

BBC Learning English – Q & A of the Week 145

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Oldest and Eldest 两个词的区别

Feifei: 大家好，欢迎收听《你问我答》，我是冯菲菲。

Rob: And hello, I'm Rob. Now Feifei, would you like to tell us about today's question?

Feifei: Well as you are the oldest one here, I thought I'd let you do it.

Rob: Are you sure I'm the oldest? What year were you born?

Feifei: Rob! You should never ask a lady her age.

Rob: What! You're a lady?

Feifei: Hmmm. Let's just hear today's question shall we?

Insert

*Hi. I have a question. What is the different the between words 'older ' and 'elder'?
Thank-you. From Ming Shu.*

Feifei: 首先感谢 Ming Shu 给我们发来的问题。她想请我们讲一讲单词 older 和 elder 的区别。They sound the same but do they mean the same thing?

Rob: Well as I am supposed to be the oldest maybe I should explain?!

Feifei: If you can remember!

Rob: I can. Both these words do relate to age. If something is old it is not new, it's been around for a while. An old person, for example, has lived for a long time.

Feifei: Old 这个词通常来形容一个人的年纪老了，或是一样东西旧了。Well that's old news, tell me something new.

Rob: If we compare two objects or two people, the one that has been around the longest is identified as the older. Like this:



Insert

My brother is older than me.

This car has so much rust, it's got to be older than mine.

Feifei: 以上的这两个例子是用单词 **older** 来比较两者之间的年龄差距。**Older** 是单词 **old** 的比较级。But when is something the **oldest** 最老的，最旧的？

Rob: The oldest is the object or person who is the greatest in age. For example:

Insert

This church is the oldest one in the country.

Could you use up the oldest milk first before opening a new bottle.

Feifei: The oldest 常指一个年龄最大的人或物，它也是单词 **old** 的最高级。In other words, it's been around the longest. Like you!

Rob: Ha ha! Now have you ever heard this idiom...

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It was the oldest trick in the book - one man distracted me while another stole my wallet.

Feifei: The oldest trick in the book - so what does that mean?

Rob: The oldest trick is a way of deceiving someone that's not new. It's been used many times before.

Feifei: The oldest trick in the book 直译是书中的老把戏，其实意思就是老掉牙的骗人伎俩。OK, we've talked about oldest but how different is that from the word elder and eldest?

Rob: These have similar meanings to older and oldest but refer only to people who are usually related.

Feifei: Elder 年长的，eldest 最年长的，最老的。这两个词通常来比较同一家人之间的年龄差距。Let's hear some examples:

Insert

I'm the eldest in the family so I think I know best!

I have three sons, John is the eldest.

I'm having a party for my eldest daughter. She's going to be 21 next week.

My elder brother is probably the best cook in the family.

Rob: So as can you can see, eldest and elder also tend to be used in reference to siblings.

Feifei: I see. Siblings 的意思是亲兄弟姐妹。单词 **elder** 和 **eldest** 一般是用来比较某人亲兄妹之间的年龄的。But generally these words don't get used very often.



- Rob:** That's right and if you're not sure when to use them you'd be OK to say older and oldest.
- Feifei:** Good, so I can still say you are the older of the two of us?
- Rob:** You could if it was true! Anyway, I hope we've helped to answer Ming Shu's question.
- Feifei:** 如果你在英语学习中遇到难题，都可以发邮件给我们，邮箱是 questions.chinaelt@bbc.co.uk
- Rob:** See you next time.
- Both:** Bye!