



I'm sure almost every one of you looked at your watch or at a clock before you came to class today.

我相信几乎你们中的每个人今天在进教室前都看了你的手表或时钟

Watches and clocks seem as much a part of our life as breathing or eating.

手表和时钟好像同呼吸和吃饭一样是我们生活的一部分。

And yet, did you know that watches and clocks were scarce in the United States until the 1850's?

可是，你知不知道直到十九世纪五十年代手表和时钟在美国都是稀缺的？

In the late 1700's, people didn't know the exact time unless they were near a clock.

在 18 世纪晚期，人们不知道具体的时间，除非他们手边有时钟。

Those delightful clocks in the squares of European towns were built for the public.

那些在欧洲城镇广场上的醒目的时钟是为公众建立的。

After all, most citizens simply couldn't afford a personal timepiece.

毕竟，简单来讲，大多数市民负担不起自己买手表。

Well into the 1800's in Europe and the United States, the main purpose of a watch, which, by the way, was often on a gold chain, was to show others how wealthy you were.

在十九世纪的欧洲和美国，戴手表的主要原因，那个手表，顺便一说，经常在一个金链子上，是给人显示你是多么的富有。

The word "wristwatch" didn't even enter the English language until nearly 1900.

英语一直到几乎 20 世纪都没有“腕表”这个词。

By then the rapid pace of industrialization in the United States meant that measuring time had become essential.

在那时候美国工业化的快速步伐意味着测量时间变得必要。

How could the factory worker get to work on time unless he or she knew exactly what time it was?

如果工厂的工人不知道准确的时间，他们如何按时上班？

Since efficiency was now measured by how fast a job was done, everyone was interested in time.

由于效率现在用一个人工作多快做完来衡量，每个人都对时间感兴趣。

And since industrialization made possible the manufacture of large quantities of goods, watches became fairly inexpensive.

并且由于工业化使得大批量货物生产成为可能，手表变得相当的便宜。



Furthermore, electric lights kept factories going around the clock. Being on time had entered the language—and life—of every citizen.

此外，电灯保持工厂日夜不停的运转。要准时的概念进入了每个公民的语言以及生活。



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