

2007考研英语强化班授课讲义(六) PDF转换可能丢失图片或格式，建议阅读原文

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I. Reading Comprehension: Many things make people think artists are weird. But the weirdest may be this: artists' only job is to explore emotions, and yet they choose to focus on the ones that feel bad. This wasn't always so. The earliest forms of art, like painting and music, are those best suited for expressing joy. But somewhere from the 19th century onward, more artists began seeing happiness as meaningless, phony or, worst of all, boring, as we went from Wordsworth's daffodils to Baudelaire's flowers of evil. You could argue that art became more skeptical of happiness because modern times have seen so much misery. But it's not as if earlier times didn't know perpetual war, disaster and the massacre of innocents. The reason, in fact, may be just the opposite: there is too much damn happiness in the world today. After all, what is the one modern form of expression almost completely dedicated to depicting happiness? Advertising. The rise of anti-happy art almost exactly tracks the emergence of mass media, and with it, a commercial culture in which happiness is not just an ideal but an ideology. People in earlier eras were surrounded by reminders of misery. They worked until exhausted, lived with few protections and died young. In the West, before mass communication and literacy, the most powerful mass medium was the church, which reminded worshippers that their souls were in danger and that they would someday be meat for worms. Given all

this, they did not exactly need their art to be a bummer too. Today the messages the average Westerner is surrounded with are not religious but commercial, and forever happy. Fast-food eaters, news anchors, text messengers, all smiling, smiling, smiling. Our magazines feature beaming celebrities and happy families in perfect homes. And since these messages have an agenda -- to lure us to open our wallets -- they make the very idea of happiness seem unreliable. "Celebrate!" commanded the ads for the arthritis drug Celebrex, before we found out it could increase the risk of heart attacks. But what we forget -- what our economy depends on us forgetting -- is that happiness is more than pleasure without pain. The things that bring the greatest joy carry the greatest potential for loss and disappointment. Today, surrounded by promises of easy happiness, we need art to tell us, as religion once did, Memento mori: remember that you will die, that everything ends, and that happiness comes not in denying this but in living with it. It ' s a message even more bitter than a clove cigarette, yet, somehow, a breath of fresh air. (433 words) Notes: weird adj. 不可思议的 , 离奇古怪的。 phony (=phoney) 假装的 , 冒充的 , 伪造的。 Wordsworth (1770 1850) 英国诗人。 daffodil n.水仙花。 Baudelaire (1821 1867) 法国诗人及散文家。 damn adj. (表示不满、愤怒、不耐烦等) : Where is that damn book? 那本该死的书在哪里? My damn car has broken down! 我的混账汽车坏了。 memento 纪念品。 Memento mori人总有一死。 1. By citing the examples of poets Wordsworth and Baudetaire, the author intends to show that[A] poetry is not as expressive of joy as painting or

music. [B] art grows out of both positive and negative feelings. [C] poets today are less skeptical of happiness. [D] artists have changed their focus of interest.

2. The word "bummer" (Line 4, Paragraph 5) most probably means something [A] religious. [B] unpleasant. [C] entertaining. [D] commercial.

3. In the author's opinion, advertising [A] emerges in the wake of the anti-happy art. [B] is a cause of disappointment for the general public. [C] replaces the church as a major source of information. [D] creates an illusion of happiness rather than happiness itself.

4. We can learn from the last paragraph that the author believes [A] happiness more often than not ends in sadness. [B] the anti-happy art is distasteful but refreshing. [C] misery should be enjoyed rather than denied. [D] the anti-happy art flourishes when economy booms.

5. Which of the following is true of the text? [A] Religion once functioned as a reminder of misery. [B] Art provides a balance between expectation and reality. [C] People feel disappointed at the realities of modern society [D] Mass media are inclined to cover disasters and deaths.

Text 2 Americans no longer expect public figures, whether in speech or in writing, to command the English language with skill and gift. Nor do they aspire to such command themselves. In his latest book, *Doing Our Own Thing. The Degradation of Language and Music and Why We Should, Like, Care*, John McWhorter, a linguist and controversialist of mixed liberal and conservative views, sees the triumph of 1960s counter-culture as responsible for the decline of formal English. Blaming the permissive 1960s is nothing new, but this is not yet another criticism against the decline in education. Mr. McWhorter's

academic specialty is language history and change, and he sees the gradual disappearance of "whom", for example, to be natural and no more regrettable than the loss of the case-endings of Old English. But the cult of the authentic and the personal, "doing our own thing", has spelt the death of formal speech, writing, poetry and music. While even the modestly educated sought an elevated tone when they put pen to paper before the 1960s, even the most well regarded writing since then has sought to capture spoken English on the page.

Equally, in poetry, the highly personal, performative genre is the only form that could claim real liveliness. In both oral and written English, talking is triumphing over speaking, spontaneity over craft.

Illustrated with an entertaining array of examples from both high and low culture, the trend that Mr. McWhorter documents is unmistakable. But it is less clear, to take the question of his subtitle, why we should, like, care. As a linguist, he acknowledges that all varieties of human language, including non-standard ones like Black English, can be powerfully expressive -- there exists no language or dialect in the world that cannot convey complex ideas. He is not arguing, as many do, that we can no longer think straight because we do not talk proper. Russians have a deep love for their own language and carry large chunks of memorized poetry in their heads, while Italian politicians tend to elaborate speech that would seem old-fashioned to most English-speakers. Mr. McWhorter acknowledges that formal language is not strictly necessary, and proposes no radical education reforms -- he is really grieving over the loss of something beautiful more than useful. We now take our

English "on paper plates instead of china". A shame, perhaps, but probably an inevitable one. (391 words) Notes: aspire to (after) 渴望成就...。 degradation n. 退化；堕落，贬低，降低。 permissive 放任的。 specialty (=speciality) 专业。 no more ... than ... 与...一样都不...。 cult n. 膜拜。 authentic adj. 真实的。 spell vt. 招致；意味着。 elevated adj. 高架的；有修养的。 put pen to paper (开始) 写信。 performative 有表演力的。 genre 种类；风格，体裁。 triumph over 胜过。 spontaneity 自发性。 craft 工艺性。 entertaining adj. 令人感兴趣的。 array n. 系列；大量。 subtitle 副标题。 dialect 方言。 think straight 有条理地思维。 talk proper 说话规范。 chunk n. 相当数量。 1. According to McWhorter, the decline of formal English [A] is inevitable in radical education reforms. [B] is but all too natural in language development. [C] has caused the controversy over the counter-culture. [D] brought about changes in public attitudes in the 1960s. 2. The word "talking" (Line 4, Paragraph 3) denotes [A] modesty. [B] personality. [C] liveliness. [D] informality. 3. To which of the following statements would McWhorter most likely agree? [A] Logical thinking is not necessarily related to the way we talk. [B] Black English can be more expressive than standard English. [C] Non-standard varieties of human language are just as entertaining. [D] Of all the varieties, standard English can best convey complex ideas. 4. The description of Russians love of memorizing poetry shows the authors [A] interest in their language. [B] appreciation of their efforts. [C] admiration for their memory. [D] contempt for their old-fashionedness. 5. According to the last paragraph, "paper plates" is to "china" as [A]

"temporary" is to "permanent". [B] "radical" is to "conservative". [C]  
"functional" is to "artistic". [D] "humble" is to "noble". 100Test 下载  
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