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**Vocabulary: laughter** 词汇: 笑声

What makes you laugh the most?

While **rib-tickling** jokes and **hilarious** videos certainly do make us **giggle**, most of the time we laugh because of something much simpler: being with other people.

So much so that we are 30 times more likely to laugh when we're with others, according to a study by **neuroscientist** Robert Provine from the University of Maryland. "When you're alone, laughter basically disappears," he told Smithsonian Magazine.

So, what is it about other people that makes us **split our sides**? The answer lies deep within our brains, and in how we form communities.

Laughter is a social emotion that we use to "make and maintain **social bonds**," says Professor Sophie Smith from University College London in an article for the BBC. It reassures people that situations are **non-threatening**. Those who laugh frequently are also often more popular. Even in a normal conversation we laugh seven times every 10 minutes, she says.

Professor Smith also explains that laughter is very different to speech. It is **non-verbal**: the **wheezing** and **snorting** sounds are produced by air being pushed out quickly at high pressure, without involving the teeth or lips. These sounds are the kind we make when in a state of **heightened emotion**.

In this respect, laughter sounds more like an animal call than human language. This theory is **backed up** by tests which show the part of the brain responsible for laughter is not the **neocortex** used in language, but an 'older' area we share with mammals.

Indeed, chimpanzees, gorillas and even rats all enjoy a good **chortle**, especially when being tickled. Just be careful when you tickle a gorilla, or you might end up **laughing on the other side of your face...** (Did you laugh at that **gag**? Or did it just make you **groan**?)

## 词汇表

<b>rib-tickling</b>	令人捧腹大笑的
<b>hilarious</b>	滑稽的
<b>giggle</b>	咯咯地笑
<b>neuroscientist</b>	神经科学家
<b>split your sides</b>	笑裂腰身，笑破肚皮
<b>social bond</b>	社会关系
<b>non-threatening</b>	不具威胁性的
<b>non-verbal</b>	非语言的
<b>wheeze</b>	发出喘息声
<b>snort</b>	用鼻子哼
<b>heightened emotion</b>	高度激动的情绪
<b>back up</b>	证实，有证据支持
<b>neocortex</b>	大脑新皮层
<b>chortle</b>	哈哈大笑
<b>laugh on the other side of your face</b>	（口语比喻）转喜为忧、乐极生悲
<b>gag</b>	玩笑、俏皮话
<b>groan</b>	哼了一声

## 测验与练习

### 1. 阅读课文并回答问题。

1. Why do we laugh so much when we're with others?
2. How is laughing unlike speaking?
3. If I tell a bad joke does it make you split your sides or groan?
4. How do you make a rat laugh?
5. True or false? *The part of the brain responsible for speaking is newer than the part used for laughing.*

### 2. 请你在不参考课文的情况下完成下列练习。选择一个意思合适的单词填入句子的空格处。

1. I can't stop \_\_\_\_\_ whenever Tim talks. He's just so funny.

rib-tickling	splitting	giggling	groaning
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2. He \_\_\_\_\_ his claim with photographic evidence.

back upped	back up	heightened	backed up
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3. After running for 10 miles I was \_\_\_\_\_ heavily.

wheezing	snorting	chortling	tickling
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4. Don't you dare say that again or you'll be laughing on the other side \_\_\_\_\_.

of my face	of your face	of our face	of the face
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5. Police were sent in to deal with a \_\_\_\_\_ situation.

threatened	non-verbal	non-threatening	threatening
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## 答案

### 1. 阅读课文并回答问题。

#### 1. Why do we laugh so much when we're with others?

**We laugh because it helps us make and maintain social connections, it helps us understand situations are non-threatening, and because it can make us more popular.**

#### 2. How is laughing unlike speaking?

**Laughter is produced in a different way physically: by forcing air out quickly, without using the teeth or lips. The sounds made are similar to those we make when highly emotional, not to words. Laughing is similar to animal noises - and uses a different part of the brain to speech.**

#### 3. If I tell a bad joke does it make you split your sides or groan?

**If you hear a bad joke you groan, which means to laugh awkwardly or in a forced way.**

#### 4. How do you make a rat laugh?

**You tickle a rat to make it laugh.**

#### 5. True or false? *The part of the brain responsible for speaking is newer than the part used for laughing.*

**True. The part of the brain used for laughing is an older part we share with other mammals.**

### 2. 请你在不参考课文的情况下完成下列练习。选择一个意思合适的单词填入句子的空格处。

1. I can't stop **giggling** whenever Tim talks. He's just so funny.

2. He **backed up** his claim with photographic evidence.

3. After running for 10 miles I was **wheezing** heavily.

4. Don't you dare say that again or you'll be laughing on the other side **of your face**.

5. Police were sent in to deal with a **threatening** situation.