



BBC WORLD SERVICE LEARNING ENGLISH

The Foot in Mouth Award
不知所云奖

The Foot in Mouth Award 不知所云奖

The UK's Business Secretary Wins an Embarrassing Award 英国商务大臣 获一尴尬奖项

Read the text below and do the activity that follows.

阅读下面的短文，然后完成练习：

When did you last look around a corner? Did you do it thoroughly?

If you think that question is a little odd, you're not alone. Every year the Plain English Campaign collects **perplexing** examples of English usage as part of a drive for language that everyone can understand.

In an annual awards ceremony, the Campaign highlights **jargon** and **gobbledegook** used by **official bodies** in their **literature**. They also give someone **in the public eye** a "Foot in Mouth" award for making the most **baffling** remark of the year.

This year that **dubious honour** goes to one of the most powerful people in Britain: Lord Mandelson, the government's Business Secretary. He earned the **black mark** for these comments, which he made in May:

"Perhaps we need not more people looking round more corners, but the same people looking round more corners more thoroughly to avoid the small things **detracting** from the big things the Prime Minister is getting right."

Although his meaning is unclear, Mandelson's remarks appear to be a classic example of **a metaphor being stretched that little bit too far**.

The Campaign also awarded the Department of Health a Golden Bull Award for describing an **initiative** as "refocusing **upstream** to stop people falling in the waters of disease". Eh?

American Airlines were also **rapped** for sending a passenger a "property irregularity receipt". "Property irregularity" is code for lost luggage. The Plain English Campaign described this as "an **acknowledgement** sent to a passenger that avoids the real problem of lost luggage".

For many **Brits**, Peter Mandelson's **accolade** has an especially sweet irony. For years he was the government's top **spin doctor**. People including Tony Blair and Gordon Brown have **turned to** Mandelson when looking for the right way to phrase things.

What hope is there for English language learners when even **renowned** masters of communication make a mess of things?

Glossary 词汇表

| | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| perplexing – 令人困惑的 | jargon – 术语 |
| gobbledegook -难解的语言 | official bodies – 官方机构 |
| literature – 文献 | in the public eye – 在公众眼中 |
| baffling – 令人困惑的 | dubious honour – 令人尴尬的荣誉 |
| black mark – 污点 | detracting – 贬低 |
| a metaphor ... too far – 比喻过分 | initiative – 倡议 |
| upstream – 上游 | rapped – 批评 |
| acknowledgement – 确认 | Brits – 英国人 |
| accolade – 嘉奖 | spin doctor – 政治顾问，为丑闻辩解的公关人员 |
| turned to – 求助 | renowned – 享有盛誉的 |

1. Reading Quiz 阅读测验

Are these sentences true or false? Circle the correct answer.

以下句子哪句是真?哪句是假? 请圈出正确答案。

1. The Plain English Campaign wants government and other organisations to be very clear. **True / False**
2. The Campaign is against organisations using lots of technical vocabulary. **True / False**
3. Lord Mandelson has been honoured for his excellent use of English. **True / False**
4. The Campaign gave American Airlines an award for losing luggage. **True / False**
5. Lord Mandelson has helped Prime Ministers communicate effectively. **True / False**

2. Synonyms 同义词

a) Synonyms from the Article 文章里的同义词

这篇文章里有很多意思相近的词汇，请把下列词语和它们的同义词搭配，你应配出六组同义词。

| | | | | | |
|----------|---------------|----------|---------|--------------|------------|
| drive | jargon | bodies | remarks | perplexing | comments |
| accolade | organisations | baffling | award | gobbledegook | initiative |

| | |
|-------|-------|
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |

b) More Synonyms 更多同义词

下面每句话中都有一个和上题同义词意思相近的词组，看看你是否能找出来并判断其意思。

1. It's quite a scary poster isn't it? It's part of the government's new campaign to raise awareness of the risks of smoking.
2. I just don't know what he means. It's all just technical mumbo-jumbo.
3. Have you seen our latest gong? We picked it up at the British Retail Awards.
4. I don't know how I managed to leave my keys on the table and double-lock the door. It's extremely puzzling.
5. After working at a number of prestigious institutions, he became a government advisor.

3. Metaphors and Clichés 比喻和陈词滥调

在这篇文章里我们读到“Mandelson’s remarks appear to be a classic example of a metaphor being stretched that little bit too far.” 用比喻修饰方法能给日常生活用语添加少许诗意，但有时过多使用比喻有让语句显得陈词滥调。请把下面每句话中划线的比喻和其意思配对。

1. I think the economy is about to **turn a corner**.
2. In his remarks he tried to **draw a line under** what had happened.
3. Things are about to reach **a tipping point**.
4. My fear is that this latest policy is **the thin end of the wedge**.
5. These latest figures are just **the tip of the iceberg**.
6. We’re not all **reading off the same song sheet**.
7. The government would like to help, but it can’t just **write a blank cheque**.

- A. demonstrating that we share a view about something
- B. end discussion about
- C. start getting better
- D. promise to give an unlimited amount of money
- E. a very small indication of a much larger issue
- F. the start of a trend that will continue and get worse
- G. a situation in which change is inevitable

4. Wordsearch 单词搜索

Try to find the words associated with today's article in the puzzle below.

There are ten words to find. Words can be written horizontally (g), vertically (i) or diagonally (m)

请在下面的字谜游戏中，找出与本文有关的英语单词来。

共有**10**个单词，其组成方式可能以水平的 (g) 垂直的 (i) 或对角的 (m) 形式出现。

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| m | o | i | n | i | t | i | a | t | i | v | e |
| j | e | s | u | r | a | t | i | o | n | a | n |
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| g | e | i | r | p | o | l | i | o | c | a | n |
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| s | p | e | r | p | l | e | x | i | n | g | s |

| | | | | |
|--------|------------|----------|-------------|------------|
| jargon | rapped | accolade | spin doctor | perplexing |
| Brits | initiative | metaphor | black mark | renowned |

Answers 答案

1. Reading Quiz 阅读测验

- The Plain English Campaign wants government and other organisations to be very clear. **True**
- The Campaign is against organisations using lots of technical vocabulary. **True**
- Lord Mandelson has been honoured for his excellent use of English. **False**
- The Campaign gave American Airlines an award for losing luggage. **False**
- Lord Mandelson has helped Prime Ministers communicate effectively. **True**

2. Synonyms 同义词

a) Synonyms from the Article 文章里的同义词

accolade / award
 gobbledegook / jargon
 perplexing / baffling
 drive / initiative
 bodies / organisations
 comments / remarks

b) More Synonyms 更多同义词

- It's quite a scary poster isn't it? It's part of the government's new **campaign (drive / initiative)** to raise awareness of the risks of smoking.
- I just don't know what he means. It's all just technical **mumbo-jumbo (gobbledegook / jargon)**.
- Have you seen our latest **gong (accolade / award)**? We picked it up at the British Retail Awards.
- I don't know how I managed to leave my keys on the table and double-lock the door. It's extremely **puzzling (perplexing / baffling)**.
- After working at a number of prestigious **institutions (bodies / organisations)**, he became a government advisor.

3. Metaphors and Clichés 比喻和陈词滥调

- C
- B
- G
- F
- E
- A
- D

4. Wordsearch 单词搜索

| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|--|
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