

美国大学生作文荟萃

肖美玲 栗进英 等



大学英语学习与考试辅导丛书

*A Collection
of Essays by
American*

College students

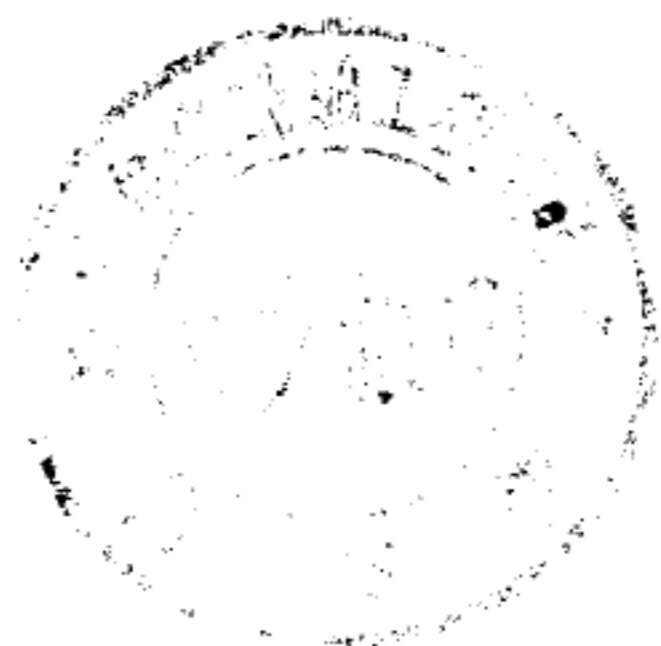


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457334

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00457334

国防科技大学出版社
湖南·长沙

图书在版编目(CIP)数据

美国大学生作文荟萃:英文/肖美玲,栗进英. —长沙:国防科技大学出版社,1999. 9

ISBN 7-81024-582-1

I. 美… II. ①肖…②栗… III. 英语-高等学校-语言读物
IV. H319.4

中国版本图书馆 CIP 数据核字(1999)第 37640 号

国防科技大学出版社出版发行

电话:(0731)4555681 邮政编码:410073

E-mail:gfkdcbs@public.cs.hn.cn

责任编辑:文 慧 责任校对:张 静

新华书店总店北京发行所经销

长沙环境保护学校印刷厂印装

*

850×1168 1/32 印张:9.875 字数:248 千

1999 年 9 月第 1 版第 1 次印刷 印数:1—5000 册

*

定价:14.00 元

前 言

在世纪之交,伴随着“信息时代”的来临,英语写作越来越受到广大师生的重视。作为一门综合技能,英语写作反映学生的英语运用能力。然而,学生的英语作文中,语病问题严重。学生作文反映的生活可谓丰富多彩,但在表情达意方面所存在的问题却比比皆是。为避免语病错误,提高英语遣词造句、谋篇布局的能力,模仿、借鉴地道的英语范文,是行之有效的捷径。为此,我们选编《美国大学生作文荟萃》。

在选编过程中,我们未选名家名篇,主要考虑到名家名篇与学生的实际写作水平有很大的差距,很难模仿,还会使学生产生“高不可攀”的感觉。同时,我们也未选国内大学生的英语习作,毕竟其语言欠地道,不宜借鉴。本书所选的美国大学生作文,语言地道,表达规范,思想健康,适合我国学生心理,且易懂、易学。

本书共收集范文约80篇,按主题归类。内容涉及金色年华,学校生活,生活琐记,友谊爱情,音乐电影,信息时代,战争灾难,环境保护,传播媒介,娱乐爱好,妇女问题,婚姻家庭,金钱地位等等。

为方便学生自学,本书提供生词解释,作品点评和写作实践。“作文点评”独立成篇,文字简洁,强调范文的“闪光点”。

本书具有以下特点:语言真实,表达地道;作文点评,指导性强;题材广泛,内容丰富;难度适中,易于模仿。

由于水平有限,谬误之处,敬请读者斧正。

作者

1999.8

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College Life

校园生活

Students are as good as the teachers.

——Motto of Harvard

Teacher: It's Nice to Meet You, Too

by Ruby Ibanez

Hello! I'm one of the twenty students in your class. I come every day. I sit here and smile and I laugh and I try to talk your English, which you always say will be "my" language.

As I sit here I wonder if you, my teacher, are able to tell when I am sinking in spirit and ready to quit this incredible task. I walked a thousand miles, dear teacher, before I met you. Sitting here, listening to you and struggling to hold this pencil seems to be my "present." I want to tell you though that I, too, am a person of the past.

When I say that my name is Sombath, I want to tell you also that back in my village, I had a mind of my own. I could reason. I could argue. I could lead. My neighbors respected me. There was much value to my name, teacher, no matter how strange it may sound to your ears.

You ask, "Where are you from?" I was born in a land of fields and rivers and hills where people lived in a rich tradition of life and oneness. My heart overflows^① with pride and possession of that beautiful land, that place of my ancestors. Yet, with all this that I want to share with you, all I can mutter^② is I came from Cambodia. I'm Khmer. I'm not even sure I can say these words right or make you understand that inside, deep inside, I know what you are asking.

“How old are you?” I want to cry and laugh whenever you go around asking that. I want so very much to say, I’m old, older than all the dying faces I have left behind, older than the hungry hands I have pushed aside, older than the shouts of fear and terror I have closed my ears to, older than the world, maybe. And certainly much older than you. Help me, my teacher, I have yet to know the days of the week or the twelve months of the year.

Now I see you smiling. I know you are thinking of my groans^③ and sighs whenever I have to say “house” and it comes out “how” instead. I think many times, that maybe I was born with the wrong tongue and the wrong set of teeth. Back in my village, I was smarter than most of my neighbors. Teacher, I tremble with fear now over words like *chicken* and *kitchen*.

Now you laugh. I know why. I do not make sense with the few English words I try to say. I seem like a child because I only say childlike things in your English. But I am an adult, and I know much that I cannot yet express. This I think is funny and sad at the same time. Many times the confusion is painful. But do not feel sad, dear teacher. I wish very much to learn all the things that you are offering me, to keep them in my heart, and to make them a part of me. However, there was this life I have lived through and now the thoughts of days I have yet to face. Between my efforts to say “How are you?” and “I am fine, thank you” come uncontrollable emotions of loneliness, anger, and uncertainty. So have patience with me, my teacher, when you see me sulking^④ and frowning, looking outside the classroom or near to crying.

Please go on with your enthusiasm, your eagerness, and your high spirit. Deep inside me, I am moved that someone will still give

me so much importance. Keep that smile when I keep forgetting the words you taught me yesterday and cannot remember those I learned last week.

Give me a gentle voice to ease^⑤ the frustration, humiliation^⑥, and shame when I just cannot communicate *refrigerator*, *emergency*, or *appointment*. For you, my teacher, they are little words, but for me they are like monsters to fight. Pat me on the shoulder once in a while and help my tense body and trembling hands to write A B C and 1 2 3.

Continue to reward me with a warm “good” or “very good” when I have finally pronounced *church* correctly after one hundred “shurshes”. Flatter me by attempting to speak a phrase or two from my language and I will end up laughing with you.

I am one of the students in your class. I came today and tomorrow I will come again. I smile and laugh and try to talk your English, which you say will become my language.

Help With Words

- ① **overflow**: to be full of
- ② **mutter**: to speak in a low voice
- ③ **groan**: a rather loud sound of suffering, worry, or disapproval, which is made in a deep voice
- ④ **sulk**: to show lasting annoyance against others, esp silently and for slight cause
- ⑤ **ease**: to free one from pain, worry, etc.
- ⑥ **humiliation**: the state of feeling humble

Writing Suggestions

During the early 1980s, many people from Kampuchea (formerly Cambodia) were forced to flee their homeland to escape political persecution, in which a great many people—possibly millions—lost their lives. This essay is told in the voice of a Cambodian refugee who was learning English in the camp and preparing to emigrate to the United States.

- Underline any parts of this essay that relate to your own feelings about learning English. Discuss your feelings with a partner. Then freewrite for fifteen minutes about this question: How are your feelings about learning English similar to or different from the ones described in the essay?
- In paragraph 9, Sombath mentions several English words that “are like monsters to fight.” Make a list of English words that are your own personal “monsters”.

The Gloom Classroom

by Robert

October often looks and feels dreary^① because school is by then in full swing^②. Today, a rainy Thursday, is no different. What makes it worse is that I am forced to sit in my writing class on the second floor of Boylan Hall at Brooklyn College and write a theme. It is no wonder that a shadow of gloom hangs over the things and the people that surround me in this room.

As I look around, I see that the surroundings are old and depressing. There is a broken brown chair beside the teacher's desk; no one will sit in it for fear of leaning back and toppling^③ over onto the floor. There is also a mahogany^④ bookcase with a missing shelf, and all the books are piled on the bottom in a stack of blue and yellowed covers, instead of standing in a straight row. This ugly desk of mine is filled with holes and scratches because other impatient students, no doubt, lost their tempers and took out their anger on the wooden surface. As I rub my hand across it, I feel coldness. Even the gray walls and the rumble^⑤ of thunder outside reflect the atmosphere of seriousness as we write our first theme of the semester. When some air sails through an open window beside me, there is the annoying smell of coffee grounds from a garbage pail not far off. That smell is a perfect indication of our discomfort!

Aside from the unattractive surroundings, the people around me show this mood of tension and displeasure. Mary, a slim blonde

at my right, chews the inside of her lower lip. I can see by the way her forehead is wrinkled that she is having quite a bit of trouble. Because only one or two words in blue ink stand upon her clean white page, she looks around the room fearfully for some new ideas. Slouching^① in his seat in the third row, David Harris nibbles^② each finger of each hand. Then he plays with a black collar button that stands open on the top of his red plaid shirt. The tension gets to him too; drops of perspiration run slowly down his cheeks. I hear a thump^③ as he uncrosses his legs and his scuffed shoe hits the floor. A painful cough slices the air from behind me. I hear a woman's heels click from the hall beyond the closed door and a car engine whine annoyingly from Bedford Avenue. All these signs of gloom do not help my mood at all.

These last few painful moments make me wonder if what my friends told me about college was all true. Where are all the beautiful girls I'm supposed to be meeting and talking to in every room? Where are the freedom and relaxed atmosphere my friends bragged about? I'm supposed to be enjoying myself instead of suffering! Everybody seems to have forgotten that college is hard work too. My first days in writing class prove that delight and pleasure often disappear when assignments are due!

Help With Words

- ① **dreary**: not cheerful
- ② **be in full swing**: to reach its highest level of activity
- ③ **topple**: to become unsteady and then fall over
- ④ **mahogany**: hard reddish brown wood used for making furniture
- ⑤ **rumble**: a series of long low sounds

- ⑥ **slouch**: to sit with your shoulders bent forward that makes you look tired or lazy
- ⑦ **nibble**: to take a small bite of something
- ⑧ **thump**: the dull sound that is made when something hits a surface

Writing Suggestions

Golden's proposal sentence tells specifically the two parts of the topic: the gloom surrounding the people and the gloom surrounding the things in the classroom. Paragraph 2 focuses on things. Paragraph 3 focuses on people. When writing a proposal, keep in mind the following guidelines:

- Make sure your proposal sentence allows you to discuss what you want to, i. e. , announce the topic clearly.
- The proposal should be so written as to allow you to discuss at least two specific aspects of the topic.
- It is much easier for you if you write the proposal as the last sentence of the introduction.

Write a brief essay on one of your enjoyable holidays and make sure your proposal would serve to develop the ideas.

Students in Action

by Bradley Myers

Whenever I think of a classroom, I get a mental image of about six rows of solemn students who all give their undivided attention to the teacher. They listen intently to the lecturing, then dutifully write down every word. Not for them is the wasteful habit of doodling^①, or daydreaming—they're there to learn.

But in the real world, a typical classroom is quite different. True, there are some students like the ones described above, but the majority are considerably more diversified in their classroom activities. It is interesting to note, too, that there is somewhat of a grouping pattern. If you observe what different students are doing in different areas of the classroom, this pattern will become apparent.

In the front row, or sometimes in the second, is located the intense student. He is the one that hunches^② over his desk and scribbles away at ninety miles per hour, trying to catch everything the teacher says. He seems like a butterfly catcher, snagging^③ the words as they come out and pinning them to his paper. At periodic intervals he curses under his breath as he makes a mistake. He furiously scribbles it out, not taking the time to erase it. Then he writes the thing correctly—but now he's behind. He dives into a flurry of writing. He must get the words down before he forgets them. He finally catches up; then oops^④, he makes another mis-