just wait for a stroke of luck, rather than making efforts to obtain what they need.

语录原文

子曰：“居处恭，执事敬，与人忠。”

zǐ yuē: "jū chǔ gōng, zhí shì jìng, yǔ rén zhōng."

白话直译

孔子说：“日常处事端庄，工作态度认真，为人一片忠心。”

语录出处

论语第十三章《子路》第十九段。

英 文 翻 译

In our daily dealings, we should look proper and solemn; in carrying out our duties, we should take it seriously and properly; and when interacting with people, we should be loyal and trustworthy.



## 【狐假虎威】

**hú jiǎ hǔ wēi**

**白话直译：**假：凭借。狐狸借著老虎的威风去吓唬其他野兽。

**比喻意义：**比喻倚仗别人的势力来欺压和吓唬人。

**英文直译：**To browbeat others by virtue of one's powerful connections.

**英文解释：**One day, a tiger met a fox and wanted to eat him. "You can't eat me, I'm the king of all the animals," said the clever fox. The tiger was puzzled, saying, "all the animals call me the king of jungle." The fox said, "if you don't believe me, let's walk around the forest, so you can see that all the animals are afraid of me." The tiger agreed and walked behind the fox. All the animals saw the tiger and ran away. The fox was very happy. He said, "See? All the animals are afraid of me." The tiger ran away.



**成语来源：**西汉·刘向《战国策·楚策一》：“虎求百兽而食之，得狐。狐曰：‘子无敢食我也。天帝使我长百兽，今子食我，是逆天帝命也。子以我为不信，吾为子先行，子随我后，观百兽之见我而敢不走乎！’虎以为然，故遂与之行。兽见之皆走，虎不知兽畏己而走也，以为畏狐也。”

**成语故事：**一天，一只饥饿的老虎碰到了一只狐狸。老虎非常想把狐狸吃掉。然而这只聪明的狐狸说：“你不能吃我，因为我是百兽之王！”老虎很疑惑，说：“所有的动物都叫我百兽之王。”狐狸说：“如果你不相信我，那就跟我一起在森林里走一圈。到时候你就能看看，是不是所有动物都怕我了。”老虎同意了。老虎跟在狐狸后面走，所有森林里的动物看到老虎都吓跑了。狐狸很高兴，它问老虎：“看到了吧？所有的动物都怕我！”老虎吓跑了。

语录原文

子曰：“学而时习之，不亦说乎？”

zǐ yuē: "xué ér shí xí zhī, bú yì yuè hū?"

白话直译

孔子说：“学了，然后按一定的时间去实习它，不是很高兴吗？”

语录出处

论语第一章《学而》第一段。

英 文 翻 译

Is it not a pleasure, having learnt something, to try it out at due intervals?



## 【井底之蛙】

jǐng dǐ zhī wā

白话直译：井底看天的青蛙。

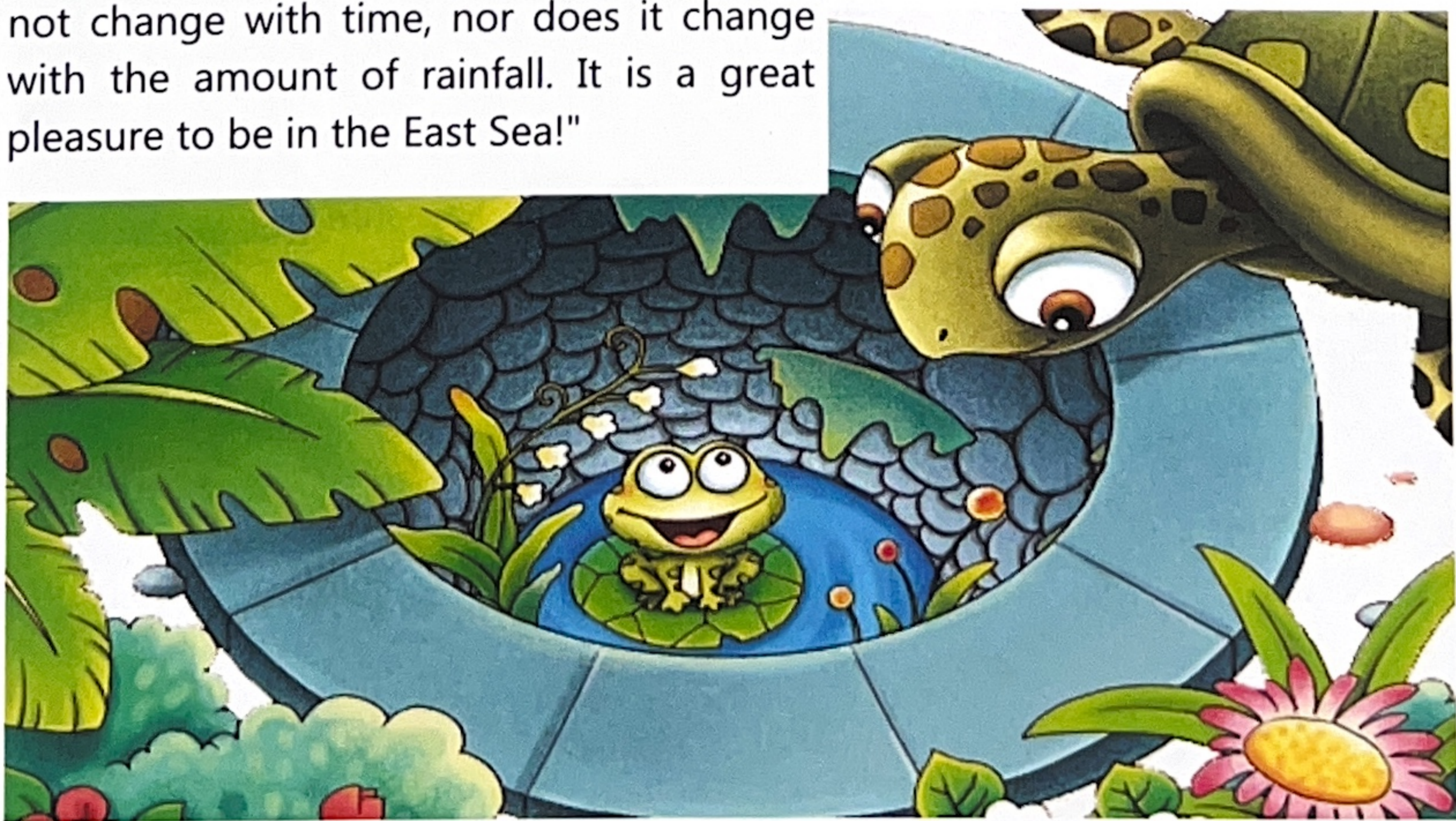
比喻意义：比喻眼界狭窄、见识短浅的人。

英文直译：Lacking in perspective. / Ignorance is bliss.

英文解释：There was once a frog who made his home in a shallow well. One day he met a turtle from the East Sea. "I'm extremely happy!" The frog told the turtle. "I can leap up and down the railing of the well and swim in the water. The other animals outside the well can't be as happy as I am." Rather amused, the turtle said, "I can't tell you how vast the East Sea is, for it is beyond measure. However, its depth does not change with time, nor does it change with the amount of rainfall. It is a great pleasure to be in the East Sea!"

**成语来源：**《《荀子·正论》：“坎井之蛙不可语东海之乐。”

**成语故事：**从前有只青蛙，在井里居住。一天，它看见一只从东海来的大鳖。井蛙对大鳖说：“我的生活多么快乐！高兴时，便在井栏上跳跃，或在水里游泳。其它动物可不及我呢！我是井的主人，住在井里就是最大的乐事。”大鳖不以为然，对青蛙说：“东海之大，我无法给你描述，因为那是无法测量的。它是不会因时间的长短或气候的旱涝而有所改变。因此住在东海才是最大的乐事！”



**语录原文** 子曰：“君子讷于言而敏于行。”

zǐ yuē: "jūn zǐ nè yú yán ér mǐn yú xíng."

**注 释** 讷：语言迟钝。

**白话直译** 孔子说：“君子言语要谨慎迟钝，工作要勤劳敏捷。”

**语录出处** 论语第四章《里仁》第二十四段。

英 文 翻 译

It is desirable for a gentleman to be slow of speech but quick in action.



## 【卧薪尝胆】

wò xīn cháng dǎn

白话直译：卧：睡；薪：柴草。

比喻意义：比喻刻苦自励，发奋图强。

英文直译：Subject oneself to hardship of all kinds in order to strengthen one's resolution to achieve one's ambition.

英文解释：Sleep on brushwood and taste gall. The state of Yue was defeated by the state of Wu and Gou Jian, king of Yue, resolved to make revenge. He slept on brushwood and tasted a gall bladder every day to remind himself of the humiliation. After a long period of preparation, he finally defeated the Wu. The phrase refers to undergoing self-imposed hardship to strengthen resolve or to accomplish ambition.

**成语来源：**西汉·司马迁《史记·越王勾践世家》：“越王勾践返国，乃苦身焦思，置胆于坐，坐卧即仰胆，饮食亦尝胆也。”

**成语故事：**春秋时期，吴国和越国发生了战争。越国被吴国打败，越王勾践被吴王夫差俘虏。后来，夫差释放了勾践，让他回到了越国。勾践在坐卧的地方吊了个苦胆，夜里睡在柴草上，每天吃饭时都尝尝苦胆，扪心自责：“你忘了大败之辱吗？”就这样勾践刻苦自励，经过十年发展生产，积聚力量，又经过十年练兵，终于在公元前473年打败夫差，灭掉了吴国。



## 语录原文

子曰：“君子食无求饱，居无求安，敏于事而慎于言，就有道而正焉 …”

zǐ yuē: “jūn zǐ shí wú qiú bǎo, jū wú qiú ān, mǐn yú shì ér shèn yú yán, jiù yǒu dào ér zhèng yān ...”

## 白话直译

孔子说：“作为一个君子，饮食方面不要贪饱；居住方面不要图舒适；做起事来要迅速；说话的时候要谨慎；靠近有道德的人，从而改进自己。”

## 语录出处

论语第一章《学而》第十四段。

## 英 文 翻 译

As a gentleman, do not look for overeating when it comes to food; do not seek comfortableness when it comes to living; be swift in carrying out one's duties, and speak with discretion; be close to men of righteousness so as to improve oneself.



## 【揠苗助长】

## yà miáo zhù zhǎng

白话直译：揠：拔。把苗拔起，以帮助其生长。

比喻意义：比喻违反事物发展的客观规律，急于求成，反而失败。

英文直译：Saplings grow by pulling them upwards, meaning spoiling things with excessive enthusiasm.

英文解释：There is an impetuous Song farmer in the fervent hope of paddy rice growing up quickly. However, the rice was to grow slowly, not as fast as he would like. One day he came up with an excellent plan. He went to the rice field and pulled every single shoot upward. "I am so tired now! I have worked so hard for a whole day! However, the shoots seemed grown higher now." His son heard that the shoots had grown higher in the rice fields, so he quickly run to the fields to have a look. How terrible it was! The leaves of the rice shoots were becoming withered.

成语来源：《孟子·公孙丑上》：“宋人有闵其苗之不长而揠之者，芒芒然归，谓其人曰：病矣！予助苗长矣！其子趋而往视之，苗则槁矣。”

成语故事：有个急性子的宋国农夫，日夜盼望稻田里的稻子快些长大。可是，稻子是要慢慢长的，不能照他想的那样长的那么快。有一天，他想出了一个“妙计”，于是到田里把每棵稻子都从泥里拔高了一些。

“好累啊！辛辛苦苦干了一整天！不过，田里的稻子倒是都长高好些了。”他的儿子听说田里的稻子长高了，连忙跑到田里去看。可是，糟透了，田里的稻苗的叶子，都开始枯萎了。



**语录原文** 子曰：“君子和而不同，小人同而不和。”

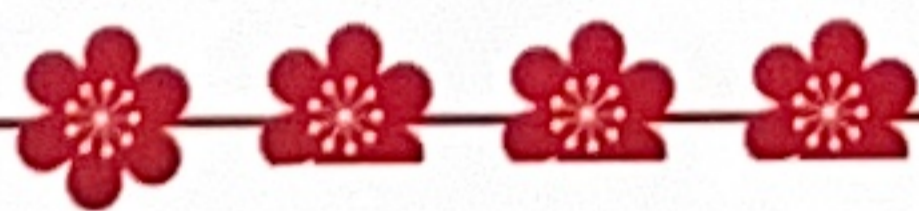
zǐ yuē: “jūn zǐ hé ér bù tóng, xiǎo rén tóng ér bù hé.”

**白话直译** 孔子说：“君子以中庸求和谐，不随声附和。非君子，随声附和，不用中庸协调。”

**语录出处** 论语第十三章《子路》第二十三段。

英 文 翻 译

A gentleman applies the Golden Mean to arrive at harmony without going with the flow. A non-gentleman goes with the flow without following the Golden Mean.



## 【塞翁失马】

sài wēng shī mǎ

**白话直译：**塞：边界的城关；翁：老头子。

**比喻意义：**比喻虽然暂时遭受损失，却也许因此得到好处。也指坏事可能转变成好事。

**英文直译：**A loss may turns out to be a gain.

**英文解释：**In ancient times, there was an old man lived in the frontier. One day, one of his horses run over the border to Hu's territory. When the folks came and comforted him, he said, "well, this is not necessarily a bad thing." A few months later, his lost horse led a group of Hu's horses back.

**成语来源：**西汉·刘安等《淮南子·人间训》：“塞上之人有善术者，马无故亡而入胡，人皆吊之。其父曰：‘此何遽不为福乎？’居数月，其马将胡骏马而归。”

**成语故事：**从前有一位老人，住在塞外边界的城关处。一天，他非常喜欢的马跑到胡人的地界去了，邻居听说，纷纷来慰问。老翁说：“没什么，马丢了，或许是福气呢。”邻居们觉得他在胡言乱语。可是几个月后，老人的马又回来了，并带回来一群胡人的骏马。



## 语录原文

子曰：“三人行，必有我师焉；择其善者而从之，其不善者而改之。”

zǐ yuē: "sān rén xíng, bì yǒu wǒ shī yān; zé qí shàn zhě ér cóng zhī, qí bú shàn zhě ér gǎi zhī."

## 白话直译

孔子说：“几个人一起走路，其中必定有人可以做我的老师。应当选择他们的优点去学习，对于他们的缺点，如果已有的话，要注意改正；如果没有，就要加以防备。”

## 语录出处

论语第七章《述而》第二十二段。

## 英 文 翻 译

When walking in the company of others, I am bound to be able to learn from them. I will select their good qualities and follow them, and pay attention to their bad qualities and avoid them.



## 【自相矛盾】

zì xiāng máo dùn

白话直译：矛：长矛；盾：盾牌。

比喻意义：比喻自己说话做事前后抵触。

英文直译：Self-contradictory.

英文解释：Once upon a time, there was a businessman from Chu country selling home-made spears and shields. He raised shields and boasted: "The shields I am selling are the strongest in the world. Regardless how sharp opponent's spear is, it will not have a thorn!" Then, he held up the spears and boasted again: "The spears I made are the sharpest. Regardless how solid the opponent's shield is, my spear will punch through!"



**成语来源：**《韩非子·难一》：“楚人有鬻楯（盾）与矛者，誉之曰：‘吾楯之坚，莫能限也。’又誉其矛曰：‘吾矛之利，于物无不限也。’或曰：‘以自之矛，限子之楯如何？’”

**成语故事：**从前，有个楚国的商人出卖自制的长矛和盾牌。他举起盾牌吹嘘说：“我卖的盾牌最坚固。不管对方的长矛多锋利，也无法刺透我的盾牌！”然后，他又举起长矛夸道：“我卖的长矛最锋利。不管对方的盾牌多坚固，我的长矛一刺就透！”围观的人群中有人问：“如果用你的长矛来刺你的盾牌，又如何呢？”楚国商人被问得半天回答不上来。

Someone in the crowd of onlookers asked: "If you try to use your spears to make a thorn to your shield, what will happen?" The businessman could not answer at all.

## 语录原文

子曰：“三军可夺帅也，匹夫不可夺志也。”

zǐ yuē: "sān jūn kě duó shuài yě, pǐ fū bù kě duó zhì yě."

## 白话直译

孔子说：“军队的司令可以失去，但大丈夫的志向是不能被剥夺的。”

## 语录出处

论语第九章《子罕》地二十六段。

## 英 文 翻 译

The commander of an army can be removed, but the ambition of a real man cannot be taken away.



## 【亡羊补牢】

## wáng yáng bǔ láo

**白话直译：**亡：丢失；牢：关牲口的圈。丢失了羊，就修补羊圈还不算晚。

**比喻意义：**比喻出了差错，及时设法补救，可以防止继续受损失。

**英文直译：**Take precautions after suffering a loss (is never too late).

**英文解释：**In the Warring States period, there was a Minister called Xin Zhuang in the Chu country. One day he said to the king of Chu: "You enjoy your life of luxury every day, regardless of state affairs while Chu is at great risk!" The king was spiteful to Xin Zhang so he had to hide away. Five months later, Qin country sent troops to invade Chu as he predicted and the king was forced into exile. He then realised Xin Zhuang had been right and hurriedly sent people to look for Xin Zhuang and asked for his advice. Sincerely Xin Zhuang said: "I have heard that it is not too late to think of hunting dogs when you see rabbits, and if a sheep escapes from the sheep pen, it is not too late to fix the pen. ...." He then presented his solution to the king.

**成语来源：**西汉·刘向《战国策·楚策四》：“见兔而顾犬，未为晚也；亡羊而补牢，未为迟也。”

**成语故事：**战国时代，楚国有个叫庄辛的大臣，有一天他对楚襄王说：“你每天只顾奢侈淫乐，不管国家大事，都城正面临危险呢！”襄王听了不以为然。庄辛只好躲到赵国。五个月后，秦国果然派兵侵略，襄王被迫流亡到阳城。他这时才意识到庄辛的话不错，赶紧派人把庄辛找回来，问他有什么办法。庄辛很诚恳地说：“我听说过，看见兔子才想起猎犬，这还不晚；羊跑掉了才补羊圈，也还不迟。……”并把良策献上。



**语录原文** 子曰：“人而无信，不知其可也。”

zǐ yuē: "rén ér wú xìn, bú zhī qí kě yě."

**白话直译** 孔子说：“一个人如果不守诚信，那就真不知道他如何能在世界上行事了。”

**语录出处** 论语第二章《为政》第二十二段。

英 文 翻 译

If a person is not trustworthy, then no one knows how this person can carry himself out in the world.



## 【胸有成竹】

## xiōng yǒu chéng zhú

白话直译：画竹子之前，心中已有竹子的形象。

比喻意义：比喻做事之前心中已有充分的把握。又比喻遇事不慌，沉着镇定。

英文直译：Having a well-thought-out plan, stratagem, etc.

英文解释：Wentong was a scholar in the Song Dynasty. He was greatly admired for his bamboo drawing. People who saw his paintings always wondered why he was so good at drawing bamboos. Actually, Wen Tong loved bamboos so much that he had grown various bamboos around his house. He spent a lot of time to observe bamboos in different seasons and weather conditions.



**成语来源：**宋·苏轼《文与可画篔簹谷偃竹记》：“故画竹，必先得成竹于胸中。”

**成语故事：**北宋画家文同画的竹子远近闻名，每天总有不少人登门求画。文同画竹的妙诀在哪里呢？原来，文同在自己家的院中种上各种竹子，无论春夏秋冬，阴晴风雨，他经常去竹林观察竹子的生长变化，琢磨竹子枝叶的形态、颜色。目积月累，竹子的形象都深深地印在他的心中，所以每次画竹，他都非常从容自信，画出的竹子，皆逼真传神。当人们夸奖他的画时，他总是谦虚地说：“我只是把心中的竹子画下来罢了。”

The observation made the images of the bamboos deeply imprinted in his mind, so he could draw bamboos with confidence. When people spoke highly of his paintings, he always said modestly that he had just put the images of the bamboo imprinted in his mind on the paper.

**语录原文** 子曰：“富与贵，是人之所欲也，不以其道得之，不处也。”

zǐ yuē: "fù yǔ guì, shì rén zhī suǒ yù yě, bú yǐ qí dào dé zhī, bú chù yě."

**白话直译** 孔子说：“财富和高官，是人们所想要的；但是来路不正的富贵，君子是不要的。”

**语录出处** 论语第四章《里仁》第五段。

英 文 翻 译

Vast wealth and high office are what people yearn for; however, if they are not obtained in a proper way, gentlemen will not take it.



## 【熟能生巧】

## shú néng shēng qiǎo

白话直译：巧：技艺高超、灵巧。

比喻意义：指熟练了就能掌握技巧，运用自如，或找到窍门。

英文直译：Skill comes from practice. /Practice makes perfection.

英文解释：A skilled archer drew a big crowd while he was practicing. The on-lookers cheered, but an old oil peddler only nodded his head indifferently. This hurt his pride of the archer. "What do you think of my skill?" "Just OK, but nothing special." "What can you do, then?" The old man put a bottle on the ground and covered its mouth with a coin. He then scooped out a ladle of oil from his big jar, held it high and began to fill the bottle. Now, a thread of oil



**成语来源：**清·李汝珍《镜花缘》第三十回：“唐敖道：‘九公不必谈了。俗话说说的熟能生巧。’”

**成语故事：**一个技艺高超的射手在练习射箭，引来了一大群人观看，大家都称赞他的技艺，但他发现人群中有个卖油翁只是淡淡的点头，这使得他很不高兴。他就问那老头：“你认为我的技术如何？”“一般。没什么特别的。”“你会干什么？”这个老头把一个葫芦放在地上，接着把一枚铜钱放在瓶口。他从大油壶里舀起一勺油，从高处往地上的葫芦里倒。只见那油就像线一样从铜钱中间的小洞里流下去，一滴都没有漏出来。围观者都惊呆了。而这个卖油翁却说：“其实没什么大不了的，只不过是天天练的结果。”

came down from the ladle into the bottle just through the hole of the coin. Everybody watched with amazement. But the old man said, "This is nothing special, I can do this because I have practiced it a lot."

## 语录原文

曾子曰：“吾日三省吾身：为人谋而不忠乎？与朋友交而不信乎？传不习乎？”

zēng zǐ yuē: “wú rì sān xǐng wú shēn: wéi rén móu ér bù zhōng hū? yǔ péng yǒu jiāo ér bú xìn hū? chuán bú xí hū?”

## 白话直译

曾子说：我每天多次自我反省：替别人办事是否尽心竭力了呢？同朋友往来是否诚实呢？老师传授的学业是否复习了呢？

## 语录出处

论语第一章《学而》第四段。

## 英 文 翻 译

Every day I examine myself on three accounts. In what I have undertaken on another's behalf, have I failed to do my best? In my dealing with friends have I failed to be trustworthy? Have I failed to practice repeatedly what my teacher has taught me?



## 【掩耳盗铃】

## yǎn ěr dào líng

白话直译：掩：捂。捂着耳朵去偷铃铛。

比喻意义：比喻自作聪明，自己骗自己。

英文直译：Plugging one's ears while Stealing a Bell.

英文解释：Once upon a time, there was a man who wanted to steal his neighbour's doorbell. However, he knew clearly that the bell would ring and catch the attention of other people if he touched the bell. He thought hard and suddenly hit a clever idea. He plugged his ears with something, thinking that everything would go well when he stole the bell. Unfortunately to his disappointment, the bell still rang loudly and he was caught on the spot as a thief.

成语来源：《吕氏春秋·自知》：“百姓有得钟者，欲负而走，则钟大不可负。以锤毁之，钟况然有声。恐人闻之而夺己也，遽掩其耳。”

成语故事：从前，一个小偷看到别人家门上挂了一个铃，便起了贼心，想把它偷走。可是他又怕被人听到铃声，于是，他把自己的耳朵塞了起来。他认为自己听不见响声，别人一定也听不到。可是，出乎他的意料，铃还是响了，他被当作小偷抓了起来。



**语录原文** 子曰：“见贤思齐焉，见不贤而内自省也。”

zǐ yuē: "jiàn xián sī qí yān, jiàn bù xián ér nèi zì xǐng yě."

**白话直译** 孔子说：“看见贤人，便应该向他看齐；看见不贤的人，便应该自己反省（有没有同他类似的毛病）。”

**语录出处** 论语第四章《里仁》第十七段。

英 文 翻 译

When you meet someone better than yourself, turn your thoughts to becoming his equal. When you meet someone not as good as you are, look within and examine your own self.



## 【铁杵成针】

### tiě chǔ chéng zhēn

白话直译：铁杵：铁棍。把铁棍磨成针。

比喻意义：只要肯下功夫，没有办不到的事。

英文直译：An iron pestle can be ground down to a needle.

英文解释：The great poet Li Bai was naughty and disliked study when he was a child. One day he saw an old woman grinding an iron rod on a big stone. Li Bai asked curiously, "what are you doing, granny?" "Grinding the iron rod to make a sewing needle," was the answer. "What?!" little Li Bai was puzzled, "you want to grind so big a rod into a needle? It will take many years." "As long as I persevere in doing so,

**成语来源：**南宋祝穆《方輿胜览》：“过小溪，逢老媪方磨铁杵，问之，曰：‘欲作针。’”

**成语故事：**唐代大诗人李白小的时候非常调皮，不喜欢读书。一天他在河边看见一位老妇人拿着一根铁棒在大石头上磨。李白非常好奇，问那个老妇人：“你在干什么呀？”老妇人边磨边说：“我要把铁棒磨成一根绣花针。”“什么？！”小李白听糊涂了。“你想把这么粗的铁棒磨成绣花针？可是这要花好多年啊！”“这没有关系？只要我坚持下去，世上没有办不到的事，我一定能把铁棒磨成针的。”老妇人的话深深打动了李白。从此，他认真刻苦地学习，最终成为了一名伟大的诗人。



there is nothing I cannot achieve. I can certainly make a sewing needle from this rod." Deeply moved by what the old woman said, Li Bai made effort to study since then and finally became one of the greatest poets in ancient China.

**语录原文** 子曰：“学而不思则罔，思而不学则殆。”

zǐ yuē: "xué ér bù sī zé wǎng, sī ér bù xué zé dài."

**白话直译** 孔子说：“只是读书，却不思考，就会受骗；只是空想，却不读书，就会缺乏信心。”

**语录出处** 论语第二章《为政》第十五段。

英 文 翻 译

Learning without reasoning leads to confusion; thinking without learning leads to jeopardy.

