



步步高英语系列丛书

Level Four ★

莎士比亚

SHAKESPEARE



翁燕珩

主编

北京理工大学出版社

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Level Four 1

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——请读步步高英语系列丛书

《步步高英语系列丛书》是一套快速提高英语阅读能力, 扩大词汇量, 增强英语语感, 从而全面提高英语水平的好书。认真地阅读这套书, 一定会在短期内取得学习英语和使用英语的成功, 长期享用成功的快乐。

这套丛书具有大众性、普及性, 适用于各个不同水平层次的英语学习者。既适用于学生, 又适用于自学者。既适用于中学生, 又适用于大学生。水平偏低的可以用作学习材料, 水平较高的可以用作复习精品。作课内读物很好, 作课外读物亦佳。可精读, 可泛读, 可玩味英语语言之美, 也可领略人类体能和智能的奥妙。

这套丛书专门为非英语国家的人学英语而编, 又有针对中国人阅读理解难点而进行的注释。按照难易程度分为六级, 一级比一级增多 350 个新词和适量的新句型。一级接一级循序而读, 自然而然地由浅入深, 由简到繁, 不知不觉地由低水平上升到高水平, 体现了学习英语的最佳途径和方法。可使读者费力不多, 而收效甚大。

这套丛书内容信息性强, 知识层面广, 读来有趣, 引人入胜, 欲罢不能, 确实是同类书中的上品。因此我诚挚地向广大英语爱好者及有志于掌握英语这一工具的人推荐这套书。

北京师范大学外语系 胡春洞

致 读 者

随着不断的对外开放,人们越来越重视外语学习,各级各类学校对外语教学的要求也越来越高。但是,您是不是也同许多人一样遇到这么一个问题:英语学习多年,单词记了不少,语法也算熟悉,但每当需要用英语进行口头或文字表达时便不知所措,说出来的别人听不懂,写出来的别人看不懂。这主要是对常用词汇和语法缺乏具体感受,对英美文化缺乏一定了解的缘故。由此看来,多读英美国家的作品以增强语感和文化摄入,就显得十分必要了。可是,目前国内出版的选材合理、编排科学,集知识性、趣味性于一体的普及型英语读物实在是太少了。为解广大英语学习者之急需,我们选编了这套《步步高英语系列丛书》。这套丛书有以下几个特点:

取材广泛,内容新颖。这些英美作者的文章,短小精悍,妙趣横生。您从中既可以熟悉常用的词汇和语法,增强语感;又可以撷取大量的文化信息,提高您的阅读理解与表达能力。

分级编排,级级衔接。本丛书分为六级,词汇量分别为350、700……至2100。各级之间紧密衔接,成为一体,在一定程度上填补了目前我国高中与大学英语教学中存在的语言知识“断带”问题。

选词科学,难易适中。本书词汇均来源于《Longman Lexicon of Contemporary English》(《朗曼当代英语词汇》),是根据计算机统计的词频安排的。语法现象也是由易到难,精心设计。读者可以循序渐进,逐步提高。

略加注释,便于阅读。凡文中出现的个别难词、新词、俚

语、短语和比较复杂的语法现象,都略加注释,以免除读者查阅辞典之苦。每篇文章末尾配有练习题,可用以检测您的阅读与理解水平。

本书以国家教委颁布的《九年义务教育全日制初级中学英语教学大纲》初、高中学生应掌握的词汇量为依据,一、二级可供初中学生阅读;三、四级可供高中学生阅读;五、六级可供大专以上的学生阅读。全套书亦可用作英语教学的泛读辅助教材。

愿《步步高英语系列丛书》成为您的朋友!

编者

1993年3月

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William Shakespeare

1

Childhood in Stratford

In 1565 Stratford-on-Avon^① was a very busy place. It was one of the largest towns in Warwickshire^②, with a beautiful church called Holy Trinity^③ and a fine bridge over the river Avon. London was only a hundred miles (160 km) away and there were good roads which connected it with Stratford. Trade was good and there were plenty of opportunities^④. Stratford was an attractive place for the young men who lived in the villages nearby who did not want to be farmers like their fathers.

John Shakespeare was one of the young men who came to Stratford to begin a new life. The trade he chose to learn was glovemaking^⑤ and , in time^⑥, he became very successful. He married a local girl called Mary Arden who came from a good family and he became an important person in

the town. By 1565 John Shakespeare was an officer of the town and later he became the mayor (the most important member of the town government).

In 1558 John's first child, a girl, was born. It was a good year for England as well as for John Shakespeare because it was the year in which Elizabeth I[®] became Queen of England. Although there were many political and religious[®] problems and England was not very friendly with Spain, English people were very hopeful about the future. It was the beginning of a great age.

In 1562 the Shakespeares had another baby daughter but unfortunately, she, like her elder sister, died soon after she was born. In 1564, John Shakespeare's luck returned[®]; his first son was born. The records of Holy Trinity church in Stratford say that the baby was given the name William on 26th April 1564. There is no record of the exact day the baby was born but English people like to think that Shakespeare was born on 23rd April not only because he died on 23rd April 1616 but also because 23rd April is St George's Day[®]. St George is the patron saint[®] of England.

The year in which William was born was a year of plague[®] in the town and John Shakespeare knew that he was lucky that his baby son had lived through the dangerous early months of life. The plague was a terrible illness; it was very common in England and the rest of Europe at that time but nobody knew that the plague was carried by rats (small

animals like mice but bigger and more dangerous). People thought that the plague was a punishment from God—so the rats continued to live and the plague continued to spread.

In the same year as William, another small boy was born in Canterbury®, about 240 km away from Stratford. His father was a shoemaker and his name was Christopher Marlowe®. He too, was going to become a famous playwright®. English drama, as well as John Shakespeare, could look forward to a bright future.

There had been plays in England for several hundred years. The people of Stratford, as in many other towns, enjoyed drama from time to time. Sometimes the church services® had some drama in them, especially the services at Christmas and Easter®. The priests (men of the church) would act for the people because all the services were in Latin, which most people did not understand. If they could see real people speaking and acting scenes from Christ's life then they could understand and remember them more easily.

For hundreds of years English people had been able to watch religious plays. They were often acted in groups, each play telling one part of a long story from the Bible®. It was a custom for a lot of these plays to be acted out one after the other on the day of Corpus Christi® at Easter time.

The people also saw morality plays®, which were not religious but were sometimes acted by professional actors

who travelled from town to town. The characters in the play were not like real people, but more like good or bad qualities in human form^②. They had names like 'wisdom', 'pleasure' and 'foolishness'. Even though the characters were not like real people, these plays were very popular with the people of Stratford. They showed the happiness and sadness of their own lives in a way they could understand. It helped them to see their problems acted out by other people, and it gave them comfort.

There was a lot of violent physical action^② in the morality plays and the audience^③ was often just as violent. They did not sit and watch quietly as audiences do today but they cried if the play was tragic (sad) or shouted with laughter if the play was comic (funny).

Religious plays and morality plays were not taken very seriously by the educated people of the time^②. They believed that all the best plays had been written by the Greek and Roman^② writers of the earlier times. They thought that the best any English writer could do was to write good copies^③ of these older plays. But at the time that William was born, ideas about the theatre and about the English language were just beginning to change; three years before Shakespeare was born, a play called *Gorboduc* was performed for the queen. The form of the play was copied from a Roman play, but it was still a good play. The most important thing was that it was written in English. This perfor-

mance reminds us of^② two other signs that England was nearly ready for a playwright such as William Shakespeare: firstly, educated English people were beginning to realise that their own language might be just as suitable for education, books and the law as it was for farming, shopping and the home; and secondly Queen Elizabeth herself was very fond of the theatre^②.

By 1568 William was four years old and was beginning to notice life in Stratford. In that year his father was chosen as mayor (the most important man) of the town. William was old enough to be happy for his father when he appeared in his mayor's clothes with all the other important people of the town^②.

The next year a group of professional actors visited Stratford and the town gave them a big welcome. William's father, because he was the mayor, helped to welcome them and the Earl^② of Worcester's men performed their plays in the town. This was five-year-old William's first experience of English drama.

It was in these early years that the young William Shakespeare caught the feeling of excitement^② that the travelling actors brought with them. Perhaps he watched the play from his father's knee—they certainly had a good view because Will's^② father was an important man in the town. Will loved the bright colours, the costumes and the scenery^② and especially the scene at the end of one of the

morality plays when the hero^⑧ (the most important actor) was changed into a pig! Drama was exciting and yet it was part of everyday life in Stratford; the different groups of actors came and went every year like the seasons. People did not go to the theatre as they do today (there were no buildings called 'theatres'), but the theatre came to them. The seeds of Shakespeare's love for the theatre were sown in those days and, as we know, the fruit was very very good.

Notes

- ① Avon 河畔 Stratford 镇。
- ② Warwickshire (英格兰中南部一郡)。
- ③ Holy Trinity “三一教堂”。“三一”指圣父、圣子、圣灵三位一体。
- ④ plenty of opportunities 生意兴隆, 业务繁忙。
- ⑤ glovemaking 制做手套。
- ⑥ in time 最后, 终于。
- ⑦ Elizabeth I 伊丽莎白一世。
- ⑧ religious 宗教的。
- ⑨ 时来运转。
- ⑩ St George's Day 圣乔治日。
- ⑪ patron saint 守护神, 保护圣徒。
- ⑫ plague 瘟疫, 鼠疫。
- ⑬ Canterbury 坎特伯雷。
- ⑭ 克利斯托福·马娄。与莎士比亚同时代的大戏剧家, 代表作是《浮士德博士》。

- ⑮ famous playwright 著名剧作家。
- ⑯ service (宗教)仪式, 礼拜式。有时宗教仪式里也穿插些戏剧。
- ⑰ 圣诞节(传说为耶稣誕生日, 每年十二月二十五日。)复活节(传说为耶稣复活的日子, 每年四月十九日。
- ⑱ the Bible 《圣经》。
- ⑲ the day of Corpus Christi 基督圣体节。
- ⑳ morality plays 道德剧。(西方中世纪末一种表现善恶观念的戏剧, 也称寓意剧。)
- ㉑ 剧中人物并非生活中的真实人物, 而更多的是体现人类意识形态中的好与坏。
- ㉒ physical action 暴力格斗。
- ㉓ audience 观众。
- ㉔ 那时有识之士并不太看重宗教剧和道德剧。
- ㉕ 希腊和罗马。
- ㉖ copies 改写, 照抄。
- ㉗ remind sb. of sth. 提醒某人某事, 让某人想起某事。
- ㉘ 女王本身也酷爱戏剧。
- ㉙ 当他父亲以镇长的身份同镇上其它重要人物在一起时, 威廉为他的父亲感到骄傲。
- ㉚ Earl 伯爵。
- ㉛ 莎士比亚感受到巡回演出队给他带来的震撼。
- ㉜ Will 莎士比亚的昵称。
- ㉝ the costumes and the scenery 服装和布景。
- ㉞ hero 主人公。heroine 女主人公。

Exercises

Give the definition of each explanation.

1. The first Queen of England is ____.
2. The patron saint in England is ____.
3. Plays which tell the stories from the Bible are ____.
4. Plays which present the good and bad qualities of human form are ____.
5. The most important actor in a play is called ____.

2

Schooldays

No one can be sure how long William's schooldays lasted. In fact, no one is sure where he went to school, although most people agree that he probably went to Stratford Grammar School^①, which offered free education to sons of full citizens of Stratford^②, such as John Shakespeare.

In the sixteenth century, boys usually went to school between the ages of seven and thirteen. First, they went to an elementary school^③. Here they practised reading and writing in English. Later, the boys went to a grammar school. Grammar schools were called 'grammar' schools, not because they taught English grammar, but because they taught Latin grammar. In fact, the main purpose of a grammar school was to teach Latin. For most people at this time, education meant learning Latin because there were very few books written in English. The works of Geoffrey Chaucer^④ (a writer of the fourteenth century, who wrote in English) were not understood by most people, and the Bible alone was not enough. The English language had a great future, but for the eleven-year-old boys at grammar school all the lessons were in Latin.

The fact that Shakespeare did not learn English gram-

mar may have been a good thing. When he later came to write for the theatre, he did not feel that he had to follow any rules about the language^⑤. This is why Shakespeare's language is so free and unusual. He was not afraid of changing the English language and if he could not find a suitable word for a speech he would make a new one. It is thanks to him that the English language is so rich today^⑥.

Let us look at three other children in the year when William was eleven years old, who all knew him as an adult. There was a three-year-old boy in Westminster who was the son of a builder. He is better known as the playwright Ben Jonson^⑦. There was a five-year-old girl in London who was the daughter of one of the queen's musicians^⑧. In later years she and William became very good friends. William often wrote about her in his poems although he never gave her name—which was Emilia Bassano^⑨. She is known as 'the dark lady' because she is always described in the sonnets^⑩ as having dark hair, dark eyes and dark skin. The third child who was later to know Shakespeare was a child called Henry Wriothesley, who was two years old at this time. He later became the third Earl of Southampton and he, too, played an important part in William's later life.

Queen Elizabeth I liked drama—she herself was quite a dramatic character^⑪. She had a difficult job being the monarch^⑫ at that time. Political problems and religious problems were much the same thing in Elizabethan Eng-