

# The impact of greek mythology on western culture assignment

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I. Background Information of Greek Mythology Greek mythology is the body of myths and legends belonging to the ancient Greeks, concerning their gods and heroes, the nature of the world, and the origins and significance of their own cult and ritual practices. They were a part of religion in ancient Greece. Modern scholars refer to, and study, the myths, in an attempt to throw light on the religious and political institutions of Ancient Greece, its civilization, and to gain understanding of the nature of myth-making itself.

And Greek mythology is embodied in a large collection of narratives, and implicitly in Greek representational arts, such as vase-paintings and votive gifts. Greek myth attempts to explain the origins of the world, and details the lives and adventures of a wide variety of gods, goddesses, heroes, heroines, and mythological creatures. These accounts initially were disseminated in an oral-poetic tradition; today the Greek myths are known primarily from Greek literature. Here I want to introduce the Greek Mythology from two aspects; the source of Greek Mythology and the features of Greek Mythology. 1.

#### Source of Greek Mythology

Greek mythology is known today primarily from Greek literature and representations on visual media dating from the period from c. 900??? 800 BC onward. So there are two major sources of Greek Mythology, the literary sources and archaeological sources. Mythical narration plays an important role in nearly every genre of Greek literature. Nevertheless, the only general mythographical handbook to survive from Greek antiquity was the Library of Pseudo-Apollodorus. This work attempts to reconcile the contradictory tales of the poets and provides a grand summary of traditional Greek mythology and heroic legends.

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Among the earliest literary sources are Homer's two epic poems, the Iliad and the Odyssey. Other poets completed the "epic cycle", but these later and lesser poems now are lost almost entirely. Despite their traditional name, the "Homeric Hymns" have no direct connection with Homer. They are choral hymns from the earlier part of the so-called Lyric age. Hesiod, a possible contemporary with Homer, offers in his Theogony (Origin of the Gods) the fullest account of the earliest Greek myths, dealing with the creation of the world; the origin of the gods, Titans, and Giants; as well as elaborate genealogies, folktales, and etiological myths. Hesiod's Works and Days, a didactic poem about farming life, also includes the myths of Prometheus, Pandora, and the Four Ages. The poet gives advice on the best way to succeed in a dangerous world, rendered yet more dangerous by its gods. What I have written above is the literary source of Greek Mythology. And I will introduce the archaeological source of Greek Mythology in the next.

The discovery of the Mycenaean civilization by the German amateur archaeologist, Heinrich Schliemann, in the nineteenth century, and the discovery of the Minoan civilization in Crete by British archaeologist, Sir Arthur Evans, in the twentieth century, helped to explain many existing questions about Homer's epics and provided archaeological evidence for many of the mythological details about gods and heroes. Geometric designs on pottery of the eighth century BC depict scenes from the Trojan cycle, as well as the adventures of Heracles.

These visual representations of myths are important for two reasons. For one, many Greek myths are attested on vases earlier than in literary sources: of the twelve labors of Heracles, for example, only the Cerberus adventure occurs in a contemporary literary text. In addition, visual sources sometimes represent myths or mythical scenes that are not attested in any extant literary source. In some cases, the first known representation of a myth in geometric art predates its first known representation in late archaic poetry, by several centuries.

## 2. Figures of Greek Mythology

In Greek mythology living beings come under two categories, that is, they are either gods and heroes, or creatures. Gods have most characteristics of humans, but along with this they also have supernatural powers and are worshipped by the humans. The heroes are like other human beings but have either done something which makes them excel over others or have a gift that others do not possess. On the other hand the mythological creatures are mainly like animals and monsters. Many have characteristics like an animal or a monster along with a few human features. Few of them possess supernatural powers too.

In myths we come across many names of gods and goddesses and strange creatures. All of them have many stories related to them. Different gods represent different aspects of life and the Earth is under their control. Now I will illustrate some of the gods and creatures in Greek Mythology. Zeus, he was the king of the gods and the supreme ruler of people. He originally was a god of the sky. In time, the Greeks regarded him as the only god who

concerned him-self with the whole universe. They also associated Zeus with justice and believed that he punished the wicked and rewarded the good.

He belonged to the race of Titans, and was the son of Cronus and Rhea. After overthrowing Cronus, Zeus took his father's place and ruled from Mount Olympus. He headed a family of twelve major gods, called the Olympians. Apollo, he was an important god in Greek and Roman mythology. In Greek myths he was the son of Zeus - the king of all gods. Apollo was the god of light, purity, and the sun. The Greeks and Romans sometimes called him 'Phoebus' meaning bright. Apollo played the lyre and wrote poetry, he also became a patron of musicians and poets.

He was considered as the ideal of manly beauty. Ares, the Greek god of wars, he was the son of Zeus and Hera (the king and queen of the gods). Ares represented the most brutal and violent aspects of war. The Greeks, who placed little value on these qualities, did not respect Ares highly. Myths describe him as a strong fierce fighter who took pleasure in bloody conflicts, but was not clever enough to win always. Centaur, it was a creature in Greek mythology that was half human and half horse. Centaurs were believed to live in northern Greece. Most of them were wild and lawless.

Medusa, she was one of the three gorgons - the daughters of the sea god, Phorcus. She was the only mortal Gorgon. She had been beautiful at first. Medusa had boasted of her beauty to Athena who became jealous and turned her into an ugly monster-like person. Medusa and her sisters had staring eyes, fangs and snakes for hair. Anyone who saw them would turn to stone. Perseus killed Medusa by looking in his shining shield. The winged

horse Pegasus rose from her beheaded body and poisonous snakes arose from the blood from her head. Medusa's blood was given to Asclepius, the god of healing.

The blood from medusa's right side had the power to revive the dead, while that from her left side was a fatal poison II. Essential Factors of Preschool English Teaching The purpose of the English Learning for Preschoolers Project is to provide valuable information based on current research on various aspects of the development, abilities, and everyday experiences of preschool English Learners, such as the children in the previous scenario. A qualified preschool English teacher needs some essential factors like patience, responsibility and certain English knowledge.

High-level teachers are the guarantee of high quality of preschool English education. In order to improve the English teaching, kindergartens usually employ English teachers with high degree. But in kindergarten a qualified teacher should be equipped with the knowledge of English and preschool students' psychology at the same time. Like choose a teaching material, an English teacher should consider whether the content could be kept with the level of children's understandings and whether the content could be associated with the preschool students' daily lives. . 1 The teaching materials of preschool English education At present, there are many kinds of preschool English teaching materials in China. It is not easy for the kindergarteners or the parents to choose. The contents of some teaching materials are easy at one moment and difficult the next, taking the level of child's acceptance into no account. In some kindergartens, children only

learn some English words and several simple phrases after two years. If children could not use them in their daily lives, they would forget them soon.

Here are some requirements of teaching materials of preschool English education.

1. 1 Keep with the level of children's understandings  
The teaching material of preschool English education should be kept with the level of children's understandings. For preschool students between three and four, the teaching material should centre on the identification of the twenty-six letters and the simple words. If the content were too difficult, they would suffer a defeat. To the contrary, for preschool students between five and seven, the teaching material should include some phrases and sentences correspondingly.

2. 1. 2 Adopt the theme  
The teaching material of preschool English education should adopt the theme, which has a direct bearing on the preschool student's daily lives. Not only does it benefit the children's understanding of the teaching material, but also provides them with a natural language environment through which children can communicate with others using what they have learned.
2. 1. 3 The importance of interesting teaching material  
As long as children consider the content is interesting, they would learn it.

That is to say, the teaching material should arouse the child's enthusiasm for studying English. Motivation is a way of explaining how people are aroused by an event, how they direct their behavior toward the event, and how they sustain that behavior for given length of time. In other words, motivation deals with why individuals get interested and react to that event that gets

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their attention. Preschool students are prone to like to show off and happy to accept something new and interesting. The teaching material has a direct influence on their studying.

And interesting teaching material should be one that could make preschool students operate well and play happily. 2. 1. 4 Compose at the basis of the theory of multiple intelligences A good teaching material should be composed at the basis of the theory of multiple intelligences, which is advocated by Howard Gardner. He insists that each person should consists of eight intelligences at least that is linguistic intelligence, logical-mathematical intelligence, spatial intelligence, bodily-kinesthetic intelligence, musical intelligence, interpersonal intelligence, intra-personal intelligence, naturalist intelligence.

According to his opinion, the aim of preschool education ought to develop multiple intelligences and help student discover his hobby and get a job which is suited to his intelligence characteristic. With regard to the understanding characteristic of each preschool student, teacher ought to show his comprehension and enable the child to have a better development. Howard Gardner believes that if one could get such help since he was young, he would devote himself into his work completely and serve the society in a cultivated way in the future.

Preschool English education should develop preschool students' multiple intelligences at the same time. The teaching material needs to pay attention to the interaction between teacher and children in the multiple intelligence way and mix body language, mathematics, language, painting, music,

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writing, operating and science together in a harmonious way. Preschool students would deepen the understanding of what they had learned and obtain the learning experiences through operation. In a word, our aim is making preschool students learn through multiple intelligences, learn for multiple intelligences, and develop multiple intelligences. . 2 Requirements of preschool English teachers Some people believe that being an English teacher for preschool students is very easy, and they do not need to master too much knowledge. However, in fact, a preschool English teacher needs patience, responsibility and certain English knowledge. High-level teachers are the guarantee of high quality of preschool English education. 2. 2. 1 Teachers' qualification In order to improve the teaching quality of preschool English education, kindergartens should employ teachers who master English and are familiar with preschool education.

In addition, preschool English teachers, like all children, use a wide range of skills, strategies and behaviors to develop linguistic, academic, and social competencies. The complexities and variations within the home, school, and community settings in which children live and learn lead to variation in the language, literacy, and learning tools that children acquire, use, and bring to the preschool classroom. It is important for preschool educators to think of children as active learners who draw upon their previous knowledge and experiences to make sense of the world as they grow and learn.

However, at present, many kindergarten teachers do not satisfy such demands. For example, during the teaching process, because of the inadequate English competence, the teachers always could not answer

preschool students' questions, which are not prepared beforehand and make unexpected attacks on themselves. The pronunciation of some teachers is not very standard. If children learn the wrong accent, it is difficult for them to redress their pronunciation. Therefore, kindergartens invite the university English teachers or the English majors with high salaries.

Some of them could not understand the preschool students' psychology and adopt the teaching method for adults that make the classroom atmosphere dry and dull. Gradually, children lose their interest in learning English. This asks for the teachers' love of preschool education, good spoken language, standard pronunciation and the affinity at the same time. 2. 2. 2 Teachers' pronunciation There is a good case to manifest the fact that as to the pronunciation of foreign language childhood is the best period. Born in different places, two babies' accents were quite obvious from each other after they began to speak.

However once the baby who was born in the south migrated to the north, he would speak in the northern accent after he grew up. That is the charm of child's imitation. For the old, the adult, the child who live in the dialect-speaking environment, once the government called on them to speak the standard Chinese pronunciation, children must be the one who can change quickest. In order to enable the child to learn the Standard English, teacher must pay special attention to the children's standard pronunciation training.

Parents need to choose a regular kindergarten to make sure of the kindergarten teacher's pronunciation, otherwise child would learn a strange tone since childhood, and it is also difficult to change. According to the

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teaching comparison, preschool students can learn English pronunciation much more standard and faster than adults can. Children do not care the stubborn exclusive behavior of adults. They like to accept the teacher's instruction. In case of the substandard pronunciations, teacher should redress the mistake and the achievement could be found immediately.

When their tones are almost correct, teacher need to continue to instruct and praise them, so that preschool students can rapidly imitate and achieve accuracy. The essential point of showing child's imitation to master the pure English pronunciation is that teacher's pronunciation must be correct. If neglecting this point, the kindergartens would bring the difficulty to their English studies in the future. III. Skills for Preschool Teaching The preschool English learner is a child whose home language is other than English, and as a result is learning English as a second language.

The preschool English learner could also refer to a child who is being raised in a bilingual home or community and one of the languages spoken in that home or community could be English. During the preschool years from birth through age 5 years of age, most children are still acquiring the basic knowledge of their first language even as they acquire knowledge of English as a second language. Preschool students also think in terms of images, that needs the preschool English teacher have kinds of teaching skills to arouse the children's interests of study English.

And teaching methods should contain the pictures and its details. It will be easier for them remember the English knowledge. Also playing games is another way to strengthen what they have learned. 3. 1 Telling stories

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Children are always curious and especially interested in stories. When they understand a story, which is told by the teacher in English, they will be overjoyed. Telling stories in English is a good way to develop preschool students' interests in studying English and promote English teaching quality.

### 3. 1. 1 The advantages of telling stories in English

Preschool students always like listening to stories. After listening, they may repeat it or discuss it together. Kindergarten teachers may apply this method in teaching English. Telling stories in English can not only help them master more words and sentences, but also practice communicating in English.

Firstly, telling stories in English could develop preschool students' interests in studying English. In order to understand the content, children would like to listen to the story on purpose and have interests in further listening.

Being an audience or a speaker brings them a great pleasure. These activities can make preschool students be familiar with the useful expressions. Once they contacted these words or sentences, they would have the feeling that they had met before. Meanwhile telling story to teach English would help children to develop their language sense. Secondly, telling stories in English provides children with chances of practicing different abilities, such as listening and speaking. It is impossible for preschool students to understand the content for one time.

And this may develop their imagination. Children usually devote themselves into it while listening to story so that they would be in the best studying condition. At this time, their talent and creativity would be brought into full play. Thirdly, telling stories in English would help preschool students review

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what they have learned and they could master the knowledge in a happy atmosphere. Moreover, interesting stories attract children's attention and broaden their horizon. Some stories could develop their thoughts and the abilities of analysis and expression. . 1. 2 The ways to tell stories in English

Firstly, in order to catch preschool students' attention and make them understand the story easily, kindergarten teachers could prepare some colorful pictures beforehand. Asking children to draw pictures on the blackboard or paper along with plot developing is another good way. A case in point is teaching the weather. The story is about a bear that goes to see his grandma. When he goes out, the sun is in the sky. The teacher asks children to draw a sunny picture. Later he suddenly feels very cold. It becomes windy.

Then children should be asked to draw a windy picture. When he arrives, it rains heavily. The teacher may require them draw a rainy picture. According to the experience, the child would remember the words of sunny, windy and rainy in a short time and apply these words in practice. Secondly, teachers would do body language to help children understand the story, such as teaching the sense of smell. The story is about two animals, a rabbit and a cat. While walking, the cat says, " I have a nose, pretty and small. I can smell like a sniffing dog. and she goes to the rabbit's home. The rabbit brings the cat a carrot, saying that it smells good. (The teacher may bring a carrot himself and smell it happily. ) However, the cat smells it and says that it smells bad. (The teacher may smell it unhappily. ) Body language could help preschool students have a better understanding of the story, and make them become more interested in studying English. 3. 2 Playing games

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Kindergarten teachers can arrange many kinds of games in class to make preschool students participate in learning English.

It generally contains these three kinds, musical games, reflective games and role-play games.

3. 2. 1 Musical games Listening to the songs can make preschool students contact with others, also may enable themselves to be expressed. And preschool English songs are usually easily to sing with lively melody. If the teacher taught children the weather, he may find some relative songs or just compose a song by himself. For example, once taught some preschool students several farm animals such as pig, cow and turkey, and he chose The Old MacDonald as their theme song.

The great surprise is all of the children could sing it, although they could not sing it very well. While learning English songs, all of the children are very serious. After learning, the teacher would ask each of them to show their songs in front of the class so that it may arouse their enthusiasm for studying. Singing songs to learn English cannot only help them remember the sentences, but also develop their musical sense. Musical games cater to preschool students' tastes, and play the various roles in preschool education which meet the requirement of multiple intelligences.

. 2. 2 Reflective games

Once taught some English words for the organs of the body. And after

Reflective games include daily useful terms in class and body activities. Daily useful terms in class are what kindergarten teachers often use in class, such as " Let's listen/ sing/ play. " " Please look at me. " " Quickly/be careful" " good job/great/well-done/ excellent/good boy/girl". Teachers may praise the

preschool students who can quickly react to his terms and often uses such words or sentences in his class. And the result turns out to be very good.

Only after a short time, all of the preschool students can understand and some of them could use the sentences when they are at home. Body activities are what the preschool students like most. However, children sometimes are too active or naughty which the teacher should pay attention to learning, he played the game of " I see..." to make the children better remember. This game requires kindergarten teachers and preschool students speak the sentences of " I see your eyes/ nose/ mouth...", while pointing at his organs. Then the teacher could take out these pictures to let them speak out the organs.

Although the game is simple, the result is very satisfying. This game could be used in other contents, such as teaching animals. As for the phrases of actions, the teacher could play the game of " follow me" with preschool students. The teacher may stand with his back to the children, and say " raise my hands" while doing the action. After repeating these phrases for several times, the teacher could turn back and examine them if they can do the exact action by saying the phrase. Body activities are very interesting for preschool students, and better for developing their arms and legs. . 2. 3

Role-play games In role-play games, preschool students are arranged into several roles and they can make conversations according to their different roles. In the beginning of each class, the teacher can ask two children come to the front and make a simple conversation which contains greeting, talking about the weather, introducing family members and so on. This could not

only review what they had learned before, but also enable them to use these sentences in the suitable situation. Put telling story, role-play game and singing song together.

The lesson is about seeing animals in the zoo. He taught the relative words and phrases that are “ zoo” “ animal” “ in the zoo” “ have a look” “ monkey” “ jump high” “ tiger” “ run fast” “ elephant” “ walk slow” “ panda” “ have fun’, then told the story in English. He arranged himself in the story which could make the story more attractive. On this occasion, preschool students had understood the story. In order to make them remember the song, can compose a conversation which is the same as the lines of the song. A: Hello! I see animals in the zoo. Do you want to have a look?

B: Yes. A: Now, let’s go. B: I see monkeys jumping high. A: I see tigers running fast. B: I see elephants walking slowly. A: I see pandas having fun. Firstly, played part of A, and all the children played the part of B. Then they changed the roles. After several times, children could remember both contents of A and B. Secondly, asked two of them to show their conversations. At last, opened the radio, and let them to follow the song. Three times was enough for them. And all the preschool students could sing it very well. 3. 3 Social Strategies

Preschool English Learners are very resourceful when finding themselves in an unfamiliar environment, especially in one where the language being spoken is foreign to them. In order to “ fit in” with peers and to be considered as a valuable play partner, they may employ the following social strategies. 3. 3. 1 Social strategies used by child 1) Join a group and act as

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though you understand what is going on, even if you do not. Example: The child may nod as a way to participate in the conversation or repeat a word a peer said. 2) Give the impression, with a few well-chosen words, that you can speak the language.

Example: Some kids pick up on a popular character, fast food chain, or theme and refer to that as a way to make friends. 3) Count on your friends for help. Example: Young English learners will sit next to or play by a peer who is accepting of the way they talk or stay quiet, and who includes them in the activity in natural ways. 3. 3. 2 Teaching tips to match these strategies used by teacher 1) For the first one, when children are engaged in cooperative learning or play, serve as an interpreter for both the fluent English speaker and the child learning English.

Example:" Sara is building a tunnel. You like to play with Sara. You pushed your car through the tunnel. " 2) For the second one, acknowledge the child's attempt to join a conversation and model more advanced language by extending his one or two words into complete sentences. Example:" Yes, KFC sells hamburgers. We're eating hamburgers for lunch. " 3) For the third one, strategically pair children with helpful peers who can serve as good language and interactive models. Example: Acknowledge the peer's friendly actions and responses. IV. Preschool English Education Through Parent-child Relationship

It is not enough for the preschool teaching to only emphasize the knowledge and the interest. It should also contain the process of operation and the activities of development for children. Preschool English education

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emphasizes the interactivities between teacher and preschool students in class, and parents paying attention to the interactivities relationship between them and children after class and to lay a foundation for realizing the cooperation among them. Parent-child relationship plays a very important role in preschool English teaching process. 4. 1 Connecting home and school

It is important to tap into the literacy practices used at home as a resource and bridge to presenting school-based literacy practices. Children and their families should be seen as contributors to their literacy development and practices just as they should be seen for their oral communication practices. Often, teachers ask parents and family members to use school vocabulary and literacy practices at home but teachers may forget to do the reverse, i. e. , to bring into the classroom or childcare setting the richness of literacy practices, tools, and materials that already exist at home. . 1. 1 Principles and Practices Principle: Engaging in multiple literacy practices, such as reading books, singing songs, and reading poetry, is part of the daily life of most families. Preschool teachers should recognize and capitalize on the richness of language use in children's families. By gathering the following information, a teacher will be in a better position to tap into the literacy practices and knowledge base the children are already familiar with and use this information as a resource in the classroom. Practices:

Ask parents about the ways they engage in the use language and literacy at home: 1. Do they read to their children? If so, what kinds of printed materials do the adults and children in the home select? 1) Mail, letters 2) Newspapers

3) Popular magazines 4) Religious books and written materials 5) Cookbooks and food labels 6) School newsletters and information flyers 7) Children's story books 8) Folktales 9) Nursery rhymes 10) Poetry 11) Letters or cards from relatives 12) Television guides 13) Board games 14) Children's coloring or activity books

2. Do they recite rhymes? 2.

Do they tell stories about relatives and friends? 3. Do they sing along to music? If so, what type of music? Does the child have certain favorite songs? 4. Do they tell folktales? 5. Do they play word games? 6. Do they share proverbs? 7. Do you repeat limericks? 8. Do they have family conversations? 1) When do your best conversations happen? 2) What does your child like to talk about? 3) What do you like to talk about? 4.

2 The importance of parent-child relationship in English education Parent-child relationship plays a very important role in preschool English teaching process.

It is not enough for the child to learn English in the kindergartens during the daytime. The parents need to build up an English-speaking environment at home. Language environment is an essential part to learn a foreign language. Without the language environment, it is difficult to master a foreign language. Learning oral English is the basis of learning English. Only if one built the solid foundation, he could learn English well. Preschool students cannot understand the meaning of one language without certain language environment.

4. Some effective ways for parents to teach English

The intensive study motivation of preschool students themselves is the main reason to accelerate to develop language ability. Parents may choose some English original tapes, video recording, or video compact discs to play while

children putting on their clothes, brushing teeth or having meals. Gradually, preschool students would “ catch” some knowledge unintentionally. Children may feel very happy or have the sense of achievement, and their interests in studying English arise spontaneously.

The parents also could watch some interesting English television programs with preschool students together. Compared with tape, it has more pictures and images. Children are easier to become interested in it. Establishing an English-speaking environment would make the preschool students come into contact with English and become one part of their lives. For instance, parents may paste the colorful English pictures and cartoons on the wall where the children can easily see or put some English books on the table or bed where they can easily contact.

If it is available, parents had better read English books and play English games with children. According to different situation, they could make different conversation together. Childhood is the best time to learn a foreign language and preschool students can easily accept English. Parents should pay attention to keep children sensitive to English. In their daily lives, parents may teach them what they could see in English. For example, when they go through the bank, parents could teach them “ bank”. When they go somewhere on bus, “ up” and “ down” could be taught.

Such words could be “ parking”, “ supermarket”, “ hotel” and “ restaurant”. Parents could teach them by asking or just telling them directly, also consult the English dictionary with children. The way of continuously duplicating may expand preschool students’ vocabulary and the language-using ability, at the <https://assignbuster.com/the-impact-of-greek-mythology-on-western-culture-assignment/>

same time may develop a good studying habit. Conclusion Children's language is an essential tool that enables them to learn about the world around them. Language is a tool children use to learn everything, from the cultural practices within the home to the academic content of the classroom.

Thus it can be seen, preschool English teaching is extremely important. In addition, there are multiple paths to childhood bilingualism. Just as children's everyday experiences may be different from one another, different children may follow different paths to developing more than one language. There is not a single best path to bilingualism. This diversity in achieving bilingualism reflects children's overall development in which different children may develop specific abilities at different times and at different rates.

Therefore, it is a must for preschool English teacher formulate different teaching plan corresponding distinct kinds of children. Above all, it has advocated some mainly feasible ways to promote the preschool English teaching. However, we are confronted with many difficulties. For example, it has not found many suitable teaching materials in the teaching field. And the main problem of this aspect is that some kindergartens or teachers could not choose the proper one. It needs to try and find. As for the teaching methods, if the teacher had prepared for the class, children would be interested in it.

This needs the teachers' responsibility. Meanwhile, kindergarten should try his best to provide the teacher with some modern teaching aids, such as VCD player or computer. The last difficulty is the English education through parent-child relationship. Although it is a good way to consolidate what the child had learned in daytime. Only some parents can do it, because of their

busy work. There is not enough time for parents to communicate with children. It needs the experts, the kindergartens, the teachers and the parents to solve the problems together.