

BBC Learning English – Listening Page

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'First Emperor' Exhibition, London 第一皇帝在伦敦

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For over 2000 years they've guarded China's first emperor, now his Terracotta Army are on the move. For the first time, they're coming to the British Museum for a major exhibition.

Oliver: Hello, 欢迎收听 BBC 英语教学节目, 我是 Oliver。

Helen: And I'm Helen. Today we start with an invasion of London by warriors from an ancient Chinese army whose soldiers have stood guard over a dead emperor for over 2000 years.

Oliver: 我们正在谈论的是世界上最著名的一支陶俑军队, Helen, do you know why 兵马俑 is translated as 'Terracotta Army'?

Helen: Well, I think the name comes from the fact that the figures are made with terracotta which is a kind of brown-orange clay.

Oliver: Terracotta 是用来制作这些陶俑的褐色粘土, 这也就是兵马俑英文名称的由来。

Helen: Now, let's hear a bit more about when this huge Terracotta Army was unearthed.

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The story of the Terracotta Army amazed the world when figures first began to emerge from Chinese soil in 1974.

Helen: Although the Terracotta Army was made over 2000 years ago, it's really a recent discovery, isn't it Oliver?

Oliver: That's right, 秦始皇的皇陵是在 1974 年才被发现的。I think that's just unbelievable that something as big as this wasn't found earlier.

Helen: And I think the discovery isn't over yet. Only part of the tomb has been excavated so far.

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They stood in underground pits near the tomb mound of the first Emperor, Qing Shuang Di, the man who conquered kingdoms and formed a new nation which survives to this day as China.

Oliver: That's a very quick lesson in history. 做为中国人，我知道兵马俑的创造者是中国历史上的第一个皇帝—秦始皇。

Helen: He was the man who conquered kingdoms and formed a new nation. Conquer means to take control of foreign land or a group of people by force.

Oliver: Conquer 征服，通过武力占领，取得统治权。秦始皇征服了很多小国家，并最终建立了统一的中国。

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He was also a megalomaniac, and he wanted to rule forever. He recreated his entire imperial court: soldiers, generals, entertainers and animals in life-sized terracotta, to accompany him in the afterlife.

Helen: He was also a megalomaniac, it's a big word. Basically, it means a person who has great desire for power and control. He believed that he was very very important and wanted to have power forever.

Oliver: 秦始皇还是一个狂妄者。

Helen: A megalomaniac.

Oliver: 他总是想着拥有掌控一切的权利。

Helen: So the first Emperor of China recreated his entire imperial court in terracotta.

Oliver: 完整的 entire, 皇宫庭院 imperial court. 秦始皇完整的再造了他的皇宫庭院。

Helen: To accompany him in the afterlife.

Oliver: 死后 afterlife, 秦始皇希望在他死后在地下仍然可以统治他的王国。That's probably every emperor's dream.

经过长时间的谈判，来自中国西安的这些兵马俑终于抵达伦敦了。

Helen: A month before the 'First Emperor' show is due to open, the museum has already sold nearly 60,000 advance tickets.

Oliver: 展览的名字就直接叫做“第一个皇帝”。截止到目前，博物馆已经售出了六万张预售票，这是一个非常可观的成绩。

- Helen: This shows that the British public is genuinely interested in the Terracotta Army.
- Oliver: 据了解，这个展览将一直持续到明年四月。And how many people are expected to visit the show?
- Helen: Well, the museum predicts that half a million people are expected to see the exhibition.
- Oliver: That's pretty impressive.
- Helen: Yes, and as the first shipment arrived in London, Neil McGregor, director of British Museum, was excited to show us around.
- Oliver: 大英博物馆的负责人 Neil 向我们介绍了即将开幕的展览。
- Helen: He also reminded us why the story of the first emperor is worth telling.

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It's important because the first Emperor is one of the men who changed the history of the world. He makes China and in some sense it's the China that we're still living with today. But he also makes his tomb, and it's a tomb on a scale that really doesn't have any equal anywhere in the world.

- Oliver: 嗯，刚才我们听到了一个西方人眼中的秦始皇是什么样子的。Neil 说秦始皇是一个改变了世界历史的伟人。
- Helen: He changed the history of the world. He made China and it's the China we're still living with today.
- Oliver: 这就是为什么在 2200 年之后的今天，我们仍然在谈论秦始皇。
- Helen: And the tomb he created is on such a scale.
- Oliver: A scale, 在这里是指范围大小。
- Helen: It's so big, there's no other tomb in the world like it, or at least not discovered yet.
- Oliver: 有一件事情我一直存有疑虑，那就是如果你在西安看兵马俑的话，你看到的绝对是一个气势恢宏的场景，因为在你眼前展示的会是成千上万的埋藏在地下的武士陶俑，可是这样的场景能够在伦敦复制吗？
- Helen: Good question. How can visitors get a feel of this massive tomb in the British Museum?

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We're not going to be able to give you the sense of the massive scale, although we'll be able to show that by projections on the screens around the reading room.

Oliver: 我明白了，大场景并不是大英博物馆此次展览的追求目标。

Helen: No, the museum can't give us the sense of massive scale. But there will be projections of the actual tomb site on screens.

Oliver: **Projection** 投影，在秦始皇陵和兵马俑坑拍摄的画面将会通过投影展示在屏幕上，这样观众就会体会到兵马俑坑到底有多大。

Helen: So what else can visitors do at the London exhibition then?

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What you will be able to do in the British Museum is look these figures in the eye. You're going to be able to see how they were made, what extraordinary works of art, works of sculpture they are, and examine them one by one and engage with them as separate objects. And that's something very hard to do in Xian, but with a smaller number in the British Museum, you'll be able to do it here.

Oliver: **Neil** 关于这次兵马俑伦敦之行的介绍非常有吸引力，尽管伦敦观众不能感受到千万兵马俑排列在一起的辉煌，但是却有了和兵马俑近距离接触的机会。

Helen: That's the key selling point here. You can get very close to these figures. You can look them in the eye.

Oliver: 可以和某人或某物面对面 **to look someone in the eye**. 这是一个常用短语，它还包括了另一个意思，那就是问心无愧的正视某人。

Helen: You can see how they were made.

Oliver: 你能了解到这些陶俑是怎么做出来的。

Helen: **Appreciate what extraordinary works of art and works of sculpture they are.**

Oliver: 观众可以鉴赏这些非凡的陶俑，同时也是精美的雕塑艺术品。

Helen: You can also examine them as individuals.

Oliver: 单独的，独立的 **individuals**，观众可以用心欣赏每一件陈列品。

Helen: **Look at each one of them in detail, engage with them individually, and that's something you can't do in Xian.**

Oliver: **That's right**, 如果说在西安看到的是气势恢宏的兵马俑坑，那在伦敦大英博物馆，你就可以和陶俑进行近距离的亲密接触。

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What you will be able to do in the British Museum is look these figures in the eye. You're going to be able to see how they were made, what extraordinary works of art, works of sculpture they are, and examine them one by one and engage with them as separate objects. And that's something very hard to do in Xian, but with a smaller number in the British Museum, you'll be able to do it here.

Helen: Hello, you're listening to BBC Learning English and today we're at the preparation ground for the new Terracotta Army exhibition in London.

Oliver: 今年九月，将在伦敦大英博物馆揭幕的展览是秦始皇兵马俑在中国以外的地方进行的最大规模的公开展出。

Helen: Even though we already know that there's only going to be a dozen terracotta figures on display, the museum has dedicated a big exhibition area for it.

Oliver: 大英博物馆将位于中央大厅里的圆形阅览室改建成了专门的展厅。

Helen: There's a raised platform, underneath an amazing domed ceiling, it's almost tomblike.

Oliver: 升高的平台 a raised platform. 半球形的屋顶 a domed ceiling. 你别说，还真能营造出一点陵墓的感觉。

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That's what worked out very pleasingly, because the only space big enough to show this exhibition was the reading room. So we built a platform over the desks and tables, and what you have left is this wonderful cylinder and dome, and it does feel as if you're in a tomb.

Helen: And in the middle of this newly created exhibition space, there are boxes and big containers.

Oliver: 大厅里堆着好多盒子和庞大的集装箱，里面都是来自中国的考古发现和无价之宝。

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This is Christmas, as you can see, the boxes on the table, they're all wrapped up and we're slowly unwrapping the presents.

Helen: It's Christmas to the museum staff.

Oliver: 是啊，在场的博物馆工作人员都非常兴奋，好像他们的圣诞节真的提前到来了，大家都迫不及待的想打开这些盒子。

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This is the great moment where colleagues from China are here to supervise the opening, and the condition check conducted by both sides, the Chinese and the British Museum side. And it's the most exciting moment of any exhibition, because this is what we've seen in different places in China, or sometimes in seen only from photographs, and now the boxes are here, and as we unwrap them, the things are here in London.

Helen: Everything is handled with extreme care.

Oliver: Of course, that goes without saying. 现场还有来自中国的专家对开箱工作进行监督、指导。

Helen: Supervise the opening. There is a condition check by both sides, the Chinese and the British.

Oliver: 状况检查 condition check, 也就是验货。所有的从中国运过来的展品必须经过仔细的检查。

Helen: And Neil explains that there's a 24 hour period for the clay figures to acclimatize.

Oliver: 慢慢适应新的环境 acclimatize.

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That's what we hope. I mean these are the most exciting things to look at, because we know that in here are the first of the full-sized terracotta figures. And after they've come off the plane and through customs, they sit for a bit here to adapt to the change in temperature, humidity, whatever, so we leave them here for about 24 hours before we open them.

Helen: The containers are very big and have travelled by air from China.

Oliver: 而且必须通过海关的检验。

Helen: Customs check. Once they're in the museum, they're allowed to adapt to the change in temperature...

Oliver: 适应温度的改变...

Helen: and humidity.

Oliver: 湿度。

Helen: And I think Neil can't quite believe his eyes that the Terracotta soldiers are finally here in London.

Oliver: 我想这些兵马俑肯定也想想看看伦敦到底是个什么样子。

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There's a real chance to see new archaeology, the new discoveries, that are being allowed out of China for the first time. And we're just about to open them and they're going to get their first view of London.

Helen: Well that's it about the 'First Emperor' exhibition at the British Museum. If you want more help with your English, go to our website...

Oliver: www.bbcchina.com.cn

Helen: Or send us an email at chinaelt@bbc.co.uk. See you next time!

Oliver: Bye!