



中英社評



疫情持續放緩，為特區政府進一步放寬限聚措施創造了條件。昨日，安老院及殘疾院舍首度容許親友有限度探訪。疫情下的長期分離，大有恍若隔世之感，有人擁抱親人不肯鬆開，有人淚流滿面，場面感人。人間至珍貴者莫過於親情，要想親友探望不至於因為疫情再次爆發而中斷，香港就必須繼續做好穩控疫情的工作，目前遠不是「躺平」的時候。

對院友來說，最難耐的是寂寞，親友探訪對他們是巨大的精神安慰，有助於身體康復。但兩年多來疫情一爆再爆，院舍開了又關，關了又開，正常的探訪難以為繼，院友的孤獨感和不安因而增加，令他們產生被家人和社會拋棄的負面情緒，可謂度日如年。特別是第五波疫情來勢洶湧，全港逾百萬人確診，九千多人死亡，其中一半以上來自安老院舍，不少人臨終前與親人緣慳一面，再見已是陰陽永隔。縱然保得性命的也日夜擔驚受怕，雖然有人隔着玻璃窗一解相思之苦，或者透過手機視頻相見，但虛擬場景取代不了真正的見面傾訴。特區政府日前宣布容許有限度探訪，這是期待已久的好消息，大家都非常雀躍，急盼與親人重逢。

有人認為，如果將有限度探訪提前至母親節前，意義更大。道理的確如此，但對特區政府來說，放寬限聚措施需要穩打穩紮，見步行步，決不能操之過急。畢竟安老院和殘疾院舍都是高風險場所，在親情和生命安全之間，生命當然是第一位的。

香港疫情只是緩解，而不是結束。現在每日確診個案約200至300宗，考慮到有些市民感染後未必呈報，官方數字未必能反映事實全貌。每日數百宗個案，是多還是少？這要看拿什麼作為參照物。與三月初疫情高峰期的每日數萬宗確診相比，的確是大幅下降，但與前四波疫情期間每日最多一百多宗確診相比，現時疫情仍然在高位徘徊。社區傳播鏈仍在，哪怕有一個超級感染者，就足以釀成新一波疫情大爆發。

事實上，就在全港一片歡欣，在不少人以為疫情已經是過去式的樂觀氛圍下，警鐘已不斷響起。母親節前夕上環星月樓爆發，累計30人中招；西環邨圍封強檢發現22宗確診個案，佔居民比例為1.3%，對比最近圍封強檢只找到零星個案，已是危險信號。由於港島西區的污水檢測顯示病毒量甚高，當地可能出現超級帶病毒者，港大呼籲師生避免到堅尼地城用膳，這是負責任的做法。

從好的方面講，本港整體疫苗接種率已達九成以上，加上大量市民感染，已初步建成免疫屏障，暫時來看大規模爆發的風險不高。然而，依靠疫苗或感染得來的免疫力會隨着時間推移而減弱，特別是新冠病毒變化莫測，無法排除出現殺傷力和傳播力更強的變種的可能性，因此各方還是要小心為妙。對特區政府來說，最要緊的是趁着疫情緩和，加快提升「一老一幼」接種率。現時80歲以上長者接種率為六成五，3至11歲兒童接種率剛過七成，距離九成的安全目標尚有相當大的距離。

快樂總是短暫的，兩年多來疫情不斷反覆，讓市民真實地感受到這一點。香港要達至真正的安全，唯有盡量擴大疫苗的覆蓋率，同時檢討抗疫機制，完善應急預案，為實現與內地通關創造條件。一言以蔽之，香港沒有鬆懈的資本，抗疫依然任重道遠。

2022-05-14



疫情威脅仍在 放寬不是躺平

Easing anti-epidemic measures is not meant to "lie flat" as virus threat remains present

The epidemic situation continues stabilising, creating the conditions for the SAR Government to further ease social distancing restrictions. Implementation of a restricted visiting arrangement kicked off yesterday for the first time in both the residential care homes for the elderly and for persons with disabilities. The long-time separation forced by the epidemic seemed as if for a lifetime. Some visitors hugged their kinsfolk unwilling to **let go**, some others' faces were covered with tears. Such scenes were very touching. Nothing in the world is more valuable than love and family affection. For such and similar visiting arrangements not to be interrupted due to a new wave of epidemic outbreak, Hong Kong must continue to do a good job in epidemic control. It is still far from the time for us to "lie flat".

For residents in these care homes, loneliness is the most unbearable. Family members and relatives' visits are for them an enormous consolation, which is of help to their physical recovery. But waves of Covid-19 outbreak come one after another over the past two years or so, and care homes have to close and open, then close and open again and again, making it impossible to make any normal visiting arrangement. As a result, residents there have felt increasingly lonely and restless and become obsessed with such negative mood as thinking themselves being abandoned by their families and society. As such, a day was passed as if it were a year. In particular, the fifth wave of outbreak has swept Hong Kong **like fury**. Over one million Hong Kong residents were confirmed to have been infected. Among them over 9,000 died, and over half of the deceased were residents of these residential care homes. Quite a few were unable to see their kinsfolk for the last time before they passed away. The survivors were in a state of anxiety and apprehension. Although some of them could somehow ease their anxiety by seeing their visiting kinsfolk through a window or video chat, such virtual-reality meetings could never be the same as face-to-face ones. The restricted visiting arrangement announced by the SAR Government earlier was a piece of long-awaited good news. Rejoicing, people concerned were looking forward to meeting their kinsfolk again.

There was a view that the restricted visiting arrangement would have been more meaningful were it implemented ahead of the Mother's Day. It is indeed so for the sake of reasoning. But for the SAR Government, easing social distancing rules must be pursued steadily and step by

step, so it must refrain from acting with undue haste. After all, both residential care homes for the elderly and for persons with disabilities are high-risk venues. Between affection and life safety, the latter must be **put first**.

The epidemic situation in Hong Kong is just stabilising, far from coming to an end. Nowadays, the daily number of confirmed cases is about 200 to 300. Such official statistics may not necessarily show the whole truth as some infected citizens may not report their cases. Is such a daily number, a couple of hundred cases, big or small? That depends on what is used as a reference. Compared with the daily number, in tens of thousands, in early March, this indeed is much smaller. But compared with the daily number of over 100 at the most during the fourth wave of outbreak, the current figure still remains high. Transmission chains still exist in the community. A super spreader alone could cause a new wave of outbreak.

As a matter of fact, when quite many people think the epidemic a thing of the past amid general rejoicing, alarm bells already keep ringing. On the eve of the Mother's Day, there was an outbreak in Sky Cuisine, a restaurant in Sheung Wan, with about 30 customers infected. Lockdown at Sai Wan Estate for compulsory testing uncovered 22 confirmed cases, accounting for 1.3 per cent of its all residents. This is an alarm considering that other recent lockdowns only uncovered a couple of cases each. As very high viral loads have been found in sewage samples in and around Kennedy Town, suggesting some potential super spreaders might exist in the area. It is responsible for the University of Hong Kong to advise its students and staff to refrain from dining out in the area.

On the positive side, overall vaccination rate in Hong Kong already reaches over 90 per cent and a large number of citizens have been infected, so a preliminary protective barrier has been raised. Hence the risk for a large scale outbreak seems not so high for the time being. However, immunity gained by vaccination will weaken with the passing of time. In particular, mutation of the virus is unpredictable, and the possibility cannot be ruled out that there may come a more fatal and contagious variant. So everyone had better remain cautious and careful. For the SAR Government, the most urgent task is to boost the vaccination rates of the elderly and children respectively. Right now, vaccination rate for the elderly is about 65 per cent while that for children aged between three and 11 just pass 70 per cent, still **a far cry from** the safety

goal of 90 per cent.

Happy times are always short. Citizens now truly understand it from ups and downs of the epidemic situation over the past two or so years. The only way for Hong Kong to have genuine safety is to maximally expand the coverage of vaccination and at the same time review our anti-epidemic strategy and improve our contingency plans, so as to create the conditions for reopening the border with the Mainland. **All in all**, Hong Kong cannot afford to relax as there is still a long way to go in fighting the virus.

14 May 2022

WORDS AND USAGE

• Let go (idiom) –

To stop physically holding on to someone or something. (放手，鬆開)

Examples:

1. Hold on tight and don't let go!
2. He let the rock go, and it was a long time before we heard it hit the bottom.

• Like fury (idiom) –

Violently; furiously. (猛烈地，奮力地)

Examples:

1. The last two days of her stay there it rained like fury.
2. I've been working like fury these past few days to catch up.

• Put sb/sth first (idiom) –

To treat someone or something as being more important than anyone or anything else. (認為…最重要，把…擺在第一位)

Examples:

1. Businesses should always put the customer first.
2. We need to choose energy policies that put the environment first.

• Far cry from (idiom) –

A long way; very different. (相去甚遠)

Examples:

1. Resistance is a far cry from immunity.
2. This proposal is still a far cry from the goal of "storing wealth among the people".

• All in all (idiom) –

When everything is considered. (總而言之)

Examples:

1. We both thought that all in all it might not be a bad idea.
2. All in all, getting insufficient sleep is bad news.



Solve your IELTS Puzzle - Part 1



續FUN英語

承接上兩集內容，今集開始會連續四集解答有關雅思考試（IELTS）在聽寫講讀遇到的問題。

讀者基於不同理由報考雅思考試，我們這四集純粹針對學術考試（IELTS Academic）方面的小貼士及解答一些讀者的來信。



第一部分一般是大約40分鐘的聽力測試，考生需要聆聽4段錄音並回答有關問題。

參與電腦考試或考筆試，題目其實是一樣，只有一個分別就是答案需要直接打在電腦上而最後有2分鐘檢查答案。

如果考筆試，考生在考試最後有10分鐘把答案從問題紙轉移到答案紙上。

讀者詢問怎樣在考試期間提升專注力及考試戰鬥力；由於考試時間往往是比較早，很多時失手是因為不能專注聆聽。發夢10分鐘便好像整個考試也完蛋了。



我一般建議學生要在準備考IELTS之前最少一個月把整個睡眠習慣調整。很多學生不習慣早起，早上不能集中精神。這對雅思考試非常不利，由於所有題目只會有一次聆聽的機會，如果不能集中精神便聽不清楚題目，整個考試的

成功率也會相對下降；另外也有可能聽錯指引，所謂的「看錯題目」也很多時由於精神不足，結果浪費了金錢時間。

也由於聽力測試是整個雅思考試中第一個最早的測試，如果狀態或表現不佳，有可能會影響之後的作戰心態。所以值得花時間去裝備自己，在盡可能的最佳狀態下參加考試是最理想的。

考試題目由淺入深，開首兩部分是有關everyday situations，及後的部分是跟學術相關的討論，也許會比較挑戰性。建議準考生在考試前最少一個月開始操練past papers，在考試時候自然地勝券在握。



另一個小貼士就是可以在考試的時候把重點、關鍵字(keyword)即時用筆畫線，想到任何同義詞(thesaurus or paraphrase)或是有可能的答案可以即時寫下。幫助即時選取最適當的答案。

最後不能輕描淡寫的就是平日的操練。如果生活上沒有一個以全英語聆聽及說話的環境，那便乾脆自己打造一個特定環境練習。網上免費英語電台及podcast是一個很好的學習工具，把聆聽英語變成每一天的部分便已經是一個很好的考試準備。

當然Miss Carol往往希望學生是真的對英語有興趣而自發性地聆聽英語資訊節目，那便更加好。要不然，自己立定考什麼Band Level便要付出相對的努力。

下集繼續。

Miss Carol

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