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大学英语阶梯阅读

南开

薛琛 主编

南开大学出版社

Graded College English Reading

BOOK TWO



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第二册

(3 级)

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薛琛 张彤 编

南开大学出版社出版

(天津八里台南开大学校内)

邮政编码 300071 电话 349318

新华书店天津发行所发行

河北昌黎县印刷厂印刷

1992年6月第1版 1992年6月第1次印刷

开本:787×1092 1/32 印张:4.375

字数:92千 印数:1—6000

ISBN7-310-00463-9/H·37 定价:2.40元

前 言

本系列读物以提高学生的阅读能力为目的,从而促进他们在听、说、写各方面的发展。读者对象为高等院校研究生、本科生、专科生以及英语自学者。本读物共分四册,与目前大学英语分级教学密切配合。

国家教委颁发的《大学英语教学大纲》指出:大学英语教学的目的是培养学生具有较强的阅读能力、一定的听的能力以及初步的写和说的能力。显然,“培养学生具有较强的阅读能力”是第一层次的要求。在英语教学的实践中,我们也深深感到要培养学生听说读写四方面的技能,提高学生的阅读能力是关键。

从目前大学生英语学习的情况来看,普遍存在的问题是词汇量小,阅读速度慢,阅读理解能力不够理想,写作方面的困难也就更加突出。在全国大学英语四级、六级统考中,也再次反映了这些问题。我们认为,切实可行的解决办法就是让学生大量地阅读,通过阅读,丰富学生的文化背景知识,扩大他们的知识面,增加词汇量,以此提高阅读速度和理解力。“读书破万卷,下笔如有神”。我们相信,通过大量的阅读,学生的写作能力也一定会相应地提高。

本系列读物与高等院校学生从大学英语一级到六级的学习相呼应,在各级的学习阶段中,为他们提供内容新颖、体裁多样、具有现代语言规范和特点的课外读物。将英语阅读部分

从“习题集”这类书籍中分离出来,将它独立成书,并与英语一至六级的教学程序互相承接,相得益彰;同时,也避免了一般英语读物文艺性过强的倾向,代之以更加广博的内容,增补大量当代世界各个领域的新知识,是我们一次认真的尝试,也是广大学生热切的呼声。为帮助学生更好地对课文进行理解、消化和吸收,我们适当地对每篇读物加以注释,并密切结合各级学生的学习要求,配备了多种形式的练习。为便于学生的自学,我们在书后附了练习的答案。

《大学英语阶梯阅读》的编写安排如下:

册次	级别	词汇量	对应年级
1	1、2	2,500-3,000	大学一年级
2	3	3,000-3,500	大学二年级第一学期
3	4	3,500-4,500	大学二年级第二学期
4	5、6	4,500-6,000	大学高年级及研究生

本系列读物由南开大学外文系英语教研室徐齐平教授审定。

鉴于编者水平有限,在选材、注释、练习编写等方面难免存在不少缺点和问题,请读者批评指正。

编者

一九九〇年十月

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1. MAKING CONTACT IN ANOTHER CULTURE

(PART I)

making contact in another culture

I . A Comparison

- 1 In your native language and culture, it is often easier to meet and get to know people than it is in another language and culture. In your own country, you may have lived in the same neighborhood all your life and you know almost everybody. Maybe in your own country you meet people through your family or through people you've always known. You usually don't have to figure out ways to meet people—they're just there! You have a community because you've grown up in a place with a lot of people that you already know.
- 2 You share a language with people from the same culture. When you talk, you don't have trouble expressing yourself. In your own language, you can usually *focus on*¹ what you're saying and not on the way you're saying it. You don't have to worry about saying something *incorrectly* or not finding the right word. You share a common background, so it isn't difficult to think of things to talk about. You're comfortable in your own language. Let's just say that you are yourself when you speak your own language.
- 3 **Effort in Another Language and Culture.** This changes in another country when the language and people are different. First of all, it takes more effort to speak a second (or foreign) language than to speak your own. In a new language, you use different muscles from those you are used to using. That's tiring. Anyone who has spent a few hours speaking a new language knows

that headaches are common. It's hard to search for words when you're talking, or to *strain*² to understand when someone is talking too quickly. In addition to the *fatigue*³, adults learning a new language have other complaints.

"I feel like a child when I speak the new language."

"I don't sound like myself."

"It's hard for others to get to know who I really am."

These are all frustrating feelings for adults who know how to express themselves well in their native language, but not in the new language. It's not surprising that it's difficult to relax when speaking a new language.

- 4 **Avoiding Cross-Cultural Contact.** For all of these reasons, many travelers and immigrants ^{like} may choose to avoid cross-cultural contact. They may spend most of their time with relatives and friends from their own culture. It is a natural and understandable feeling to want that familiar contact. Without it, one might feel lost. At the same time, without cross-cultural contact, a newcomer may have a hard time feeling part of the new culture. *Some newcomers may never feel totally integrated*⁴, but it is possible for them to become comfortable with at least some aspects of the new culture.

- 5 What does it mean to become comfortable in another culture? Whether or not a person is comfortable depends, in large part, on how the person feels with the people from the new culture. If newcomers or travelers avoid contact with others, then they probably won't learn to *feel at ease*⁵. Admittedly, it's not always easy to make contact with people whose beliefs and customs are very different from yours. This is not to say that people always have an easy time making contact in their own cultures. However, at least in a person's own culture, he or she probably knows what to do in order to make contact and to get to know people.

II . Making Contact in the U. S.

- 6 Making contact with people doesn't just happen by itself. You have to put yourself in places where there are people around. This is done more easily when you can simply walk to a nearby cafe, neighborhood park, or town plaza *where a lot of people happen to be*⁶. Unfortunately, that's not the way most American cities and towns are built. Distances are great, and people can't usually walk a short distance and find themselves in the midst of groups of people. It requires effort and time to make contact. One way not to make contact is to wait for it to happen.
- 7 **Advice to Newcomers.** In some countries, the newcomer (the visitor, the immigrant, the foreign student) is often invited places by others and meets people quickly. In the United States, this is not always what happens. Even though you may be the newcomer, you may find that people don't go out of their way to meet you. What advice can be given to people who come to the U. S. ? A foreign student from the Middle East said that the most important advice he could give would be:

"Don't be shy with people. *Make the first move*⁷. If you want to be invited to people's homes, invite them first. When you see someone you'd like to meet, talk to them. Begin conversations. "

Your attempts to initiate contact may not always be successful, but it's worth the effort to make the first move.

Notes

1. focus on; to direct one's attention to
2. strain; to have to try hard
3. fatigue; great tiredness
4. Some newcomers may never feel totally integrated; Some newcomers may never feel that they are parts of or members of a group.
5. feel at ease; to feel comfortable without worry or nervousness

6. where a lot of people happen to be; a lot of people are there by accident
7. Make the first move; Start conversations first or extend invitations.

Exercises

I . Reading Comprehension

Circle the letter next to the best answer.

1. In your native language and culture, it is often easier to meet and get to know people than in another culture. Which of the following reasons for this is not talked about? (Paragraphs 1 and 2)
 - a. In your own culture, you already have a community because you've grown up in a particular place.
 - b. In your own culture, you know people who can introduce you to others.
 - c. In your own culture, you share a common background with people.
2. "You are yourself when you speak your own language." This means (Paragraph 2)
 - a. only you can speak your own language.
 - b. you can express the "real" you because you are comfortable speaking your own language.
 - c. you are usually by yourself when you speak your own language.
3. What can happen if newcomers completely avoid contact with people from the new culture? (Paragraph 4)
 - a. They will probably not feel part of the new culture.
 - b. They will become completely comfortable in the new culture.
 - c. They will feel lost without the familiar contact.
4. Which of the following points is not made in Paragraph 5 of the reading?
 - 4 •

- a. A person's comfort in another culture depends on how he or she feels with people in the new culture.
 - b. Some people have difficulty making contact in their own culture.
 - c. People do not know what to do in order to make contact in their own culture.
5. Why is making contact in the U. S. particularly difficult? (Paragraph 6)
- a. In American cities and towns, people can't usually get to places easily and quickly where there are a lot of people around.
 - b. The distance between neighborhood parks and town centers is so great that people cannot walk from one to the other.
 - c. Most people don't live near cafes.
6. Why does the foreign student from the Middle East give the advice, "Make the first move?" (Paragraph 7)
- a. In the U. S. , people don't move out of the way when they meet newcomers.
 - b. In the U. S. , people don't always approach newcomers first.
 - c. In the U. S. , in order to be invited to people's homes, it is always necessary to extend an invitation first.
7. There are several things you can do to make contact with people in a new culture. Which of the following is not talking about in Paragraph 7?
- a. Start conversations and extend invitations.
 - b. Invite people to restaurants.
 - c. Go to the same park often, as you are likely to see the same people.

II . Vocabulary

Match the word in Column A with its meaning in Column B.

A	B
1. attempt	a. some time
2. aspect	b. organization
3. awhile	c. try
4. acquaintance	d. part ,characteristic
5. institution	e. person you know a little bit , but who is not a friend
6. midst	f. middle

III . Word Forms

Choose the correct word form to fill in the blank.

- avoiding , avoid
 - Sometimes people feel like _____ interaction with people from other cultures.
 - People who _____ asking questions may make serious mistakes.
- integrated , integrating , integration
 - Sometimes people prefer not to be totally _____ into a new culture. They like to keep some of the behaviors of their own native culture.
 - Racial _____ is a goal in the U. S. A.
 - Some people adapt to a new culture by _____ parts of their own culture with the new culture.
- initiate , initial , initially
 - The first letter of a name is an _____.
 - When you "make the first move", you _____ a conversation.
 - Many people feel uncomfortable in a new culture _____ , but after a while they feel more integrated.
- become involved , involved , involvement

- a. As soon as he moved to the new city, he _____ in a church group and a hiking club.
- b. For many years, immigrating to the U. S. _____ waiting for weeks or months at an immigration center like Ellis Island in New York or Angel Island in San Francisco.
- c. He got to know the people in his town through his _____ in community affairs.

IV . Joining Sentences

Combine each group of sentences by using *when*, *while*, *before*, *after*, or *since*.

1. I was entering the building.
Just then I saw an old friend of mine.

2. He decided to go into business for himself.
Before then, he had worked for many other people.

3. John's employer warned him about his careless work.
From then on, John was more careful.

4. Edison invented a lamp which conducted electricity.
Up to this time, gas had been the chief means of lighting homes and streets.

5. They moved into an expensive apartment.
Already they have become very snobbish.

6. She was next door chatting with her daughter.

Meanwhile, someone broke into her house and stole her jewelry.

2. MAKING CONTACT IN ANOTHER CULTURE (PART II)

III . Different Kinds of Contact

- 8 How do you make contact? Contact often begins with a conversation. Many conversations may never lead to anything, but without them, it is unlikely that any contact would ever develop.
- 9 **Conversations with Strangers.** In the United States it is common and acceptable to have conversations with strangers. Quite often, you see strangers having friendly conversations with each other. In many cases, the contact that you have with strangers will be minimal, even if they seem friendly and warm toward you. It might even happen, for example, that a stranger will tell you some very personal things in the ten minutes that you're waiting for the bus together. It may seem that this person wants to become friends. That probably won't happen. People can be very friendly without wanting real friendship. A French woman who lived in the U. S. said that she was surprised when strangers such as store clerks and bank tellers would smile at her and talk to her as if they were her closest friends. After a while, she learned how to respond to *small talk*¹ and began enjoying the conversations.
- 10 **Conversation as Language Practice.** A newcomer shouldn't avoid this kind of conversation with strangers. All conversations in English can serve a purpose. They are opportunities to practice and interact in English. Although a conversation may not mean much, it can provide minimal contact with

people and be one more way to learn the language and learn how people interact.

- 11 **Places to Make Contact.** It isn't easy, especially for adults, to develop a new circle of friends and *acquaintances*². Many Americans have a difficult time beginning new friendships when they move from city to city, even within a state. Of course, it is much easier to move within one's own country than to move to another country, but relocating anywhere, even to a nearby city, can be difficult. When Americans move within the country, they often need at least six months to begin to feel settled and to make contact with people. Many people who have moved say that they only begin to feel at home in a new place after two or three years.

- 12 **Where Americans Make Contact.** What, specifically, do some Americans do to make contact when they move? Some join *religious institutions such as churches and synagogues*³. Some become involved in community affairs, joining groups, associations, and organizations or doing *volunteer work*⁴. Others join clubs where they know they'll meet people with whom they have interests in common. Some of these ways of making contact may be unfamiliar to people who are visiting the U. S. or who are immigrating from other countries. In many countries, for example, volunteer organizations don't exist. "*Newcomer clubs*"⁵ and agencies that arrange for people to meet may be unique American inventions. Still, you do not have to be born in the U. S. to try some of these ways of making contact. Of course, there are the more usual places to make contact, and these places may provide a more comfortable way of meeting people.

- 13 Where are the places to make contact? Your neighborhood is a place to start, but remember that you may have to be the one to approach your neighbor first. If one of your neighbors seems friendly but you've only exchanged greetings, try starting a conversation. Once you've had several conversa-

tions, extend an invitation. Have that person come into your home for an informal visit. If you work in the day and don't have much of a chance to talk to neighbors in the day, take a *night class*⁶ in a subject or activity that interests you. Talk to people before class and during the breaks. Remember they may not come to you first. It's like this at work or at school. You probably see the same people in the *cafeteria*⁷ or by the coffee machines. Start talking to them. Some may not respond very much; others will respond in a way that tells you that they would enjoy talking to you again. If you have children, go to the same park a few times a week. You'll start seeing the same people. Which people seem approachable? Start conversations with them. A friendly first conversation could lead to something more.

IV . Cross-Cultural Contact

- 14 Don't be discouraged if some of your efforts to make contact are not successful. You can't always know who will and who won't be responsive to your attempts to make contact. Some Americans feel too busy to *widen their circle of friends*⁸ and may simply not want to develop a friendship. Some native-born Americans have only had contact with other Americans and may appear shy and inexperienced with people from different cultures. And, unfortunately, there are always some people who do not want to get to know others from different cultures. You can probably find this type of person in every culture.

- 15 **Types of Americans.** In the United States, you'll find a variety of "types." Many Americans enjoy meeting people from different cultures, but you have to know where to find them. If you're a student and your school has an international student club, you will undoubtedly find Americans who are interested in cross-cultural contact. Maybe you know a neighbor