

九十八學年度英文創意寫作比賽

乙組第二名：四英二郭文馨

Appropriate Etiquette

Modernized, globalized, and urbanized, the 21st Century society we are all trying to survive in, requires one to obtain skills of appropriate etiquette knowledge. As our lifestyles untangle, intertwine, and complicate themselves, we quickly find ourselves in confusing situations as we grow up, finally getting lost in the sea of questions about behaviors, manners, and etiquette. What situation requires what sort of behavior, language use, gestures, and dress code, becomes more and more of a mystery as we enter this complex society. Too much emphasis on etiquette will result in the lack of awareness of appropriate social interaction awareness.

A solitary lifestyle doesn't work in a society like ours. Too much damage has been done to the natural environment, so that it has become near impossible to retreat to solitary confinement. Therefore, interaction has become inevitable. This is where etiquette becomes of importance. The reason as to why it is so important, lies behind the concept of impression of ourselves, so we can gain respect, and to be able to convey across through gestures that we respect our counterparts. Behavior then becomes a language without words, and just like how you should be careful of what you say, you should be as equally careful as to what you might convey across with gestures.

To point or to tap might be acceptable in some situations, but completely offensive in others. Besides the variation of situations that changes the regulations of etiquette behavior, difference in culture, generation, and nationality play significant roles in the judgment of what behavior is acceptable and what is not. Bound by so many rules as to what you should say or do, it becomes incredibly difficult to find space for individualism. If we do not follow these restrictions, our actions will be magnified and labeled as inconsiderate and rude. Judgment will be passed too quickly, and those who forget to follow the rule book of etiquette behavior will be penalized before they even realize what they've done wrong.

There should be an universal gesture invented that says "I mean no offense, I just don't speak the universally recognized etiquette." Then chewing gum in class wouldn't provoke so much anger and speaking loudly into a cell phone in cinemas would not turn so many heads. Scruffy attire in meetings will just become an artistic

way of portraying personality instead of disrespect and not being punctual would obviously be because of individual unique character. Is individuality really about wronged judgment in etiquette?

Perhaps the reason why so many invisible rules are set in the society about appropriate etiquette, is because it has become what everyone is comfortable in. Although there are differences in etiquette, but the axis concept remains the same. It is for respect and politeness that we all work so hard to maintain appropriate behavior.