

Idiom by Lon Yan

各有千秋

ge4 you3 qian1 qiu1

Some people are smart with books, others sports or music. Talent, in fact, comes in many more shapes and sizes.

Take Joey Chestnut, the California guy who was in the news recently. His talent: eating a lot of hot dogs in a very short time - 72 in 10 minutes to be exact - and defended his titled for the 10th time in as many years.

Other talents are even more special. The website Seventeen listed this one under "Super weird talents everyone wishes they had": "Turning your head around 360 degrees".

Its video demonstration is a blank screen, probably because it is too scary. But you would have an idea of what that is like if you had seen Linda Blair do it in The Exorcist.

The great variety of talents people have can be described by the idiom "各有千秋" (*ge4 you3 qian1 qiu1*).

"各" (*ge4*) is "each," "every," "有" (*you3*) "to have," "to exist," "千" (*qian1*) "a thousand" and "秋" (*qiu1*) "autumn," "a year," "a period," "a time." "千秋" (*qian1 qiu1*) is "a thousand years," "centuries," "a long time." Literally, "各有千秋" (*ge4 you3 qian1 qiu1*) is "each having his or her own thousand years."

"千秋" (*qian1 qiu1*), in this context refers, figuratively, to contributions that will last or be remembered for a long time. The idiom means "each has specialized skills," "each in his own way has made an important contribution," "each has its (his, her) merits."

The idiom can also be used to describe things. Three proposals each having different strong points can be called "各有千秋" (*ge4 you3 qian1 qiu1*).

Terms containing the character "各" (*ge4*) include:

各界 (*ge4 jie4*) – all walks of life

各自 (*ge4 zi4*) – each; respective; by oneself

各人 (*ge4 ren2*) – each one; everyone

各別 (*ge4 bie2*) – distinct; peculiar