

English

BOOK 4

北京外国语学院
英语系编

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ENGLISH

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为了培养学生查阅英美出版的语法书籍的能力，本书语法说明改用英语。

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Lesson One

TEXT

The Discoverer of Radium

J. Walker McSpadden

A shy, frightened child stood before a government inspector in a Polish schoolroom.

"Name the Czars of Russia," he barked.

The girl did so in a voice which she tried to keep steady.

"Who governs us?"

The child hesitated. Her teacher and her schoolmates looked anxious.

"Answer me!" came the sharp command.

"His Majesty, Alexander the Second, Czar of all the Russias," came the clear, low voice of the student.

The inspector glanced quickly around the room to check up on the others. All the girls were bending low over their sewing, and he could not see their faces.

"Very well; then; remember!" he said to all in general, and stalked out of the room.

Later, when the coast was clear, the teacher called, "Come here, my little soul."

And the child sank down beside her and burst into tears.

Warsaw, the birthplace of Marya or Manya Skłodowska, was then ruled by Russia. Russian inspectors made sudden visits to

the unhappy country, seeking to spy out possible trouble. Even the schools were watched. Manya had been chosen for examination today, as often, because she was bright and dependable.

Manya's father was a professor of physics. She grew up helping him with his work, busily washing bottles and test tubes and learning to love this science. Her mother had died when Manya was very young, and Dr Sklodowski tried to be both father and mother to his four girls and one boy. However, before his children were grown, Dr Sklodowski had difficulties with the Russian rulers. He lost his position and had to take a humbler teaching job. From the time she was ten until she reached middle life, Manya faced struggle and hardship.

When she was eighteen, she went to work as a governess in a private house. She saved as much as she could of her small salary and went to Paris for further study.

At the University of Paris, she was no longer called Manya, but the French Marie. At first she lived in the home of her sister who had married and moved to Paris. But it was so far from her classes that she took a single room and lived alone. Her small savings were soon gone, and her father was able to send her only a little money. For some reason she did not want her sister to know that she was living from hand to mouth. She never once missed her beloved classes until the day when she fainted in the street.

Her sister's husband was a doctor, who came on the run. Marie had been taken to her room. His keen eyes took in the bare furnishings. He could not find even the makings of a cup of tea.

"What did you eat today?" he asked.

"Today? Why, I can't seem to remember."

"Yesterday, then?"

"Oh, yesterday, why, I had some cherries — and all sorts of things."

"Humph! We'll see about that."

He bundled her up and took her home in a cab to her sister Bronya. "Take care of the little one," he called from the bottom of the steps. "I'm off to get a prescription filled." The "prescription" was a large steak and some fried potatoes.

The next day, rested and fed, she returned to her cold attic room, promising to take better care of herself. She longed to be back in the laboratory. She liked even the smells of the chemicals. She wanted to take not one but two degrees — both master and doctor of science. Then, armed with these, she could return to her beloved Poland and work side by side with her father.

But in the meantime, she became acquainted with a blond young professor. His life was also devoted to science. He was French, of good family, and his name was Pierre Curie. He was so underpaid and so deep in his work that he had decided never to marry. But in spite of himself, he became deeply interested in this Polish girl with the intense gray eyes and delicate features, who was as keen on test tubes as himself.

Weeks and months passed by. At last Marie wrote to her father that she was not coming back to Warsaw; she was going to marry Professor Pierre Curie. They were poor; but they had the same interests, and could continue their work together. For a wedding trip they rode out into the country on bicycles.

When they got back to their little apartment, Marie made a humiliating discovery. She couldn't cook! For years she had done the most delicate work in the laboratory, but now she had no idea of how to prepare the simplest meal! She bought a cook book and followed it as carefully as if she were doing an experiment in physics. Pierre never complained. His thoughts were so taken up with his work that he didn't pay much attention to what he ate.

Now the Curies became interested in the strange behavior of

a rare metal, uranium. The French scientist Becquerel had already found that the salts of uranium had some light-giving properties. The more the Curies talked about this discovery, the more determined they became to find out the how and the why of these queer rays.

Pierre had some teaching duties, and so Marie decided to work on this problem as much as possible by herself. For eight years, Marie Curie worked in cold laboratories with poor equipment. By good fortune they were able to get from the government of Austria a ton of pitchblende. It was the ore from which uranium had been taken and was of no use. One morning a coal wagon drew up to the shed next to the School of Physics where Marie worked, and dumped the load onto the ground. If it had been diamonds, Marie could not have been happier. Down deep in that ugly heap she felt sure that her new element lay hidden.

Day after day a strange sight was to be seen in the shed. A frail woman dressed in the roughest of clothes worked over a huge kettle and stirred the bubbling mass within. She had no one to help her with this hard, heavy work, but she was so full of the spirit of discovery that she was happy. The shed was cold and drafty and the rain leaked in. A great deal of the work had to be done out-of-doors. "And yet," she wrote later, "it was in this miserable old shed that the best and happiest years of our lives were spent."

Marie Curie's lungs became affected by this exposure, and doctors ordered her to bed. She would not obey.

By this time the Curies were so certain of the presence of the new element that they wondered what name it should be given — what it would look like.

"Pierre, what form do you think it will take?" asked Marie.

"I do not know," he replied. "I should like it to have a very beautiful color."

They had called the rays from it radioactivity; they now decided

to call the element *radium*. At last came the day when Marie Curie was almost at the end of her efforts. But what a pitiful result there seemed to be from all these years of work. Step by step, she had separated one material from another. From all that wagonload of pitchblende, there was left only a tiny pinch of stuff in a jar.

But that pinch was potent! Marie realized its power. It behaved unlike anything she had ever seen. It gave off both light and heat of its own.

One evening in 1902, after their supper had been eaten and the two children put to bed, Doctor Curie and his wife went back to the little shed. He put his key in the lock.

"Don't turn on the lights," Marie said; then with a little laugh, "Do you remember how you once said to me, 'I should like radium to have a beautiful color'?"

There was no definite color, but the scene was fascinating. The shed was lit up with a soft glow. Although it came from one spot, the light was so reflected from jars and windows that it seemed a part of the air itself.

"Look, Pierre, look!"

The young woman's face was wonderfully changed in this lovely light. The tired lines had disappeared. She was beautiful. As she sank down on the floor, Doctor Curie — the man who had lectured hundreds of times in the classroom — had not a word to say. His throat was full to choking. He gently stroked her hair.

STUDY AIDS

1. Explain:

- 1) "The inspector glanced quickly around the room to check up on the others."
- 2) "And yet," she wrote later, "it was in this miserable old shed

that the best and happiest years of our lives were spent."

2. Look up the italicized words and phrases in the *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English*:

- 1) "...she went to work as a *governess* in a private house."
- 2) "...she was living *from hand to mouth*."
- 3) "His keen eyes *took in* the bare furnishings."
- 4) "...he became deeply interested in the Polish girl with the *intense* gray eyes and *delicate* features..."
- 5) "...the Curies were so certain of the *presence* of the new element ..."

3. Grammar:

- 1) "From all that wagonload of pitchblende, there was left only a tiny pinch of stuff in a jar." What is the subject of this sentence?
- 2) "One evening in 1902, after their supper had been eaten and the two children put to bed, Doctor Curie and his wife went back to the little shed." Supply what has been omitted.

PROPER NAMES

Walker McSpadden ['wɔ:kə mək-
'spædən]

Marya Skłodowska ['mɑ:ɾjɑ: sklɔ:-
'dɔ:fskɑ]

Alexander [æli'g'zɑ:ndə]

Manya ['mɑ:njɑ:]

Maria [mə'riə]

Pierre [pi'sə]

Bronya ['brɒnjə]

Curie [kju'ri:]

Becquerel [ˌbekə'rel]

Note:

1. Marya, Manya, Marie

Marie Curie's given name was Marya. At home and at school she was always called by the affectionate name Manya. When she went to France she was known as Marie — the French version of Marya.

2. Skłodowska — i

Note that Marie Curie's maiden name (i.e. unmarried name)

was Sklodowska while her father's name was Sklodowski. Women's names in Poland end in *a* and men's in *i*. Note also that there is no letter *Ź* in the Polish language. The sound [v] is spelt *W*; and there is no [w] sound in Polish.

NOTES

1. His Majesty

Majesty (陛下) is the title given to a king (His Majesty) and a queen (Her Majesty). When one speaks to a king or a queen, one addresses him/her as *Your Majesty*, and follows this by a verb in the third person, e.g.

We appreciate what Your Majesty has done to promote the friendship between the two countries.

Cf. Your Highness (殿下) and Your Excellency (阁下)

2. Alexander the Second: Emperor of Russia 1855—81.

3. when the coast was clear: a metaphor taken from navigation meaning "when there was no apparent danger". Here it means "when the inspector was gone and it was safe."

4. Warsaw ... was then ruled by Russia.

In the late 18th century Poland was divided up between Russia, Prussia (普鲁士) and Austria. But the Polish people never stopped struggling against their foreign rulers. In the 19th century they staged several revolts. At the end of World War I Poland became an independent republic.

5. savings: money one has saved up. The plural is always used.

6. She wanted to take not one but two degrees — both master and doctor of science.

The degrees usually granted are Bachelor of Arts (B.A. 文学士) or of Science (B. Sc. 理学士), at the end of an undergraduate liberal arts or science course; Master of Arts (M.A. 文学硕士) or of Science (M. Sc. 理学硕士), at the end of a postgraduate course. The highest degree conferred by a university is the doctorate: Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D. 哲学及其他文、理科博士), of Medicine

(M.D. 医学博士), of Divinity (D.D. 神学博士), of Law (L.L.D. 法学博士).

7. Antoine Henri Becquerel (1852—1908): French scientist who discovered radioactivity in radium in 1896. The Curies made further investigation of the phenomenon and shared with him the 1903 Nobel Prize (诺贝尔奖金) in physics.

8. A great deal of the work had to be done out of doors.

Distinguish *out of doors*, which is used adverbially, from *out-of-door*, which is an attribute:

A lot of out-of-door activities have been organized for the children.

The children enjoyed playing out of doors.

GRAMMAR

1. Syntactical Functions of the Participles

The *ing*-form of the verb is either a gerund or a participle depending on its function in a sentence. When used in place of a noun (as subject, object, etc.), it is a gerund. Otherwise it is a present participle. The present participle, apart from forming the predicate as in the continuous tense, may be used as an attribute or adverbial:

Marie made a *humiliating* discovery. (attribute)

He sat there *thinking*. (adverbial)

It can also be used as predicative or to form a complex object or compound predicate:

A pedal is *missing*. (predicative)

This set Newton *thinking*. (part of the complex object)

She was often heard *singing* this song. (part of the compound predicate)

Similarly the past participle can also be used as an attribute, an adverbial, as predicative, or to form a complex object or compound predicate:

The *tired* lines had disappeared. (attribute)

The next day, *rested and fed*, she returned to her cold attic room, promising to take better care of herself. (adverbial)

But in the meantime, she became *acquainted* with a blond young professor. (predicative)

I'm off to get a prescription *filled*. (part of the complex object)

The glass was found *broken*. (part of the compound predicate)

2. The Present Participle as an Adverbial (I)

Participial phrases may be used adverbially to denote time, reason, manner, or accompanying circumstances:

Arriving at the station (= When she arrived at the station), she found the train gone.

Not knowing his address (= As we did not know his address), we could not get in touch with him.

They started moving round us, singing to the accompaniment of a *kora*.

They reached out and put his hands around Mr Turner's neck, shaking him as a cat shakes a rat.

Again they refused, saying it would be too expensive.

Adverbial use of the participles is more common in literary, especially descriptive language. In spoken or informal English the same idea is more often expressed by a sentence containing an adverbial clause as in the first two examples above, or by one containing a co-ordinate predicate, e.g.

He reached out and put his hands around Mr Turner's neck, and shook him as a cat shakes a rat.

Sometimes two separate sentences are used:

Again they refused. They said it would be too expensive.

In some set phrases, the participle has already become part of the pattern:

They went swimming that morning.
 He spent some time studying the subject.
 They are busy getting the land ready for sowing.
 The girl came running in to tell us the news.

WORD STUDY

put *v.i.; v.t.*

1. move something and leave it in a certain place or position:

He put the book on the table.

He put his hands in his pockets.

2. cause someone to be in a certain state or position, etc:

I put myself entirely in your hands.

This put us in a very awkward position.

We want to put you in charge of the work.

I want to be put right if I'm wrong.

3. express (in words):

I can't put my feelings into words.

Let's put it in the form of a question.

How shall I put it?

We'd better put everything in black and white.

I don't know how to put that in English.

put an end to 结束, 制止

put out 扑灭, 生产, 出版

put across 讲清楚(使听懂)

put on 穿(衣); 戴(帽); 演(戏)

put down 写下来; 镇压

put up 盖(房子); 举(手); 住宿

put forward 提出(建议, 理论, 政策)

put up with 忍受

put off 延期

draw *v.t.; v.i.*

1. make lines, pictures, etc. with a pen or pencil:

She's drawing a ship.

2. pull, drag:

The cart was drawn by two horses.

He drew his chair up to the table.

3. obtain from a source: