

ÉRETTSÉGI VIZSGA • 2005. május 12.

ANGOL NYELV

**EMELT SZINTŰ
ÍRÁSBELI VIZSGA**

III. Hallott szöveg értése

Szövegátirat

OKTATÁSI MINISZTERIUM

TASK 1

It is amazing how rich the English language is in colorful words and expressions. Native speakers of the language use these phrases every day, so it is important that people around the world should better understand them as from this understanding comes real communication and knowledge.

It might also be interesting to try and find out how these words and expressions became part of our language. Sometimes the original story has been lost, but very often there is an interesting story behind the expression, and sometimes there are even several explanations available. In any case, these stories and explanations can help us remember these phrases and may even give us some ideas about past and present life in an English-speaking country.

Let's just take the example of one of my favorite expressions of mine: "the real McCoy".

If a person tells you that something is "the real McCoy," he is telling you that it is the real thing, not a copy or replacement. There is nothing false about "the real McCoy". It is the best that can be found.

There are different ideas on how the expression came into common use. Perhaps the most popular story is about a famous boxer, Charles "Kid" McCoy, a one-time world heavyweight champion. One day, McCoy was having a drink in a bar with a lady friend. A man came up and began to talk to her. He was not a nice man.

McCoy wanted no trouble. He asked the man to leave. He said, "I'm Kid McCoy". McCoy thought his name was so well-known that there was no need to say any more. But the man did not believe him. He said, "Oh yeah? Well, if you are Kid McCoy, then I am George Washington!" And he continued to speak in an unpleasant way to the boxer's friend.

McCoy hit the man with his fist - not hard - it was really a light touch. But the man fell to the ground, unconscious. Ten minutes later, when he came to his senses, he called out: "That *was* the real McCoy!"

And so, as told by Kid McCoy, that was how the expression, "the real McCoy" got started.

There are other explanations, however.

One is that the expression goes back to the days of Prohibition when it was illegal in the United States to sell whiskey. Although whiskey was against the law, many sold it, and many sold bad whiskey. They were not afraid to do so, because there was little that anybody could do about it. Buying whiskey ... good or bad ... was illegal as selling it.

But there was one whiskey dealer who was ‘honest’. His name was McCoy. He refused to sell bad whiskey. He sold only the best imported whiskey. In time, his product became recognized as the best. It was called “the real McCoy”.

The expression survived Prohibition days and soon became a general term. One way or another, no matter how the expression began, “the real McCoy” is an expression that everybody understands. It means the one and only - the best there is.

They are indeed words of special praise.

TASK 2

...And finally here’s an interesting report on a recent survey of what British people are most afraid of. The survey was conducted for Universal Picture, UK. A poll of 1,000 people between 16 and 55 years old found spiders topped the list of what’s scary - followed by terrorists, snakes, heights and death. The next three fears - in descending order - were a trip to the dentist, needles and injections, and public speaking.

A similar survey conducted in the United States, however, showed that the most scary things for Americans were snakes with a little less than two-thirds of all adults - 63% - saying they were either very or at least somewhat afraid of them. Fear of heights was also a problem for many Americans: most people - 55% - were at least somewhat afraid of looking down from a great height. Fear of flying - with a total of 35% - was also quite high on the list of fears. Other fears that were relatively high on the list included being alone in a forest, spiders or insects and mice.

It is very interesting that women have far more fears than men: for example, some of the differences between the proportions of men and women who are “very afraid” are really huge: women are twice more likely to be afraid of snakes than men; almost three times more likely to be afraid of heights and flying than men, about than five times more likely to afraid of spiders, dogs and insects and being alone in a forest than men. And when it comes to little furry creatures, women are nine times more likely than men to be very afraid of mice.

Some of the differences between those with more or less education are also great: people with less education have more fears than people with more education - particularly in the case of fear of snakes, heights, flying and forests.

TASK 3

Ladies: ...tell you who I really fancy: Jean-Marc Barre in the Big Blue, he is very sexy.

Not as sexy as Hugh Lowell, with his green eyes and lithe body.

Lithe? (*Laughs.*)

Presenter: Lots of people are looking for the perfect partner and like these girls, I'm no exception. Find me a mixture of Harrison Ford, Tom Cruise and Clive Anderson and watch me swoon.

But at 30 something I'm still single, and not for lack of trying. It's not that I've ever had a problem attracting men, but Mr Wrong always turns up rather than Mr Right. Maybe it's time to put my plight to the scientists. Dr Glenn Wilson from the Institute of Psychiatry is an expert on the science of love. He's come up with a more academic version of everyone's ideal husband.

Dr Wilson: He would be tall, he would be fit, he would be symmetrical, because that would show good genes.

Presenter: Is it true that tall, dark and handsome men are the most attractive?

Dr Wilson: Women do seem to go for tall men, and they do tend to like darker-haired men. And, thereafter, the personality traits are important, his intelligence, his talent, his earning power, things like that. Men are the other way around, they like a woman who is definitely shorter than themselves and they prefer, blond, blue-eyed women, probably because they are baby signals. And it's that vulnerability that brings out the protective instincts in males.

Presenter: So there is hope for me yet...