

# B2 全场景覆盖表达 口语主题陈述——文化类

# 话题一览

- Books
- Art
- Photography
- Culture

# BOOKS

- **Literature** (n.) = written works (books)
- **Literacy** (n.) = the ability to read and write
- **Literate** (adj.) = able to read and write

Examples:

- *I am really into English literature*
- *I think it's really important for young children to become literate*

# TYPES OF BOOKS

## **Fictional novels** - different genres

- Crime novels
- Romance
- Thriller – suspense
- Comedy
- Action
- Sci-fi

## Examples:

- I am a big fan of crime novels.
- I don't like romance novels too much. I find them too unrealistic.

# TYPES OF BOOKS

- **Non-Fictional BOOKS**

- Biographies
- Autobiographies
- Hobbies
- Historical (adj.)
- Personal development = self help
- Books related to your field of work
- Recipe book
- Travel guide

Examples:

- I enjoy reading a good auto-biography.
- I read personal development books now and again.

# DESCRIBING THE STORY

- Plot = storyline
- Setting = background (where – when)
- Characters = people in the story
- Protagonist (main character / hero)

Examples:

- *This book has a gripping **plot***
- *It is **set** in the middle ages in England*
- *The **protagonist** is a magician called Merlin*

# PHRASES TO DESCRIBE HOW WE READ BOOKS

- To **skim through** books in the bookstore
- To **flip through** a book
- To **leaf through** a book
- *All of these above mean to glance at quickly, not to read in depth.*
  
- A **voracious** reader
- An **avid** reader
- A **bookworm**
- *All of these mean someone who reads a lot*

## DESCRIBING A BOOK

- A **heavy** read (n) = that book is difficult to read
- It's a **good** read.
- This book is **easy reading**.
- This book **makes** easy reading.
- I couldn't put it down.
- It had me **spellbound**. (对...入迷的)
- It was a **gripping** novel. (扣人心弦的, 吸引人的)
- I read it **from cover to cover**. (从头到尾)
- It's a **captivating**/great read. (使着迷的)
- It had an **intriguing** plot. (非常有趣的, 引人入胜的)



# IDIOMATIC EXPRESSIONS ABOUT BOOKS

- To **turn over a new leaf** = to start anew / start something fresh
- I want to get **in** my boss's **good books** = I want to do something to win his/her favour
- She **threw the book at** me = she told me off very strongly / scolded me for doing something wrong
- **Take a leaf out of** Mary's **book** = learn from Mary (suggesting she is better than you)

# CONVERSATION ABOUT ART

## Do you like art?

- I like crafting something new = *making, creating*
- I have to admit I am not ...
- I have an appreciation of art
- An art aficionado = *an amateur*

# CONVERSATION ABOUT ART

## Have you ever been to an art exhibition?

- I have been to a museum and it had art in it somewhere.
- I went to a gallery that had some **interactive art**.
- I once attended an **Art festival**.
- I have used **Virtual Realty goggles** to visit a gallery virtually.
- I went to my child's **school art exhibition**.
- I have seen **art displayed on** the street, a kind of **Street art**.
- Not recently, **due to COVID restrictions**.

# CONVERSATION ABOUT ART

## What pictures or style of art do you like?

- I like the pictures **on the wall in my home** with a **scenic view**.
- This picture **makes me feel calm**.
- I am not fond of **abstract art**.
- As far as art, I like some photographers like....
- I've always liked \_\_\_\_\_ = *I like* .....
- I like some **graffiti** but sometimes it can be seen as a **stigma** or an **eyesore** (= *an unattractive sight*)
- I actually like **textile art** = *art using fabrics*

# CONVERSATION ABOUT ART

**Do you think art is an important part of our education?**

- For sure, art can enhance the learning of other subjects.
- It's better to marry art and science = to connect
- To pair art with math = to connect
- It's difficult as students may love art and science but they often have to choose one or the other.
- When governments have to cut budgets, art is often the first subject to go.

## IDIOMS TO TALK ABOUT ART

- I was **bowled over** by this piece of art = *I was really impressed*
- It **took my breath away** = *It was impressive*
- It is jaw-dropping = *It was amazing*
- **It blew my mind** = *It was amazing*

# IDIOMS TO TALK ABOUT ART

- **There was a lot of buzz** (*excitement / hype*) about this painting, but **it left me cold** = *I felt uninterested*
- **It wasn't much to write home about** = *it was normal, nothing special*
- I didn't like that painting, I don't know why, **I can't put my finger on it.** (= *I can't explain why*)
- That painting was **as exciting as watching paint dry.** (extremely boring)
- *Rachel fell asleep during the big game because she thinks that watching sports is like watching paint dry.*

# VOCABULARY FOR PHOTOGRAPHY

- I snapshot all the time, I am an amateur **photographer**.
- I have a knack for taking good **photographs**.
- I am following a **photography** course online at the moment.
- I look terrible in photos, I am not at all **photogenic**(上镜的).
- How do you remember all that information? You must have a **photographic** memory.



# VOCABULARY FOR PHOTOGRAPHY

## Common Collocations

- **Take** a photo **of** someone
- To **shoot** a photo
- To take some **shots (n.)**
- To **snap** a picture/photo (casual)
- To take **a snap (n.)**
- To **capture** the moment (**to catch**)
- A **digital** photo
- Color photos / black and white photos
- A high-resolution photo

# VOCABULARY FOR PHOTOGRAPHY

- To **pose for** a photo
- *I hate posing for photos, because I am just so not photogenic.*
- A **photo opportunity**
- *Having all the family together for my birthday was a great photo opportunity*
- **Photo editing (n.)**
- To **crop a photo**
- **a photo frame/album**
- **A photo session**
- to be **in focus**
- to be **out of focus**

# VOCABULARY FOR PHOTOGRAPHY

I tend to take \_\_\_\_\_

- **Landscape photos**
- **Portrait photos**
- **Cityscape photos**
- **Seascape photos**
- **Panoramic views**
- **Picturesque views**
- **Selfies**
- **Group photos**
- **Daily life photos**

# VOCABULARY FOR PHOTOGRAPHY

- I like taking pictures of \_\_\_\_\_
- I like to capture / shoot \_\_\_\_\_
- I like to photograph (v.) \_\_\_\_\_
- Cities / nature / people / animals / spontaneous (=not planned) moments / everyday situations / food / different scenery / different scenic views

# VOCABULARY FOR PHOTOGRAPHY

- I love to take photos and **post them on social media**.
- **Everything and anything**, it is all **just one click away**.
- I am camera shy (= I don't like to be in photos).
- Photos that **give me** good memories / **bring back** good memories.
- I adore **looking back** at my **wedding pics**.
- **Screenshots** of brand new jewelry
- Give your photos a **sense of symmetry** (proportion or balance).

- **What kind of photos do you prefer to take?**
- Well, I am a bit of an amateur photographer and I really do like taking different kinds of photos, but if I had to pick one kind, I think it would be different scenic views. Right? Landscapes, I particularly like landscapes because I live near the countryside. I am surrounded by nature. So, I love to get out into the countryside and to snap some mountains or rivers, something natural. That's the kind of photo I prefer taking.

- **How often do you take photos?**

- To be honest, I think I take photos most days. It's so easy nowadays just to take out, to whip out your phone and to snap anything you see around you, whether it's food in a restaurant or a spontaneous moment when you walking down the street, and I love to capture those moments. I always have my phone with me so, to be honest, yes, I am taking photos most days.

CULTURE



- **How important it is to learn about other people's cultures?**
- Learning about other people's cultures is very important in today's globalized world. Cultural knowledge is required everywhere, be it business or travel or work. If we are familiar with the culture of a place, we can understand people better. This will make our work and life easier in a new place.

- **What difficulties can people living in a foreign country experience?**
- I believe the most significant difficulties about living in a foreign country would have to do with understanding cultural norms and unspoken rules, especially during social interactions. Misunderstandings can be common phenomena. Generally fitting in as well as feeling like you belong would be another big challenges.

- **How can we benefit from learning about other cultures?**
- Several ways that people can benefit from other cultures are in business, personal relationships, and just in self-improvement. In business, it is necessary to know a little bit about whatever culture you plan to work with. For instance, I think in Muslim cultures, shaking hands with your left hand is considered extremely rude. If you didn't know that, it could hurt your chances of doing business. Also, it's important just to improve yourself by learning as much as you can, and culture is a good subject.

- **What do you think is the best way to learn about another culture?**
- Obviously, the best way to learn about a culture is to go there and experience it. If you can get a feel for the culture firsthand, it will be a lot easier to pick things up. But I also believe that you can learn a ton about other cultures just by reading books about them. Reading about people's experiences in foreign lands is the next best thing to being there.

- **Do you think it's better to go overseas to study a foreign language or to study it in your home country?**
- I think it is better to study a language in its native country. When you do that, you are engulfed in the language and forced to encounter it outside of the classroom. Otherwise, your only exposure to the language is when you're studying or in the classroom. I know firsthand that when learning a foreign language in your home country, it is easy to lose what you have learned.

- **What benefits can there be for people working in a foreign country?**
- Working in a foreign country offers both personal and economic benefits to people. At a personal level, they can enjoy a higher standard of living. Their knowledge about cultural differences and languages also develops. Professionally, the work environment gives them greater exposure which improves their professional skills. More importantly, international work experience which people gain is highly valued by employers.

- **Do you believe in stereotypes about different nationalities?**
- It's is a difficult question. In my view, the nationality and character of a person are two different things. Stereotypes about different nationalities are just based on people's observations. They may or may not be accurate. I think that stereotypes don't reflect reality. So, I don't believe in them.

- **Are you in favour of adopting a universal language?**
- Certainly, adopting a global language would make our life easier. But languages and cultures are inextricably intertwined. So, if we choose to have a common language, the cultural diversity will disappear. The loss will be irreparable. I don't think it's a wise idea to adopt a universal language.



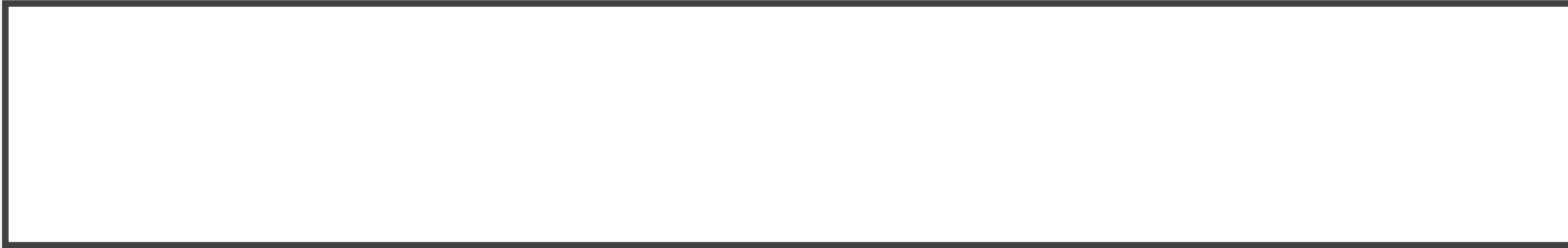
- **What negative effects might come from a country losing its traditional cultures?**
- The loss of traditional cultures can affect a country in many ways. If there are businesses based on traditional skills, cultural loss can affect the economy of a country. Since traditional cultures represent a country, major changes in cultures can have an impact on tourism in that country.

- **What is your understanding of the term “globalization”?**
- Globalization, in my mind, is the idea that the world is becoming smaller, so societies can interact and exchange culture more easily and more efficiently. Unfortunately, because some countries are richer and have more influence than others, certain cultures get spread around more than others. On the whole, however, globalization is a good thing because it is not the only culture that gets spread, but things like information and medicine can help people.

- **Do you think globalization is a good thing?**
- Yes, globalization has its problems, but for the most part, it is good for most people involved. Some people have different opinions because they are really concerned with the loss of culture, but for me, the benefits outweigh the drawbacks. People have access to more information, so diseases can be better treated, food can be made more efficiently, and goods that make people's lives easier are now available.

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# 口语主题陈述



Describe a photograph you like. You should say:

- What the photo is of
- Where you took it. .
- When you took it.
- Why you like it.

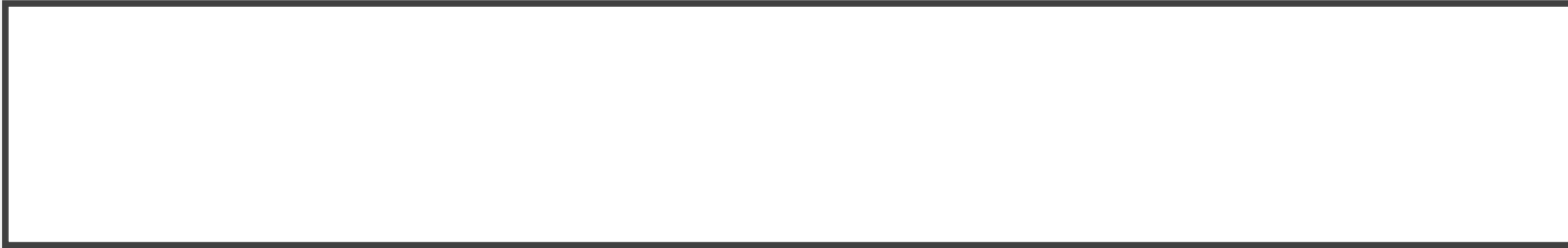
- Although I've taken many photographs over the years, one of my favorites is one that I took while on holidays in Qinghai Lake, so I'm going to tell you about that,
- Quite simply, it's a photo of a lake near where I stayed. Qinghai Lake is a mountainous place so it's a fantastic place for landscape photography. In this particular, you can imagine a lake and some trees surrounding it.
- It was taken about six months ago when I was on vacation. I was sitting on the balcony of my hotel room when I noticed how beautiful the lake looked. The sun was setting and it looked spectacular so I ran inside and grabbed my DSLR camera and my tripod. I spent a few minutes to set up the shot so I could get the composition and exposure settings right. Because I love the image so much, I had it printed and framed. It's now hanging on the wall of my living room and is a great conversation-starter when my friends visit. Everybody asks about it!
- The photo is particularly meaningful for two reasons. First of all, it reminds me of my trip. Because it was my first time to visit there, I took so many shots but that one was definitely the best one! The scenery there is breathtaking. Secondly, at that time I was just learning to use my DSLR and to be honest, most of my photos were quite bad. However, for this photo, I got the settings just right. It's possible that I was just lucky but I am quite proud of the image as it shows I developed some skills.
- To conclude, this shot will always hold a special place in my heart.

Describe a book that you enjoyed reading because you had to think a lot.

- You should say:
- What this book was
- Why you decided to read it
- What reading this book made you think about
- and explain why you enjoyed reading this book.



- I'm going to talk about a book that really made me think, and that has had a positive effect on my life. The name of the book is 'Atomic Habits', and it's about the compounding effect that small decisions and minuscule (/ˈmɪnəskjuːl/) changes can have on people's lives.
- I decided to read Atomic Habits after seeing an interview with the book's author, James Clear, who is a world-renowned expert in the field of habit formation. In the interview, he told inspiring stories and revealed some simple life hacks that can make people more productive, motivated and happy. I found the whole idea of the 'science of tiny habits' fascinating, and so I bought the book straight away.
- While reading the book, I was forced to confront my own habits and behaviours. I realized that I'm nowhere near as productive as I could be, but that some small tweaks to my routine could make a significant and long-lasting difference. The book also gave me a framework to understand how good habits are formed and how bad habits can be broken. It has encouraged me to analyze my own habits accordingly.
- I thoroughly enjoyed reading Atomic Habits because I thought it was well researched, well reasoned and well written. The author's ideas and advice aren't simply his opinions; they are taken from cutting-edge research and real success stories. I enjoy reading books that change my way of thinking in some way or give me practical, life-altering ideas, and this was definitely one of those books.



Describe a foreign culture that you are interested in

- You should say
- what this culture is
- how you learned about this culture
- what you know about this culture and explain why you feel this culture is interesting.

I have spent most of my time learning English and western culture. But I did have an interesting experience about a year and a half ago that inspired me to learn about Costa Rican culture. One of my friends spent a semester abroad in Costa Rica in early 2019, and I spent two weeks at the beginning of the summer visiting him there. Prior to visiting, I knew almost nothing about the culture, but staying there, even for such a short time, really opened my eyes. Costa Rican culture is extremely different from either American or Chinese cultures. Two of the phrases most often used in Costa Rica are a good illustration of their culture: *Pura Vida* and *Tranquilo*. *Pura Vida* means “pure life” and *Tranquilo* means “calm”. Both are used in situations where the level of stress is rising. When Costa Ricans say this phrase, they are telling themselves “Don’t worry. Chill out.” It’s an extremely **laid-back**, relaxed culture. Their main goal in life is to be happy. Workdays tend to be shorter, and since the country is so small and borders both the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, it is really easy to go to the beach, so many do just that. When I was there, it was routine to see people getting up around 6 am, go to the beach and surf for two or three hours, work from 10-4, go home and eat, then go back to the beach. It was great to see a culture with such a different outlook on life.



Describe an aspect of a foreign culture you like.

- You should say:
- what it is
- how you know about it
- what differences there are between that aspect of culture and your own

Japan has a distinct, fascinating culture, both modern and traditional, that is unlike any other countries, and will leave a lasting impression on any person. Some of the interesting aspects of Japanese culture may include their cuisines, architecture, performing arts, fashion, anime and manga. But, today, I would like to talk about another aesthetic aspect of Japanese culture that I find interesting also.

It is called “Sakura viewing and Hanami parties”. In plain English, “Sakura” means cherry blossom. So, it essentially means the viewing of cherry blossom when they are in full bloom during the spring season. By the way, Sakura has remained an iconic symbol of Japanese culture and history for centuries, and when this Sakura viewing takes place, thousands of people, both local and visitors from around the world, flock to see the mesmerizing beauty of cherry flowers in full bloom.

This Sakura viewing culture, which I first came to learn about from a travel show on TV, and then, later on, after reading some travel journals, may last only for a few days, but it may leave an impression on you for a lifetime.

People from my culture also love flowers, and they even use them for many purposes and occasions, but gathering ceremonially at a place or at a particular time to watch the blossoming of the flower is something that they don't normally do. Another difference between my culture and that of Japan as far as viewing flowers is concerned, people from my culture prefer to bring flowers at home, if they like them, for decorating their homes while Japanese people like them better on trees.

Well, I like this particular aspect of Japanese culture because it shows how much they really value the beauty in mother nature. Besides, since this particular culture brings people from all over the world for a common cause, that is to enjoy the stunning beauty of mother nature, it offers all of them a chance to understand and appreciate each other and thus bringing peace and harmony in a world, which is otherwise full of hatred and animosity.