

About this script

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关于台词的备注:

请注意这不是广播节目的逐字稿件。本文稿可能没有体现录制、编辑过程中对节目做出的改变。

Might 精讲

Insert

Hello, I'm Claire from Tianjin. I would like to know the usage of the word "might" and the meaning of it in the following sentence. "This caused a few gasps, as well it might." Thank you.

Yang Li: 大家好，我是杨莉，以上是天津听友 Claire 通过电子邮件发给我们的问题。针对她的提问我准备分两部分来解答。In the first part, we'll take a look at the meaning of 'might' in her sentence in the email. And in the second half of the programme we'll take a look at the general use of the word 'might'. To help me with the first question is an English language teaching expert at the BBC, Frances.

Insert

OK the sentence that the reader sends is "This caused a few gasps, as well it might." Now this is formal and it's rather literary. It doesn't sound like normal everyday conversation. What's happening here is that something has happened. And as a result a few people gasped, they went oh... so something was shocking or surprising. Now when the speaker says as well it might, this means the speaker considers that the event that caused those gasps certainly merited this reaction, as well it might. Another way to say it could be, as well it ought to have done.

Yang Li: Fran 解释得非常清楚，这是一个文学体的语句，这句话的意思是这件事引起了一些人的震惊，那完全是意料之中的。下面我们分句解释。

Insert

Now this is formal and it's rather literary. It doesn't sound like normal everyday conversation.

Yang Li: 她说：这是一句正式的、文学体裁的语句 formal and rather literary. 不是日常对话用语 it doesn't sound like normal everyday conversation. 那么这句富有文学色彩的语句表达的是什么意思呢？

Insert

What's happening here is that something has happened. And as a result a few people gasped, they went oh... so something was shocking or surprising.

Yang Li: 一件令人震惊的事情发生了 **shocking or surprising** 令人震惊的。多数人在受惊时都会情不自禁地发出感叹，啊!!! 这就是 **gasps**。

Insert

Now when the speaker says as well it might, this means the speaker considers that the event that caused those gasps certainly merited this reaction.

Yang Li: 作者认为这件事非同小可，人们有震惊的反应理所当然。**Merit** 就是值得怎样，理应怎样。

Insert

As well it might. Another way to say it could be, as well it ought to have done.

Yang Li: **As well it might** 意思就是 **as well it ought to have done** 本来就应该这样的嘛。这里的 **might** 的确是很不寻常的用法我们仅仅把它作为文学欣赏吧!

Insert

Now when the speaker says as well it might, this means the speaker considers that the event that cause those gasps certainly merited this reaction. As well it might. Another way to say it could be, as well it ought to have done.

Yang Li: Welcome back to Question and Answer of the week. Now for the second part of this programme I've invited my colleague William Kremer.

William: Hi Li. I guess you'd like me to help you with some explanation of the word 'might' as it's used in everyday English?

Yang Li: You got it. 下面我们一起来看看 **might** 这个词最常见的几个用法。

William: It is used as the past tense of 'may'.

Example

I thought I might find you in the canteen.

Yang Li: 我原以为我可能在餐厅找到你，这里 **might** 是 **may** 的过去时，可能。

Example

I thought I might find you in the canteen.

William: It's also used instead of 'may' to make a possibility seem less likely or to make a request for permission more polite.

Yang Li: 用 **might** 代替 **may** 表示一种把握不大的可能性或者在提出请求时使用，是口气更为婉转客气。

Example

England might win the World Cup if it adopts the right strategy.

Yang Li: 英格兰如果策略得当，说不定会赢世界杯呢。

Example

Might I have a word with you for a few minutes, please.

Yang Li: 您能抽出几分钟吗？我有话跟你说。

William: Another usage that you often hear is when people use the word 'might' to suggest that something would have been possible if something else had been the case.

Yang Li: 另一种常见用法就是用 **might** 来表示过去在某种条件下可能发生的情况 **might have done something**.

Example

I might have become a millionaire if I'd gone into banking.

Yang Li: 如果我当时进入银行业说不定我现在就是百万富翁了。

William: There is also the phrase **might as well**, which is used to suggest that there is no good reason for not doing something.

Yang Li: **Might as well** 这个短语很有用，表示没有道理不去做某事。

Example

No one wants to read these books so I might as well give them to charity.

Yang Li: 既然没人想看这些书，我还不如把它送给慈善组织算了。

William: Then finally we've got the word 'might' as it's used as a noun, which has a completely different meaning. It can mean either the pure physical strength or the power of an institution.

Yang Li: 是的。**Might** 在作为名词的时候意思是身体的力气或一个机构或国家的势力，兵力。

Example

It's arguable whether China has the same military might as the United States.

Yang Li: 中国的军事实力是否能和美国媲美尚有争议。

William: That's quite a lot to take in for one programme but if you're keen to find all the usages of the word then you can refer to any good dictionary.

Yang Li: Meanwhile log onto our website www.bbcukchina.com for more vocabulary lessons.

William: Bye bye.

Yang Li: Bye.