

GRADED ENGLISH READERS

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西南师范大学出版社

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ENGLISH READERS

新编英语分级阅读教程
A New
Ladder For
English Learners
Southwest-China
Normal University
Press

新编英语分级阅读教程

(第一级)

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西南师范大学出版社

1995.9

(川)新登字 019 号

责任编辑 何 明
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新编英语分级阅读教程
(Stage One)

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西南师范大学出版社出版 • 发行
(重庆北碚)

重庆北碚培萃印刷厂印刷

开本: 787 × 1092 1/16 印张: 16 字数: 500千字
1995年9月第一版 1995年9月第一次印刷
印数: 1-5000

ISBN 7-5621-0333-X/G • 194

定价: 11.50元

前 言

《新编英语分级阅读教程》是供高等院校英语专业低年级阅读课使用的一套系统教材，全书共分 Stage One, Stage Two, Stage Three 和 Speed Reading 四册。它是以国家教委颁布的《高等院校英语专业基础阶段教学大纲》为指导，结合我国英语教学的特点，在原《英语分级阅读课本》的基础上改编而成的，旨在培养学生的阅读理解能力，提高阅读课的教学质量。

本书具有以下几个方面的特点：

1、循序渐进，拾级而上。

全书内容由浅入深，难度逐册增大。学员从中学英语水平开始阅读，到基础阶段结束时可达到借助词典读懂中等难度原著的水平。

2、便于教师课堂操作。

课文长度按不同的级别分别控制在1000~3000字左右，教师可根据《大纲》的具体要求规定每节课的阅读时间。《快速阅读》严格按照95年四级统考题的形式编写，并用活页装订，便于教师掌握阅读速度，真正达到计时、快速阅读的目的。

3、题材广泛，语言地道。

教材的课文全部选自英、美近期出版物。体裁包括：小说、传记、历史、游记、科普、科幻、神话、圣经故事和描写英语国家风土人情的作品。选材上尽量照顾了内容的知识性、科学性和趣味性。

4、具有可检查性。

每篇课文后都编有“阅读理解”、“词汇”和“答问”三种练习，教师可随时了解学生对文章的理解程度、对词汇的掌握情况及他们的口头表达能力。

5、使用面广。

本教材供本科院校、专科院校及教育学院英语专业低年级学生使用。本教材还可帮助自学英语人士及广大英语爱好者提高阅读速度和理解能力。

由于编者水平有限，书中的疏误在所难免，恳请广大读者和同行专家不吝指正。

编者
1995年9月

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1. THE ISLANDERS

In the middle of the sea there are two islands. No one lives on them now. One is called Eastia, and the other Westia. Eastia is rocky and has many mountains. Westia is low and has no hills at all. Long ago, people lived on these islands. The people on Eastia were called Eastians, and the people on Westia were called Westians.

The Eastians were strong people. In the rocky earth they found gold and silver and iron. From these they made many things and sold them to the Westians. They built ships from wood which grew in their forests, and they made cloth also. The Westians kept cows and grew many things to eat. They sold all these things to the Eastians. They bought ships from the Eastians, and in these ships they sent their things. They also went fishing in the ships.

Both the Westians and the Eastians were happy. They had enough food and enough money. They were never ill, and they had good schools for their children.

Each island helped the other. The Westians had to buy things which they needed from the Eastians. The Eastians had to buy food from the Westians, because they could not grow things or keep cows on their rocky island.

For many years they lived quietly. Then one day, King Bong the Strong of Eastia called together his wise men and said, 'The cost of cows has gone up. These Westians are asking too much.'

They answered, 'True, O King! But the Westians say their cows have been sick. Many have died, and they must sell the rest for more money.'

'Hmmm!' said the king. 'That may be true. But why should we buy from them? Let's buy a piece of their island and have our own cows.'

'Perhaps they won't sell,' said one of the wise men.

'Then, we shall go and take it,' the king answered. 'We have fine ships. We shall go and fight them.'

So the Eastians began to get ready for war. They bought much food from the Westians, and put it away carefully. The Westians did not know anything about this, and were not at all ready to fight. When everything was ready, King Bong the Strong of Eastia sent a letter to King Ho the Slow of Westia. This was the letter:

Dear Ho,

Your cows are too dear. We want to buy half of your island, so that we can have our own cows. How much do you want for it?

Bong.

After a week the answer came. This was the letter:

Dear Bong,

You can't have our island. We will never sell it to anyone.

Ho.

King Bong the Strong was very angry when he read this. He called his wise men again and said, 'Now we must fight! These people will not sell us part of their island, so we shall go and take the whole island.'

The wise men said, 'We shall kill King Ho the Slow, and King Bong the Strong will rule over both islands.'

Then all the people ran about singing war songs. The king ordered all the ships to get ready, and the fighting men sailed for the island of Westia. The Westians were very surprised to see the ships full of soldiers. They quickly ran to meet the Eastian army.

There was a long battle. Perhaps you think the Eastians won quickly, but they didn't. The Westians fought very bravely. They fought all day, and many were killed on both sides.

At the end of the day they stopped fighting, though the battle wasn't really finished; but the Westians wanted to rest, and King Bong wanted to send back to Eastia for more men. So many of his men had been killed that he was afraid he would lose. He ordered all the men of Eastia to come and fight. Only the grandfathers could stay at home.

After some days the ships came back with more men. Only women, children and very old men were left.

The battle began again. This time, after a very hard fight, the poor Westians really did lose. King Ho the Slow was killed, and King Bong the Strong was hurt and died the next day. There were very few Westians left, for even the women had fought to help the men. The Eastians went back to Eastia. They also had lost a great number. The Eastians waited for the Westians to send them food again. But the Westians had killed many of their cows, and their fields had been burnt in the battle, so there was no food left, and they had nothing to send. Also there were so few of them that they could not raise enough food to sell to the Eastians. So the Eastians nearly died because they had so little food.

At last they said that they would go and live on Westia and grow the food themselves. First of all they killed the remaining Westians and tried to grow things and keep cows. But they did not know how to do this; things did not grow, and their cows died.

Then they became ill because they hadn't enough food. There were so few men left that there were not enough young men to marry the old men's daughters, and so few children were born; many people died, and the number of Eastians became smaller and smaller.

In a very few years they were all dead. That is why the islands are now deserts. If King Bong the Strong had not made war, those islands would have been full of happy people.

War is a very bad thing.

A. Comprehension: Answer the questions without looking back at the passage.

1. Both the Eastians and Westians were happy because _____.
[A] they lived on a beautiful island
[B] they lived in a very rich country
[C] they did not have to grow their own food
[D] they led an easy life and enjoyed good health
2. When the Eastians began to get ready for war _____.
[A] the Westians became angry with them
[B] the Westians knew nothing about it
[C] the Westians were very worried about it
[D] the Westians stopped selling food to them
3. When the Westians saw the ships full of Eastians soldiers _____.
[A] they gave themselves up
[B] they all went into hiding
[C] they at once ran to fight their enemy
[D] they were so scared that they didn't know what to do
4. Which of the following is not true?
[A] The war lasted a long time.
[B] The Westians fought bravely but they lost.
[C] A lot of fighting men on both sides were killed.
[D] The Eastians won a great victory over the Westians.
5. Few children were born in Eastia after the war because _____.
[A] the island had become a desert
[B] few women wanted to have children
[C] most women had been killed in the war
[D] there were not enough young men to marry the women

B. Vocabulary: The following words or phrases have been taken from the passage you have just read. Circle the letter before the best meaning or synonym for the word or phrase as used in the passage.

1. kept, 'The Westians kept cows and grew many things to eat.'
[A] to raise [B] to grow up [C] to rise [D] to hide
2. quietly, 'For many years they lived quietly.'

- [A] calmly [B] noisily [C] peacefully [D] with little noise
3. gone up, 'The cost of cows has gone up.'
- [A] to raise [B] to rise
[C] to become bigger [D] to become taller
4. put...away, 'They bought much food from the Westians and put it away carefully.'
- [A] to throw away [B] put off
[C] to put aside [D] to keep for later use
5. dear, 'Your cows are too dear.'
- [A] much loved [B] very lovely [C] friendly [D] costing a lot
6. rule over, '...and King Bong the Strong will rule over both islands.'
- [A] to be led by [B] to be the king of
[C] to live on [D] to be at peace with
7. Poor, '...the poor Westians really did lose.'
- [A] having little money [C] not rich
[C] not very strong [D] unfortunate
8. raise, '...they could not raise enough food to sell to the Eastians.'
- [A] to lift [B] to grow [C] to send [D] to cause to rise
9. deserts, 'That is why the islands are now deserts.'
- [A] good land for farming [B] land with no one living on it
[C] rocky mountains [D] sandy land with little plant life
10. made war, 'If King Bong the Strong had not made war....'
- [A] to win a war [B] to start a war [C] to lose a battle [D] to be at war

C. Questions: Answer the following questions orally in class according to the passage you have just read.

1. What kind of people were the Eastians?
 2. How did the Eastians get ready for war?
 3. What happened to the two kings in the war?
 4. What happened to the remaining Westians?
 5. Why is war a very bad thing?
-

2. MISS EVANS OF BOSTON, AMERICA

On a beautiful afternoon in a year now long gone a big ship set out on its first journey from England to America. It was a new ship called the 'Titanic'.

Men worked day and night to build this great ship. Everything in it was new and clean and well made. Hundreds of people were in the ship. Some were rich, and they had beautiful rooms high up in the ship. Poorer people were in another part of the ship, not so high up and nearer to the water-line.

For two days the 'Titanic' went on its way over the sea. Everyone in it was happy. It was very cold, but there was sun all day, and inside the ship it was not cold at all. Then, the next night, it got colder and colder.

People asked—'Why is it so cold? It's not a very cold time of the year.' The answer was this. When water gets very cold, it gets hard. This is called 'ice'. When it gets hard it makes very big, hard pieces called 'icebergs'. A part of the iceberg shows on top of the water, but there is a lot more of it under the water. This part of it cannot be seen. In the cold part of the year, the icebergs stay in the cold part of the sea. Later in the year, when it is not so cold, the icebergs break up and move about all over the sea. When there are a lot of them, this is called an 'ice-field'. The 'Titanic' was moving into an ice-field.

All ships have a man in the highest part of the ship to see everything on the water. He is called the 'look-out' man. He can see another ship, or anything else on the water before anyone else can.

The 'look-out' man on the 'Titanic' saw the icebergs coming nearer. There was not very much light but he could just see them.

He called to other men and just then something hit the side of the ship. Very soon after that, the 'Titanic' stopped. But it could not get away from the icebergs. One of them came slowly nearer and nearer. Then the bottom part of the iceberg hit the bottom part of the 'Titanic'. It made a very big hole and the water began to come inside the ship.

Everyone was told to come out of their rooms and go up to the top part of the ship. People did as they were told, quickly and quietly. But some of them did not understand. 'What has happened?' they asked. 'Why have we stopped?'

Men were putting the lifeboats over the sides of the ship, down into the water. Then all the men helped the women and children into the lifeboats.

Some of the children lost their mothers. Some of the women lost their men and children. It was very cold, and there was no light, except the light from the ship. People could hear the water coming higher and higher up inside the ship. Then, all at once, the lights went out.

There was not very much time left. The iceberg was on one side of the ship. It was like a huge, white wall.

A woman came to the side of the ship. Her two children were in one of the lifeboats, and she was very afraid.

The lifeboat was just moving away from the ship. There was no more room in it. The woman called to the people in the lifeboat.

'Oh! Please, please make a place for me,' she said. 'My children are in the lifeboat. I must go with them.'

'There's no more room,' someone called out. 'If we take one more the lifeboat will go down under the water. Everyone will be lost.'

'I must go with my children!' cried the poor woman, 'You must take me!'

Her children heard her calling out. They began to cry. 'Mother! Mother!' they called. They were very afraid.

There was a young woman in the lifeboat called Miss Evans. Only little is known about her. She was not married, and she came from Boston, in America. She was going home to Boston. That is all we know about Miss Evans. We do not even know her first name.

Miss Evans heard the woman calling to her children. She stood up in the lifeboat and touched one of the men on the arm.

'Let me go back to the ship,' she said. 'Let that woman take my place. I have no children. I am not married.'

'The ship will go down,' said the man. 'You know that, don't you?'

'Yes,' said Miss Evans quietly, 'I know that.'

There was no time to talk. People helped Miss Evans to get back to the ship. Then they helped the children's mother to get down into the lifeboat. The lifeboat moved away from the ship. Very soon after that, there was a great noise, and the 'Titanic' went down under the water.

Some hours later, a ship called the 'Carpathia' came to help. Some people were still in the water; others were in the lifeboats. They were all nearly dead from the cold. The 'Carpathia' saved everyone still alive. But it did not save Miss Evans. No one ever saw her again.

If you speak about Miss Evans in Boston today, not many people can remember her name. But she was one of the great women of America.

A. Comprehension: Answer the questions without looking back at the passage.

1. According to the text, the 'Titanic' was _____

- [A] a big newly-built ship. [B] a small beautiful ship.
 [C] sailing in rough waters. [D] on its way back to England.
2. It was getting colder and colder because ____
 [A] the ship was caught in a storm. [B] the ship was sailing in an ice-field.
 [C] it was a cold time of the year. [D] it was very windy at that time.
3. Which of the following is true?
 [A] Miss Evans's children were on the 'Titanic'.
 [B] Miss Evans and the other woman were friends.
 [C] A lot is known about Miss Evans.
 [D] We don't know much about Miss Evans.
4. Miss Evans decided to go back to the 'Titanic' ____
 [A] because she had no choice.
 [B] because she did not know it was going to sink.
 [C] though her children were on the lifeboat.
 [D] though she knew it was going to sink.
5. Miss Evans was one of the great American women because ____
 [A] she saved a lot of women and children
 [B] she asked to go back to the ship
 [C] she was cool-minded in face of great danger
 [D] she gave her life for another woman.

B. Vocabulary: The following words or phrases have been taken from the passage you have just read. Circle the letter before the best meaning or synonym for the word or phrase as used in the passage.

1. set out, '... a big ship set out on its first journey from England to America.'
 [A] to sail on the sea [B] to sail at full speed
 [C] to begin a voyage [D] to go to another country
2. shows, 'A part of the iceberg shows on top of the water...'
 [A] to see [B] to appear
 [C] to lead the way [D] to float on the sea
3. break up, '...the icebergs break up and move about all over the sea.'
 [A] to separate [B] to be destroyed
 [C] to float about [D] to divide into smaller pieces
4. ice-field, 'The "Titanic" was moving into an ice-field'
 [A] cold part of the sea [B] hard piece of ice
 [C] part of the sea that is frozen [D] area of the sea with many icebergs
5. look-out man, 'The "look-out" man on the "Titanic" saw the icebergs coming nearer.'
 [A] person who keeps watch
 [B] person who looks out of a ship

- [C] person who first sees an iceberg
[D] person who first sees another ship
6. hit, 'He called to other men and just then something hit the side of the ship.'
[A] to pass by [B] to knock at
[C] to give a heavy below [D] to come against with force
7. went out, 'then, all at once, the lights went out.'
[A] to leave a house [B] to leave a ship
[C] to stop shining [D] to spend time on the sea
8. be lost, 'Everyone will be lost.'
[A] to be killed [B] not to be found
[C] to be unable to find the way [D] no longer to be found
9. poor, "I must go with my children!" cried the poor woman.'
[A] not rich [B] having little money
[C] causing pity [D] lacking strength
10. touched, 'She stood up in the lifeboat and touched one of the men on the arm.'
[A] to reach for [B] to feel with the hand
[C] to cause to feel pity [D] to strike lightly with the hand

C. Questions: Answer the following questions orally in class according to the passage you have just read.

1. How are icebergs formed on the sea?
2. Why are icebergs dangerous for the ship?
3. What happened after the 'look-out' man saw the icebergs coming nearer?
4. How did some of the people escape from the 'Titanic'?
5. What happened a few hours after the 'Titanic' sank?

3. THE STORY OF THE OPAL (I)

An opal is a jewel. It is a white jewel, like glass, in which there are many colors—gold, and silver, and blue, and red. As you turn the jewel this way and that, the color is always changing.

The Nightingale is a bird. Nightingales sing in the forest at night, and their song always sounds very sad—because this is the story which they sing, and it is a very sad story.

It was a hot summer day, and the sun was in a clear blue sky. A little Sun-fairy came down his long golden ladder and hid among the leaves of a large tree. All the sunlight is really Sun-fairies who run down to earth on golden ladders. When they see a cloud coming they quickly climb up their ladders and pull the ladders up after them into the sun. The sun is ruled by a powerful fairy, who every morning tells his servants, the Sun-fairies, where they are to bring their light; and every evening he looks at them all, when they come back, to see that he has the right number.

The Sun and the Moon have quarreled; that is why they are not often in the sky at the same time. The fairy who rules the Moon is a woman, and all her Moon-fairies are little girls; they come down to earth on the prettiest ladders which look like silver. No one knows why the Sun and Moon quarreled, but they have; and the Sun-fairies and Moon-fairies may not play together.

On the day on which my story begins a little Sun-fairy came into a tree and sat down near a little bird's home. He watched the little bird and his wife. 'Why should I not have a little wife too?' he said to himself; and then he began to feel very sad, for Sun-fairies never marry. Yet he was the prettiest little fairy you could think of. His hair was golden, and he sat there quietly with one arm on his little ladder, watching the birds and hearing what they said.

'I shall try to keep awake tonight to see her,' said one young bird.

'Don't be foolish,' said its mother. 'You shall do no such thing.'

'But the nightingale says she is so very beautiful,' said another bird, looking out from his house built of grass and feathers near by.

'The Nightingale!' answered the first bird, laughing. 'Everyone knows that the Nightingale loves the Moon-fairies. So who can believe a word he says?'

'I have seen her,' said yet another bird with a soft voice. 'I was awake last night and saw her; she is more beautiful than anything that ever came here before.'

'Of whom are you talking?' asked the Sun-fairy.

All the birds stopped talking when they saw him. At last one said:

'Only of a Moon-fairy, please, Mr Sun-fairy—no one that a great Mr Sun-fairy like you would care about'—for the bird remembered the quarrel between the Sun and Moon.

'What is she like?' asked the Sun-fairy. 'I never saw a Moon-fairy.'

'You should ask the Nightingale,' answered the bird. 'He knows more about her than anyone, for he always comes out to sing to her.'

'Where is the Nightingale?' asked the Sun-fairy.

'He is resting now,' said the bird, 'and will not say a word. But, later, when the Sun sets, he will come out and tell you.'

'I will wait till the Nightingale comes,' said the Sun-fairy.

So all day long the Sun-fairy played about the tree. As the sun moved down through the sky, his ladder moved with it, lower and lower, for one end was on the sun. If he had let the sun set before he ran back and pulled it up, his ladder would have broken against the earth. Then the poor little Sun-fairy could never have gone home again; but he would have walked about on the earth, becoming colder and colder—till at last he died.

But some time before the Sun had gone, when it was still lying in a beautiful bed of red and gold, the Nightingale came out and began to sing soft and clear.

'Oh, is it you at last?' said the Sun-fairy. 'How I have waited for you! Tell me quickly about this Moon-fairy of whom they are all talking.'

'What shall I tell you of her?' sang the Nightingale. 'She is more beautiful than the rose. Her hair is silver, and the light of her eyes is far prettier than yours. But you are from the Sun, and you do not like Moon-fairies.'

'Why not?' said the Sun-fairy sadly. 'What are they like? Show this one to me some night, dear Nightingale.'

'I cannot show her to you now,' answered the Nightingale; 'for she will not come out till long after the Sun has gone down; but wait a few days, and when the Moon is full and round, she will come a little before the Sun sets. And if you hide under a leaf you may look at her. But you must not let your light fall on her, or you might hurt her.'

Every day the Sun-fairy came back to the same tree.

'Tonight I shall see her at last,' he said to himself, for the Moon was almost full and would come into the sky before the Sun went down. He hid in the leaves and waited.

'She is coming,' said the Nightingale; and the little Sun-fairy put his head out from the leaves and watched.

After a short time a little silver ladder was gently placed among the leaves near the Nightingale's home and down the ladder came the Moon-fairy.

The little Sun-fairy looked out and saw her. She was all silver and soft Greeny-blue. Her hair and her eyes were full of light. She looked cold as the sea, yet she burned like a jewel. The Sun-fairy looked at her in surprise, without saying a word, till he saw that his little ladder was almost broken! The sun was going down, and he had only just enough time to climb back and pull his ladder after him.

A. Comprehension: Answer the questions without looking back at the passage.

1. The Sun and the Moon are not often in the sky at the same time because _____.
[A] they don't like each other [B] the Sun is afraid of the Moon
[C] the Moon is afraid of the Sun [D] they are ruled by the same fairy
2. While watching the two birds the Sun-fairy felt sad because _____.
[A] he did not have a wife [B] he was not very pretty
[C] the Moon-fairy hated him [D] the birds did not like him
3. If a Sun-fairy had let the Sun set before he pulled his ladder up _____.
[A] he would have died at once
[B] he would have seen the Nightingale
[C] he would have been unable to go home
[D] he would have been killed by the Moon-fairy
4. When the Moon is full and round the Sun-fairy may _____.
[A] play with the Moon-fairies
[B] live 24 hours away from the Sun
[C] have a chance to see the Nightingale
[D] have a chance to see the Moon-fairy
5. When the Sun-fairy saw the Moon-fairy _____.
[A] he smiled at her [B] he said hello to her
[C] he asked her if she loved him [D] None of the above

B. Vocabulary: The following words or phrases have been taken from the passage you have just read. Circle the letter before the best meaning or synonym for the word or phrase as used in the passage.

1. jewel, 'An opal is a jewel.'
[A] precious stone [B] white stone
[C] something that shines [D] pearl
2. turn, 'As you turn the jewel this way and that...'
[A] to move round [B] to move from side to side
[C] to move up and down [D] to hold the wrong side up
3. changing, '...the color is always changing.'
[A] to shift [B] to replace
[C] to become different [D] to exchange
4. clear, 'It was a hot summer day, and the sun was in a clear blue sky.'
[A] pure [B] without clouds
[C] easily seen [D] clean
5. servant, '...who every morning tells his servants...'