

阶梯英语读本

6

Graded
English
Reader

安徽教育出版社



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阶梯英语读本

6

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前 言

阅读是学习语言的一项基本技能。读是写的基础,是扩大词汇量、了解众多的语言现象的主要途径。阅读是运用英语获得信息的主要方法之一;阅读能力是考查英语水平的重要依据。

在各级各类学校学习英语的同学们,要想提高阅读能力,光靠阅读课本上的几篇课文是远远不够的,必须大量地接触课外的语言材料。

课外阅读读什么和怎样读,是一个值得研究的问题。

首先,应当选择那些与自己水平相当的语言材料,太难太易都不好。太难了,时间都花在查生词上,速度缓慢,难以获得大量信息。太易了,无法扩大词汇量,也难以增加新的语感。

其次,要研究阅读方法。阅读一般分快速阅读和精细阅读两种。对一篇短文,快速浏览一遍,读懂其中 70% 左右,然后做与短文内容有关的理解性练习——这是在考试中所使用的阅读方法,平时也可以这样进行阅读训练。用这种方法可以提高阅读速度,在短时间内获得大量的信息。这种方法的缺点是没有读懂文章的各个句子,有些囫囵吞枣。另一种方法就是精读细读,不放过每一个段落、每一个句子,把其中的意思和结构都弄清楚。以上两种方法各有利弊,应当结合使用。

基于以上的一些考虑,我们为各种不同程度的英语读者编写了这套《阶梯英语读本》。这套书按照所选英文短文难易程度,由易到难,共分 9 册。其中①②③册大抵上适合我国初中学生阅读,④⑤⑥册大抵上适合我国高中学生阅读,⑦⑧⑨册大抵上适合我国大学专科和本科学生阅读。因为是课外读物,读者尽可以根据自己的实际水平,选用其中一册或若干册进行阅读。此套书中选用的语言材料

所囊括的词汇量由少到多,语言现象由简单到复杂。英文原文均选自原版图书、报纸、杂志等,题材多种多样,内容生动有趣,融知识性和趣味性于一体,有的寓意深刻,富于哲理。所选用的语言材料力求新颖。这些素材都是英语国家中真实的语言文字,但为了适合我国不同程度的读者阅读,我们对少数原文的个别句子进行了改写或简写,但从不破坏原文的语言风格为原则。读者阅读此书,不仅可以学习语言,还可以增进知识、开阔视野。译文均为编者所撰写。译文力求做到忠实于原文、通顺流畅。对于原文中较难理解的词汇和短语,我们作了简明的注释。对生词和短语词义的注释一般只限本文中的含义。

本书以英汉对照方式编排。实践证明,本族语在外语学习中是一根有益的“小拐杖”,它能帮助读者对两种语言进行比较和加深理解。但是,外语学习者不可过分依赖它,平时要用主要精力去阅读和理解原文。对这套书我们建议读者可以先快速通读一遍英文短文,看看读懂了多少,然后再对照译文和注释细细品味。

参加此套书编写的是大、中学校的英语教师和语言科研人员。对书中的缺点和错误我们热忱希望读者批评指正。

编者

2002年1月

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1

New Year's Day

元旦

THE YEAR is a perfect circle, and it can begin on any day you like; it was a mere accident of Roman politics that bequeathed us January 1st.

In the very early years of the Roman Republic, the newly elected consuls took up office in the month of March — and that dictated when the year began. Then in 153 BC, this transfer of power was rescheduled to January, and the first of that month became New Year's Day throughout the western regions of the Roman Empire.

This convention survived the change to the Julian calendar in 46 BC, and even the subsequent adoption of Gregorian refinements some 1600 years later.

But in the north of Europe the situation was a mite confused. Prior to the Norman conquest of England, the New Year in these parts began on Christman Day, December 25th. In 1066 the Normans brought with them the Roman habit of beginning the year on January 1st — but this conti-

“年”是一个完整的周期，它可以从你喜欢的任何一天开始；把1月1日作为元旦传给我们后人，纯粹是罗马政治中的偶然事件。

罗马共和国开创之初，新当选的执政官是在3月份上任的——以此来定新年的开始。后来到了公元前153年，这种政权的交接调整到元月进行，于是那个月的第一天便成了罗马帝国整个西部地区的元旦。

这种惯例到公元前46年改用儒略历，甚至到大约1600年以后采用改进的格列历时依旧保留下来。

但是在北欧，情况有点混乱。在诺曼底人征服英国之前，这些地区的新年是从12月25日圣诞节那天开始的。1066年诺曼底人带来了罗马人的习俗，即把1月1日作为一年的开始——但是这种欧洲大陆的

mental affectation barely lasted for a century. From 1155 onwards New Year's Day was Lady Day, March 25th, and it was only with the legal adoption of the Gregorian calendar in Britain and Ireland in 1752 that it reverted again to January 1st.

The French tried a different scheme when they had their Revolution. Their new calendar, introduced to coincide with "the year of liberty" in 1792, had the year beginning on September 22nd, the day on which the republic was proclaimed — but 14 years later they too went back to January 1st, in 1806.

There are yet many other New Year's Days. The ancient Greeks, for example, pre-occupied with sport, reckoned their calendar from the first Olympiad in 766 BC. This required their year to begin with the first moon after the summer solstice — around the beginning of July.

The Chinese also watch the sun and moon; the Chinese New Year coincides with the second new moon after the winter solstice.

影响持续了还不到一个世纪。从 1155 年开始,元旦定在 3 月 25 日报喜节这一天。只是由于不列颠和爱尔兰在 1752 年法定采用格列历,元旦才又恢复到 1 月 1 日。

法国人在大革命时期试用了一种不同的体制。他们为了与“自由年”相一致而于 1792 年采用了新历,该历以 9 月 22 日为一年的开始,这一天是共和国宣告诞生的日子——但是 14 年之后,即 1806 年,他们也恢复 1 月 1 日为元旦。

还有许多其他的元旦。比方说,对体育运动入迷的古希腊人,他们从公元前 776 年第一届奥运会开始纪年。这就要求他们的新年从夏至后的第一个朔望日——大约 7 月初开始。

中国人也观察太阳和月亮;中国的新年恰好在冬至后的第二个新月。

2

The Sun Was in the North

太阳曾在北方

The Portuguese discovered the west coast of black Africa 500 years ago. But historians believe that, 2, 000 years earlier, the Phoenicians may have travelled right round Africa in small boats from Suez to Gibraltar and back to Egypt.

The journey was planned by the Egyptian pharaoh Necho in 600 BC. He was interested in finding a sea route from Egypt's eastern coast on the Red Sea to Alexandria on the Mediterranean. In those days, nobody knew how big Africa was, and he believed it would be easy to follow the African coast round to Morocco and back to Egypt.

Necho hired crews of Phoenicians to make the journey. The Phoenicians lived at the eastern end of the Mediterranean, where Israel, Lebanon and Egypt are today. They were interested in Necho's plan, because their traders wanted to find a new route to their markets in the western Mediterranean, avoiding waters which were controlled by their Greek rivals.

500 年前葡萄牙人发现了黑非洲的西海岸。但是,历史学家认为,在此 2,000 年前,腓尼基人可能已经乘小船沿海岸做过从苏伊士到直布罗陀再回到埃及的环绕非洲之行了。

那次航行是古埃及法老尼科在公元前 600 年筹划的。他希望找到一条从濒临红海的埃及东海岸到地中海海滨亚历山大港的海路。那时候,谁也不知道非洲有多大,他认为沿非洲海岸绕到摩洛哥再回到埃及是轻而易举的事。

尼科雇用腓尼基水手进行这次航行。腓尼基人生活在地中海的东端,就是今天的以色列、黎巴嫩和埃及人。他们对尼科的计划很感兴趣,因为他们的商人想找一条通往他们西地中海市场的新途径,以避免他们的希腊对手所控制的水域。

According to an old story reported by the Greek historian Herodotus, the Phoenicians set off at the beginning of winter in 50-oared sailing ships, rowed to the eastern tip of Africa at Cape Gardafui, and then sailed south-west on the monsoon winds. Month after month went by, and they sailed further and further south. During their journey, the weather became steadily colder, and the seas rougher, and the Phoenicians were amazed to see that the sun was now in the north at midday. They must have thought that they would never see their homes again. But after six months, the coast turned west; they went round the Cape of Good Hope and at last began to travel north.

While they were sailing up the west coast of Africa they ran out of food, and had to land to collect more supplies. This delayed them, and it was only after another fifteen months that they reached a country they knew — Morocco. From there they went on to Gibraltar and then sailed east to Egypt. When they eventually arrived home, they had been away for over two years, and had travelled 25,000 km.

根据希腊历史学家希罗多德转述的一个古老传说,腓尼基人在冬季开始时乘 50 桨帆船出发,划向非洲最东端。到达瓜达富伊角,然后就顶着季风向西南航行。月复一月过去了,他们越来越远地向南驶去。在他们的旅途中,天气渐渐变冷,海面更加汹涌起伏,腓尼基人看到现在中午的太阳在北边而大吃一惊。他们一定以为他们再也不能重见家园了。但是 6 个月,海岸向西转,他们绕过好望角,终于开始向北航行。

当他们沿非洲西海岸向北航行时,他们的食物吃光了,不得不停靠下来采集更多的生活必需品。这种情况耽搁了他们,于是又经过 15 个月之后,他们才到达一个他们熟悉的国家——摩洛哥。从那儿他们继续驶向直布罗陀,然后向东到埃及。当他们最终到达家门时,他们离家已有两年多了,航行了 25,000 千米。

Marco Polo in China

马可·波罗在中国

700 years ago, in about 1260, the first Europeans travelled to China. They were two brothers, businessmen from Venice in Italy. When they reached China they were welcomed by the emperor, and they stayed there for some time before returning home.

Eleven years later they made a second journey to China. One of them took his son along, a young man called Marco Polo. Marco kept a diary, in which he recorded his experiences on the journey and in China.

The Polo family spent many years in China. Marco's father and uncle became rich businessmen. Marco himself worked for the emperor, becoming one of his advisers, and travelling to various other countries in South-East Asia on official business. Later the emperor made him governor of the city of Yangchow, and a member of his imperial council.

700 年前, 约是 1260 年, 第一批欧洲人旅行到中国。他们是两兄弟, 是意大利威尼斯的商人。到达时他们受到了皇帝的欢迎。他们在中国呆了一段时间后才回国。

11 年后他们第二次旅行到中国。其中一人带着他的儿子, 一个叫马可·波罗的年轻人。马可记日记, 其中记下了他途中和在中国的经历。

波罗一家在中国呆了许多年, 马可的父亲和叔叔成了富商。他自己为皇帝工作, 成了皇帝的一名顾问, 还因公到东南亚许多其他国家旅行。后来, 皇帝让他担任扬州知府和皇帝顾问委员会成员。

4

First US City to Be Bombed from the Air

第一个遭轰炸的美国城市

In 1921, during one of the worst race riots in American history, Tulsa, Okla, became the first US city to be bombed from the air. More than 75 persons — mostly blacks — were killed.

Before the riot, Tulsa blacks were so successful that their business district was called ‘The Negro’s Wall Street’. Envy bred hatred of the blacks, who accounted for a tenth of the segregated city’s population of 100,000.

Then on May 30, 1921, a white female elevator operator accused Dick Rowland, a 19-year-old black who worked at a shoeshine stand^①, of attacking her. Though he denied the charge, Rowland was jailed. *The Tulsa Tribune* ran a sensational account of the incident the next day, and a white lynch mob^② soon gathered at the jail. Armed blacks, seeking to protect Rowland, also showed up. Someone fired a gun, and the riot was on.

1921年,在美国历史上最严重的种族暴乱之一的那次暴乱中,俄克拉何马州的塔尔萨成了美国第一个遭到飞机轰炸的城市。遭杀害者超过75人——大部分是黑人。

暴乱前,塔尔萨黑人生意做得非常红火,以致他们的商业区被称为“黑人华尔街”。忌妒产生对黑人的仇恨,在这座实行种族隔离的有10万人口的城市,黑人占十分之一。

1921年5月30日,一位白人女电梯操作工指控在一个擦皮鞋摊位工作的19岁黑人迪克·罗兰袭击了她。尽管罗兰矢口否认这一指控,他还是锒铛入狱。次日,《塔尔萨论坛报》危言耸听地报道了这一事件,于是一群白人私刑暴徒很快聚在了监狱门口。手持武器的黑人为了保护罗兰也赶到了那里。有人开