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恒管英萃

# 寫信結尾XOXO 表達親暱掛念

上回談及新版A至G,現由H說起。

#### H for H-hour

與D-Day(發動攻勢或重要活動首日)相似, H / h-hour源於軍事術語,解軍事行動或重要事宜的開始時刻,又可稱為zero hour。

I for "Dot the i's and cross the t's"

進行速記(longhand)或草寫(cursive writing)時,多會寫不完整生字,甚至寫完整句才會為小草字母i和t分別補上一點和一橫。片語dot the i's and cross the t's源於老師在教寫草書時提醒學生別忘記i的一點和t的一橫,現泛指行事重視細節、一絲不苟:Don't worry; I've got the i's dotted and the t's crossed with our property mortgage application.(別擔心,我已妥善處理樓宇抵押申請。)

### J for Jay

J在英語又可寫成jay,在動物界是見於歐洲、羽毛鮮豔的松鴉,由於此鳥經常發出惱人鳴叫,於是jay 泛指嘮嘮叨叨的傻瓜。Jay亦是大麻捲煙其中一個街頭術語(street name)。

#### K for 1,000

由於K是Kilo(公斤),亦即一千克(1,000 grams),因此K在日常生活中代表一千: It's amazing for a fresh graduate to have 50K in their first paycheck!(初出茅廬的畢業生已能賺取五萬元月薪,真了不起!)

#### L for L-bomb

炸彈當然可怕,愛神投下的亦不是人人歡喜。L-bomb的L正是 love,片語drop the L-bomb on somebody 解作突如其來而叫人討厭的愛情剖白:I was shocked that he already dropped the L-bomb on me after knowing each other for a day!(才不過相識了一天他已跟我示愛,真叫人大吃一驚。)

#### O for "the Xs and Os"

此多用於美式口語,指行業或技能的基本元素,尤多用於運動的作戰攻勢:At halftime, it is common to see a coach gathering the players for the Xs and Os. (中場休息時,多見教練與一眾運動員討論比賽策略。)

寫信或紙條予友人或愛人時,結尾時加上XOXO則代表親吻和擁抱,其出處眾說紛紜。其中最為人知的是基督教以「X」代表耶穌,故在中世紀時不懂讀寫的信徒在重要文件以蠟或鉛封口,印上及親吻「X」以示真誠及文件內容真確,就如親吻《聖經》表達對基督信仰一樣,亦衍生seal with a kiss(SWAK)的說法。

「O」則有說乃雙手環狀擁抱對方的形象化,亦有說猶太人初移民美國時拒絕以「X」作簽署,認為此字母勾起其民族被宗教迫害的慘痛經歷,因此以「O」取代。時至今日,XOXO則表達親暱及掛念之情,用於家人、友人或愛人間之書信溝通。

P for "Mind/ Watch your p's and q's"

小楷字母p和q猶如照鏡般,小孩學習書寫難免有時弄混,因而衍生片語mind / watch your p's and q's去提示謹言慎行: Interviewees should mind their p's and q's in job interviews.(見工時應保持最佳言行舉止。)

此片語還有不少有趣典故: 古時酒吧侍應或酒保以 p's代表 pints(英美容量:品脫)和 q's代表 quarts(夸脫,是品脫的一倍)分別記錄客人飲用啤酒量作準確收費,因此mind one's p's and q's亦可解 誠實準繩的會計或薄記。

另外亦有婆娑起舞的典語:法語的 pieds(英譯feet)是跳舞的腳步,queues(英譯pigtail)則是馬尾髮型,古時法國盛行的舞蹈中舞者的馬尾掛上大大的假髮,導師以 mind your p's and q's提示舞者別被馬尾絆倒,保持優雅舞姿。

亦可說成on one P and Q,告誡需守規矩:All students were on their P and Q with the principal's presence. (校長的出現令所有學生的言行舉止謹小慎微。) ■鍾可盈博士 <u>恒生管理學院</u>英文學系高級講師

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