

The Thirty-Nine Steps

三十九级台阶

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作 者 「英国] 约翰・巴肯

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英语阅读的津津三味

——《津津有味·读经典》推荐序

读书最美妙的境界是读得津津有味。

我想,对于中小学生,英语阅读要读出三味才算是津津有味。

津津第一味,是读出好成绩。国家《义务教育英语课程标准》(2011年版)和国家《普通高中英语课程标准》(实验)都规定了中小学生的英语阅读量,要求学生每年课外阅读一定量的英文读物。用课外的阅读提高自己的英语成绩,肯定是我们进行课外阅读的一个基本愿望。如何实现呢?这需要有相应的配套活动指导,因为这些活动可以把我们在阅读中获得的语感转化为我们考试中可以表现出来的语言运用能力。

津津第二味,是读出宽视野。我们通过阅读认知我们无法靠自己生活的直接经验认知的世界,我们可以通过阅读穿越到任何时代,与大师为伍,与英雄比肩,入宫廷痛斥国王,到小村体恤贫民。我们不仅可以因此而晓知天下,更可因此与人广泛交流。

津津第三味,是读出高素养。阅读是学习,学习知识,更学习做人的道理、做事的方法、分析的思路、明辨的条理、批评的路径、建构的框架。阅读是体验,体验如何淡泊明志、如何激扬文字,如此等等,丰富我们的人生理解,提高我们的综合素养。

你肯定会问,如此三味,需要太多课外时间,我本无多少课外时间,是否可以 聚合一体?

当然可以。

《津津有味·读经典》就是一套可以让你读出津津三味的读物。这套读物不仅符合国家《义务教育英语课程标准》(2011年版)和国家《普通高中英语课程标准》(实验)的要求,更是汇集了西方文学经典,更为难得的是,英语语言优美而又符合我国学生语言水平,同时附有表演短剧剧本、纯正地道MP3和自主评价手册。

如此, 你可以开卷"悦读"了吧!

期待你读出津津三味!



教育部英语课程标准组专家 鲁子问

《三十九级台阶》是英国作家约翰·巴肯的重要作品之一,也是文学史上经典的悬疑小说。2009年,英国《卫报》评选出"死前必读的1000本小说",巴肯有两部作品入选,其中之一便是《三十九级台阶》。

书中主角理查德·汉内是一个在非洲长大的苏格兰人,曾在非洲担任工程师。他退休后从非洲来到伦敦,感到百无聊赖。正当他想回到非洲去寻找刺激的时候,他遇见斯卡德,通过他知道了一个国际间谍组织的秘密。后来斯卡德被杀,汉内成了主要怀疑对象。为了躲避警察和间谍的追踪,他逃到苏格兰,一次次巧妙机智地脱离了危难。最后,根据斯卡德留下的"三十九级台阶"这条线索,他成功地摧毁了敌人的阴谋。

这本书于1915年第一次世界大战期间发表,成为士兵喜爱的小说。 本书描述的是一个为了国家甘愿牺牲自己的人,战乱中的士兵从主角中 得到认同感,也愿意为了自己的国家奉献自己的生命。

巴肯曾是政治家。在战争时期,他做过情报工作,同时也坚持写作。 事实上,理查德·汉内在他的另外四本小说中反复出现过,但《三十九级台 阶》是其中最经典的一部。

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The Man Who Died

Preview Questions

- 1. What do you think "thirty-nine steps" means?
- 2. Do you think Thirty-Nine Steps is an interesting title for a story?
- 3. Look at the title of this chapter. How do you think this man died?

y name is Richard Hannay. I was born in Scotland. When I was six years old, my father took me to Rhodesia, in Africa. I grew up there and became an engineer. I came to England thirty years later. I had enough money and didn't need a job. I decided to retire and live in England for the rest of my life. When I arrived in London, I visited all the famous places. I was bored after one week. Then I visited famous restaurants and theaters. I was bored after one month. People invited me for dinners, but I did not really have a good time. After just three months, I was ready to return to Rhodesia. I decided that I did not like England and did not want to live there. I didn't like the weather. I didn't like the talk of ordinary Englishmen. I could not get enough exercise. I needed to have adventure in my life, and England did not seem to offer any adventure at all. England was boring. I wanted to go home.

Then, one afternoon in May, something happened.

I was on my way home and stopped at the club to read the papers. I read about the fight in the Near East and about Karolides, the Prime Minister of Greece. I thought Karolides was a good man, and England was on his side. Germany and

Austria, however, hated him. I wondered if I could get a job in the Near East. It seemed more interesting than England.

I had dinner at the Café Royal and went to a show afterward. It wasn't very interesting, and I left early.

I went to my flat, which was on the first floor. I was just putting my key into the keyhole when I saw a man beside me. I didn't hear him coming, so I was very surprised. He was a thin man with a short beard and small eyes. I recognized him. He lived in a flat on the top floor.

"May I come in and speak to you?" he asked.

I nodded and opened the door to let him in. He hurried in and looked around the flat, making sure that there was no one else there. I had a servant named Paddock, but I didn't want him to sleep in the flat. He came every morning and left in the evening. Of course, he was not there when my visitor rushed in. As soon as he saw that there was no one else in the flat, he made sure the door was locked.

"I'm sorry," he said. "I need to talk to someone. You look like the kind of person a man can trust. Will you help me?"

"I'll listen," I said, "but I can't promise any more than that."

He was very nervous. "I'm sorry to look around your flat like that," he said. "I'm a little nervous, you see. At this moment, I am dead."

I was sure he was mad. "What does it feel like to be dead?" I asked.

He smiled. "I'm not mad. I want to tell you my story. I need help. Will you help me?"

"I'll answer that question after you tell me your story," I answered.

He told me that he was an American. He went to Southeast Europe and got interested in politics. There, he discovered a secret group of very rich men who wanted war in Europe. This would make them richer. He knew a lot about how the governments and armies worked. Some of his explanations puzzled me. He told me that these rich men had a secret plan, and he had to stay alive for one month to stop them.

"But I thought you were dead!" I said.

"I'm coming to that," he answered.

He told me that these rich men all hated Karolides for trying to stop the war and planned to kill him. He found out how they were going to do this. The rich men could not kill Karolides in Greece because he had very strong guards. Karolides, however, was coming to London on the 15th of June. The rich men were planning to kill him then.

"Why don't you tell him?" I asked. "Then he can stay at home."

"Then they will win," he replied. "Karolides must come to London because he is the only one who can stop the war."

"You should tell the British Government," I said. "Then they will make sure he is safe."

"I don't think so," said my visitor. "The men who want to kill him are very clever. They will find a way to do it. If I am still alive on the 15^{th} of June, I can save him."

I asked him some questions. He told me his name was Franklin Scudder. He said he found out about the plan as he was traveling around Europe. He learned the first part of the plan in Austria. He found out more about it in Poland. He learned the last part of the plan in Paris. As soon as he was sure, he tried to disappear. He put on a disguise and

went to Germany. Then he changed his disguise and went to Norway. He changed his disguise again and came to London. He was afraid that they would catch him.

Then he discovered that they were watching him and wanted to kill him. One day, he found a card under his door. The man who left that card was a very rich and cruel man. Scudder shook with fear when he talked about him. He decided that he would make them think he was dead. Then they would stop watching him.

He stole a dead body from the hospital and brought it to his flat in a large box. He took out his gun and shot the dead body in the face. This made it more difficult to recognize the body. People would not know that it was not him. He dressed the body in his **pajamas** and left the gun next to it. Then he waited until he saw me come home and came down the stairs to meet me.

I thought about his story. It seemed true. I liked Scudder. He did not look like a liar. I decided to check his story by seeing the dead body in his flat. I asked him for his key. He told me that he did not have it.

"I had to leave it in the flat," he said. "My enemies are very clever and would know that I had escaped if the key was not in the flat. You'll have to wait until tomorrow morning."

I decided to trust him and told him he could stay in my flat for the night. He thanked me. He went into a bedroom and changed his appearance. When he came out, I thought he was a different man. He shaved off his beard. He cut his eyebrows. He combed his hair differently and walked differently. He even spoke differently. He lost his American accent and spoke like a British Army officer. He told me his name was now Captain Digby.

I gave him a bedroom and locked him into it. You can never be too sure. Then I went to bed myself. At last, something interesting was happening. I was happy.

"This is better," I thought. "Sometimes interesting things happen here, even in London."

The next morning, I woke up when my servant arrived. He tried to go into the room where Scudder was sleeping but found it locked. He was making too much noise, so I told him to be quiet.

"There's a friend sleeping in there," I told him. "He is an important man in the government, and he needs some rest. Please do not disturb him. No one is allowed to know that he is here. If they knew that he was here, they would send him messages and come visit him. He needs to rest."

Paddock is a good servant, and he believed everything I told him. When Scudder, now Captain Digby, came out of his room, Paddock looked after him very well. He made sure that Scudder had plenty of hot tea and enough to eat. After breakfast, I left Scudder with the newspapers and went to the city. When I returned, it was time for lunch. Someone had found the dead body in Scudder's flat. The police were there. I went to his flat and talked to a police officer. They were very busy and told me to go away.

The next day, I went to the inquest. The judge decided that Scudder had killed himself. It was a case of suicide. I came home to my flat and told Scudder what people said at the inquest. He was very interested. He wished that he could have seen it himself.

The next two days were very calm. Scudder stayed in

the flat. He read a lot and made notes in his notebook. We played chess in the evenings, and he always won.

On the third day, he began to be nervous again. He asked me if we could trust Paddock. Sometimes he became annoyed for no reason. He was not worried about himself, though. He was only worried about his plan to stop the rich men from killing Karolides. He did not want it to fail.

One evening, he decided that he should tell me more about the plan to kill Karolides.

"If I die," he said, "someone else should know about it. We must stop the rich men from starting a war!"

I listened as carefully as I could. It was a very long story, and I couldn't remember all the details. He said something about a woman named Julia Czechenyi, who would help in the plan to kill Karolides. He also talked about a Black Stone and a man who lisped when he spoke. Then he talked about another man. This man could move his eyelids so that his eyes looked like a bird's eyes. Scudder was very afraid of him.

The next day, Scudder was less nervous and read a book during most of the day. That evening, I went out for dinner. I came home ready to play our usual game of chess. The flat was dark, which was unusual. I turned on the lights and saw something in the corner of the room. It was Scudder. He was lying on the floor. He had a long knife through his heart.

Review Questions

- 1. Why did Scudder say that he was dead?
- 2. Who was Paddock?
- 3. Describe the man that Scudder feared most.

The Milkman Begins His Travels

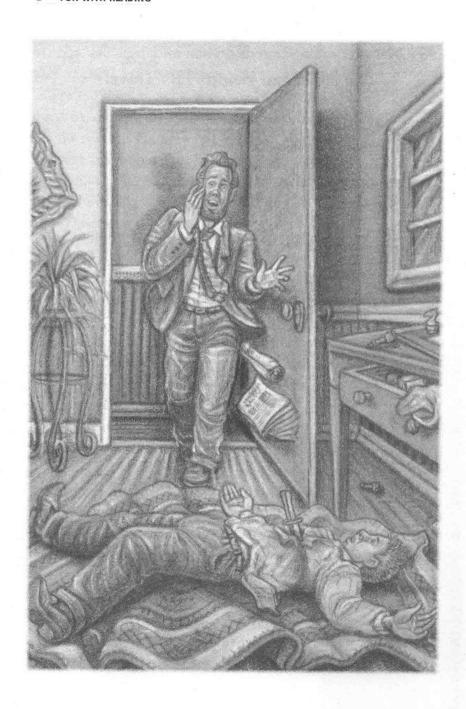
Preview Questions

- 1. What do you think Hannay should do?
- 2. Who will the police blame for murdering Scudder?
- 3. Who do you think murdered Scudder?

I sat down in a chair and felt sick. A few minutes later, I stood up. I got a tablecloth and covered poor Scudder's body. It was half past ten. I searched the flat, but I didn't find anyone or anything. I locked the doors and windows. Then I began to think.

One thing was certain. Scudder's story was true. His death was the proof. The men who knew that he knew their plans had found him. They made sure that he could not talk about it to anyone. They must wonder if he talked to me, though. I realized that I might be the next man to die. It might not be tonight or the next day or the day after, but they would certainly try to kill me.

Then I thought of something else. If I went to the police, what would I tell them about Scudder? They would think I murdered him. They would probably arrest me. Perhaps that's what the enemies wanted. If I were in jail for murder, I would not be able to talk. If I did talk, no one would believe me. If they did believe me, they would probably stop Karolides from coming to London. Whatever I did, the enemies would win. The only thing I could do was to try to take Scudder's place and disappear until the 15th of



June. I believed his story. Somebody killed him in my flat. Now I was the only person that could try to stop the enemy from killing Karolides. I wanted to try. I had to disappear until the end of the second week in June and then tell the government what Scudder had told me. I didn't know if they would believe me, but I would have to try.

I needed to hide for twenty days. I knew that Scudder's enemies would search for me and try to kill me. I knew that the police would also search for me and try to arrest me for the murder of Scudder. The challenge made me feel alive at last.

I wondered whether Scudder had any papers that might give me some more information. I searched his body, but I didn't find anything. I couldn't find the little black book in which he wrote his notes. I guessed that the murderer had taken it. Then I saw that the drawers in my desk were open. Scudder would never leave them like that because he was a very tidy person. Perhaps someone had been searching for something. Perhaps they were looking for the notebook. I went around the flat and saw that other places had also been searched. I did not see the notebook anywhere. They must have found it and taken it away.

I got my atlas and looked at a big map of Britain. I wanted to find a place where there were not many people and where I could use the skills I learned in Rhodesia. I didn't like the city and thought that the police or the enemies would easily catch me if I stayed there. I decided to go to Galloway in Scotland. Very few people lived there, and I was sure I could disguise myself as a Scot. I was born there, after all!

I found the train timetable. A train departed from St.

Pancras station at ten past seven the next morning. It would take all day to get to Galloway. But first, I had to get to the station. I was certain that Scudder's enemies were watching from the street and would follow me if I left the flat.

I slept for a few hours and woke very early the next morning. I thought about it all again and decided that I had to continue with my plan. I got dressed and put on my best walking boots. I shaved off my beard and put some money in my money belt.

I waited.

Paddock usually arrived at half past seven, but the man who brought the milk always came at twenty to seven. I knew that because he always made a lot of noise. He was a young man about the same height as me. He always wore white **overalls** and a blue hat.

It was about six o'clock, and I decided to have some breakfast. I got some cereal from the kitchen. I put it into a bowl. That's when I found Scudder's little black notebook. It was in the cereal box. I thought I was lucky to find it, but I didn't have time to look at it just then. I went out and waited for the milkman. He was late. When he arrived, I asked him to come in. I made sure he could not see the tablecloth with Scudder's body under it.

"I want you to do me a favor," I said. "Lend me your hat and overalls for ten minutes, and I will give you twentyfive pounds."

"Why?" he asked. "What are you going to do?"

"I don't have time to explain," I said. "It's for a bet."

He agreed and gave me his overalls and hat. I put them on and gave him twenty-five pounds. I went out, carrying some bottles. At first, I thought there was no one in the street, but then I saw a police officer at the end of the street, and a tall, thin man walking along the other side of the street. I looked up and saw a face at the first floor window of the house opposite the flat. The tall, thin man looked up, too. Perhaps that was a signal. I wasn't sure.

I crossed the street and took the first side street. I saw a small park. There was no one there. I put down the bottles and took off the overalls and hat. I walked back to the main street. A man with a dog came around the corner, and we said good morning to each other. I looked at my watch. It was seven o'clock. The train to Galloway would depart in ten minutes. I had to hurry. I ran to the station. When I got there, I did not have time to buy a ticket. The train was leaving. I ran toward it. Two guards tried to stop me. I ran past them and jumped into the last carriage.

Three minutes later, an angry guard wrote a ticket for me. He took me to a third class carriage and made me sit with a sailor and a short, fat woman with a child. The fat woman was angry with the guard because he complained that the child did not have a ticket. The sailor didn't like the guard either because he told the sailor to stop spitting. I sat down and rested. I was on my way.

Review Questions

- 1. What would the police think if Hannay told them about Scudder?
- 2. What did Hannay find in the cereal box?
- 3. Why did the milkman give Hannay his uniform?