

孙建华 霍洪涛 主编

煤炭高等院校英语统编教材·大学本科

CURRENT ENGLISH READING COURSE



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当代英语阅读教程

煤炭工业出版社

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内 容 提 要

本书为《CURRENT ENGLISH READING COURSE》第2册，共10单元。每单元围绕某一话题精选4篇精读和4篇快速阅读文章，并辅以阅读技巧点拨、双语注解和习题操练。题型涉及阅读理解、英汉翻译、词汇选择、简短回答、判断正误、选择填空等，所涵盖的知识点和能力测试与大学英语四、六级考试改革的方向一致，可帮助学生熟悉新题型、提高应试能力；所选文章内容丰富，体裁多样，融知识性和趣味性于一体，可拓宽知识面、提高学习能力、培养学习兴趣，为运用英语打基础。

本套教材适合非英语专业本科一、二年级和英语专业低年级学生使用，建议与精读教材同步使用，也可作为广大英语爱好者提高英语水平的自学教材。

前 言

阅读是掌握语言知识、打好语言基础、获取信息的重要渠道。对于外语学习者来说,阅读不仅是目标语语言输入的主要来源,也是听、说、写、译等其他语言技能发展的基础和源头。没有足够的语言输入,其他技能的发展与提高是有限的。《CURRENT ENGLISH READING COURSE》系列教材旨在帮助学习者扩大英语词汇量,提高新词新语、常用词汇和语法现象的识读速度,进而增强英语语感,开阔语言文化视野,转变语言思维方式,增强跨文化意识和交际能力,掌握英语阅读策略和阅读技能,最终促进其英语语言综合能力的全面提高。

本套教材选用的语料均为时文,大都选自国内外近期出版的期刊、报纸、书籍、杂志及国内外主流网站。内容既有科普、人文社科文章,也有独特人物、异域风情篇章;既有心理学、政治、经济、历史、地理、文学艺术等主体话题,也有人们喜闻乐道的校园生活、安全、网络、婚姻、家庭、情感、诚信、战争与和平、人际交往等热门话题。

本套教材的主要特点有:

- (1) 构思新颖;
- (2) 内容时尚且不乏经典,语言鲜活;
- (3) 主题明确,话题热点、新潮;
- (4) 理论指导,有读有练,效果易见;
- (5) 循序渐进,分级编写,由浅入深,适用面广。

本套教材适合非英语专业本科一、二年级和英语专业低年级学生使用,建议与精读教材同步使用。同时,可以作为广大英语爱好者提高英语阅读能力的自学教材。

本套教材总主编为河南理工大学赵增虎。本册主编为孙建华和霍洪涛,副主编为蔺志渊、王新建和王晓培。

本教材所采用的阅读材料均注明了出处,在此谨向其作者表示衷心的感谢!

由于编者能力有限,本书在编写中难免会出现不足,甚至是错误之处,恳请读者批评指正。

编 者

2008年5月

Contents

Unit 1 Glimpses of Artistic World	1
Part I Intensive Reading	1
Part II Translation	14
Part III Bank Cloze	14
Part IV Fast Reading	15
Part V Reading Skills	24
Unit 2 A Mosaic of Changing Asia	26
Part I Intensive Reading	26
Part II Translation	38
Part III Bank Cloze	39
Part IV Fast Reading	39
Part V Reading Skills	50
Unit 3 Speeches and Presentations	52
Part I Intensive Reading	52
Part II Translation	63
Part III Bank Cloze	64
Part IV Fast Reading	65
Part V Reading Skills	75
Unit 4 Celebrated Figures	77
Part I Intensive Reading	77
Part II Translation	88
Part III Bank Cloze	88
Part IV Fast Reading	89
Part V Reading Skills	96
Unit 5 Computer Park	98
Part I Intensive Reading	98
Part II Translation	109
Part III Bank Cloze	110
Part IV Fast Reading	111
Part V Reading Skills	119
Unit 6 News Focus	121
Part I Intensive Reading	121
Part II Translation	132
Part III Bank Cloze	132
Part IV Fast Reading	133
Part V Reading Skills	142

Unit 7 Contending	143
Part I Intensive Reading	143
Part II Translation	154
Part III Bank Cloze	155
Part IV Fast Reading	156
Part V Reading Skills	163
Unit 8 Education	165
Part I Intensive Reading	165
Part II Translation	176
Part III Bank Cloze	177
Part IV Fast Reading	178
Part V Reading Skills	187
Unit 9 Animal World	189
Part I Intensive Reading	189
Part II Translation	200
Part III Bank Cloze	201
Part IV Fast Reading	201
Part V Reading Skills	211
Unit 10 Entertainment	213
Part I Intensive Reading	213
Part II Translation	224
Part III Bank Cloze	225
Part IV Fast Reading	226
Part V Reading Skills	235
Keys	237
Glossary	245

Unit 1

Glimpses of Artistic World

Background

Art is a boon "befalling" human beings as mortal creatures. Through arts and artistic forms, our perception and imagination of the universe stretch further into the next era, and then magically become immortal. The traditional and conventional classification of Art or Arts usually confines the artistic realm within such fields as drawing, painting, sculpture, and so on. But as civilization evolves, human imagination and aesthetic taste are diversifying. Our definition of art gets widened. Such forms as music, motion picture, photography, tattoo, logo designs, martial art, to mention just a few, all represents our imagination and feeling of this world and its culture. To no less extent, these forms and skills, in an artistic and imaginative way, express the ideas of a particular culture, class, society, and the individuals who exercise these crafts.

Part I Intensive Reading

Directions: *There are four passages in this part. Each passage is followed by some questions or unfinished sentences. For each of them there are four choices marked A, B, C and D. You should decide on the best choice and mark the corresponding letter.*

Passage 1

Music Represents a Living History of America

Music is a very important part of our lives. Music is for dancing, drinking, eating, loving and thinking. Some songs remind us of our childhood or youth. Others remind us of the people we love. Many important occasions, like weddings and funerals, have special music. Every

nation has a national song like the American *The Star-Spangled Banner*.

In the US, high schools and colleges have school songs too. Music is a part of the history of America. It expresses the problems and feelings of its people.

As the years pass, the music grows and changes. Modern science has also changed music. Inventions like records, radios, movies, electric instruments, tape recorders and videos have changed the way we play and listen to music. They have helped to make music an important form of international communication.

American music, from the earliest folk songs to modern “pop”, is known around the world. Music is one of America’s most important exports. It brings the people of the world together.
10 Even when people cannot understand the same language, they can share the same music.

Many people learn and practice English by singing songs. Understanding American music can help you understand American people, their history and culture. So, as the song says, “Put a dime in the **jukebox**, baby.” Let’s listen to the music.

The first American music

Native American lived in America before Columbus arrived. They had songs for many occasions and they used drums and other musical instruments. Dancing and music was an important part of their life and their religion. You can still hear native American music and see dancing at special festivals.

20 The first British people who came to America were very religious. They came for religious freedom. Their songs were simple and they did not use musical instruments in church.

Soon other people with different forms of the Christian religion arrived in America. They brought different kinds of church music from Europe and they used musical instruments like the organ and the piano in the church.

Not all early music was church music. Some people liked to drink and dance. Many drinking places opened and **fiddle** music and European songs entertained the people.

American farmers soon left the east coast to begin new farms further west. The farms were big and far apart. There were not many towns or churches. Religious leaders, called preachers, rode horses around the country and brought religion to the farm people.

30 To bring the country people together in a large group, these preachers held “camp meetings”. These religious meetings were held in big tents. Sometimes thousands of people went to hear the preachers. Camp meetings often went for several days. Popular religious songs were sung and the music was very lively. People clapped their hands and tapped their feet to the music.

The first camp meeting was held in 1800 and they are still held today. Many pop stars, for example, Elvis Presley, first learned to sing and to love music at these meetings.

Early black music

In the South there were large cotton farms called **plantations**. Growing cotton was very hard work. Slaves were brought from Africa to work in the fields. The white slave owner did not let the slaves have drums. They knew that Africans could use drums to send messages. They were afraid that the slaves would help each other to run away.

40 Most slave owners did not let the slaves practice their African dances or their religions. All the slaves had to become Christians. They sang in their own churches on Sunday. They sang

white religious rhythms to the music. We call these songs “**spirituals**”. Some spirituals told about the hard life of the slaves or their wish to run away.

Although the slaves could not do African dances, in church they clapped their hands and moved their whole bodies. Today, black religious music is called **gospel music**.

In Louisiana and the city of **New Orleans** the slave owners were French. They let the slaves and the free black play drums and horns. They also let them keep their African dances. Black musician in New Orleans put European musical instruments and songs together with African rhythms. They made a new musical sound which was later called **jazz**.

Many of the first jazz instruments were home made. Black people also made rhythm with their hands, feet and bodies. Later black brass bands, in the French style, became common. These bands played at special times like weddings and funerals. This new music was called New Orleans jazz. Some white bands played it too and gave it the name Dixieland jazz. You can still hear this early form of jazz in the city of New Orleans. 10

The slaves were set free in 1865 after the Civil War between the North and the South. Since that time black gospel music and jazz have become an important part of popular music in America.

(817 words, from *American Music*, by Sonia Eagle, Longman)

Notes

fiddle *n.* violin 小提琴

gospel music a type of religious singing popular among black Americans 福音音乐

jazz *n.* a type of music with strong rhythms, originally created by African American musicians 爵士乐

jukebox *n.* 投币自动点唱机

New Orleans 新奥尔良，位于路易斯安那州东南部，密西西比河畔，北临庞恰特雷恩湖，是全州最大的城市，人口 7 万，约一半为黑人，被认为是爵士乐的发源地

plantation *n.* a large area of land where sugar, coffee, rubber, etc. are grown 种植园

spiritual *n.* a religious song originally sang by blacks in America 灵歌

The Star-Spangled Banner 星条旗歌（美国国歌）

Questions 1 to 5 are based on Passage 1

1. According to the passage, the first British people coming to America sought for _____.
 - A. purchasing black slaves
 - B. native American music
 - C. religious freedom
 - D. not mentioned
2. Why were the slaves not allowed to use drums by the white owners?
 - A. Because the slaves would help each other to run away by using drums to send messages.
 - B. Because the slaves were not Christians.
 - C. Because the slaves would fight with their white owners.
 - D. Because the slaves would use drums to fight with each other.

3. We can conclude from the passage that many black slaves in US believe in _____.
A. African religion
B. Native American religion
C. Christianity
D. nothing
4. The music made by black musician in New Orleans is later called _____.
A. spirituals
B. gospel music
C. folk music
D. jazz
5. Which of the following music types is **Not** religious music?
A. “Camp meeting” music.
B. Dixieland jazz.
C. Gospel music.
D. Spirituals.



Passage 2

▲ Brief History of Tattoos

Tattoos didn't spring up with the dawn of **biker** gangs and rock “n” roll bands. They've been around for a long time and had many different meanings over the course of history. Let's sketch out the **anecdotes** of tattoos, their purpose, and just how they were created.

For years, scientists believed that Egyptians and Nubians were the first people to tattoo their bodies. Then, in 1991, a **mummy** was discovered, dating back to the Bronze Age of about 3,300 B.C. “The Iceman”, as the specimen was dubbed, had several markings on his body, including a cross on the inside of his knee and lines on his ankle and back. It is believed these tattoos were made in a curative effort.

Being so advanced, the Egyptians reportedly spread the practice of tattooing throughout the world. The pyramid-building third and fourth dynasties of Egypt developed international nations with Crete, Greece, Persia and Arabia. The art of tattooing stretched out all the ways to Southeast Asia by 2,000 B.C. The Ainu (western Asian nomads) then brought it with them as they moved to Japan. Elsewhere, the Shans of China introduced the craft to the Burmese, who still weave tattooing into their religious practices.

Around the same time, the Japanese became interested in the art but only for its decorative **attributes**, as opposed to magical ones. The Horis — the Japanese tattoo artists — were the undisputed masters. Their use of colors, perspective, and imaginative designs gave the practice a whole new angle. During the first millennium A.D., Japan adopted Chinese culture in many aspects and confined tattooing to branding wrongdoers.

In the Balkans, the **Thracians** had a different use for the craft. Aristocrats, according to **Herodotus** (500 B.C.), used it to show the world their social status.

Although early Europeans **dabbled with** tattooing, they truly rediscovered the art form when the world exploration of the post-Renaissance made them seek out new cultures. It was their meeting with Polynesian and American Indian tribes that introduced them to tattooing. The word, in fact, is **derived** from the Tahitian word tattau , which means “to mark”.

British explorer James Cook is responsible for bringing the term back to Europe following his 1769 South Pacific voyage. At that time, the marked bodies of these indigenous people intrigued Europeans so much that there were displays at fairs and circuses.

Why Tattoo?

Most of the early uses of tattoos were **ornamental**. However, a number of civilizations had practical applications for this craft. The Goths, a tribe of Germanic **barbarians** famous for **pillaging** Roman settlements, used tattoos to mark their slaves. Romans did the same with slaves and criminals.

In Tahiti, tattoos were a **rite of passage** and told the history of the person’s life. Reaching adulthood, boys got one tattoo to commemorate the event. Men were marked with another style when they got married. When the Turkish Ottoman Empire ruled Bosnia, all the soldiers were tattooed by military authorities in order to recognize them in case they ever chose to leave.

Later, tattoos became the souvenir of choice for globetrotting sailors. Whenever they would reach an exotic locale, they would get a new tattoo to mark the occasion. A dragon was a famous style that meant the sailor had reached a “China station”. At first, sailors would spend their free time on the ship tattooing themselves and their mates. Soon after, tattoo parlors were set up in the area, surrounding ports worldwide. Always a superstitious lot, they would sometimes mix in gunpowder with the ink, as they believed it held magical powers of prolonged existence.

In the middle of the 19th century, police officials believed that half of the criminal underworld in New York City had tattoos. Port areas were renowned for being rough places full of sailors that were guilty of some crime or another. This is most likely how tattoos got such a bad reputation and became associated with rebels and **delinquents**.

How did they do it?

In the Americas, native tribes used simple pricking to tattoo their bodies or faces. In California, specifically, some groups injected color into the scratches. Some northern tribes living in and around the Arctic Circle (mostly Inuit) made punctures with a needle and ran a thread coated with soot through the skin. The South Pacific community would tap pigment into the pricked skin using a small rake-like instrument.

In New Zealand, the Maori would treat the body like a piece of wood in order to make their world-famous moko style tattoos. Using a small bone-cutting tool, they would carve intricate shallow grooves on the face and buttocks, and infuse them with color. Thanks to trading with Europeans, they were able to use a metal apparatus and apply more traditional puncture methods.

In 1891, an American by the name of Samuel O’Reilly patented the modern tattoo machine. What he actually did is improved upon an engraving device called the “autographic printer”, originally invented by Thomas Edison. This handheld **contraption**, as we know it today, makes a

needle vibrate up and down very rapidly (approximately several hundred vibrations per minute). The needle penetrates the skin around one millimeter in depth and injects ink into the skin at the dermis level.

Pop stars have them, as do lawyers, professional athletes, soldiers, and mechanics — there's no social **stigma** attached to people with tattoos. Today, tattoos are a fashion statement more than a means of intimidation. And it's only natural that people want to discover how this trend started.

10 Samuel O'Reilly was the first famous contemporary tattoo artist. He set up shop in New York's Chatham Square and was very popular in his time. Tattoos were all the rage, all the way to the financial crash of 1929. They became trendy in America again around World War II, with the introduction of new designs like cartoon characters. Tattooing made another leap for the mainstream in the '70s and '80s, when celebrities began sporting them.

In the last decade, the policy of global acceptance and worldwide communication has not only made tattoos popular, but also **omnipresent**. With 5,000 years of tattooing tradition, nothing indicates that this is a vanishing fad.

(1,024 words, from www.overture.com, by Bernie Alexander)

Notes

anecdote *n.* a short, interesting story about a person or an event 轶事, 奇闻

attribute *n.* a particular quality or feature 特征

barbarian *n.* 野蛮人

biker *n.* <AmE> people who ride a motor <美>骑摩托车的人 (尤指属某一团伙者)

contraption *n.* a machine or piece of equipment that looks strange 奇特的装置

dabble with to take part in sth. not very seriously 涉足, 浅尝

delinquent *n.* people with bad or criminal behaviour(esp. young people) 违法者 (尤指青少年)

derive *v.* be derived from sth. to come or develop from sth. 从……衍生出, 来源于……

Herodotus 古希腊历史学家希罗多德 (约 484—425 B.C.), 被称为“历史之父”, 所著的《历史》为西方第一部历史著作

mummy *n.* 木乃伊

omnipresent *adj.* present everywhere 无所不在的

ornamental *adj.* used for decoration 用于装饰的

pillage *v.* to steal things from a place, using violence 抢劫, 掠夺

rite of passage a ceremony or an event that marks an important stage in one's life (标志人生重要阶段的) 仪式, 事件

stigma *n.* feeling of shame, disgrace 羞耻, 耻辱

tattoo *n.* a picture or design that is permanently marked on a person's skin 文身

Thracian *n.* 色雷斯人, 巴尔干半岛最早的居民之一, 曾创造过独特而璀璨的文化, 如今已消亡。古罗马时期著名的奴隶起义领袖斯巴达克斯就是色雷斯人

Questions 6 to 10 are based on Passage 2

6. According to the second and third paragraph, which people are responsible for spreading tattooing internationally?

A. Egyptians.

- B. Persians.
 - C. Japanese.
 - D. Asians.
7. According to Herodotus, the Thracians in the Balkans used tattoos to _____.
- A. decorate their body
 - B. mark the criminals
 - C. catch up with the fashion
 - D. show the social status they belonged to
8. The word “tattoo” is originally from _____.
- A. Creole
 - B. Greek
 - C. Polynesian word
 - D. Egyptian word
9. The practice of tattooing a man when he gets married may happen in _____.
- A. Japan
 - B. Tahiti
 - C. Inuit
 - D. New Zealand
10. Which of the following statements is **True** for the situation of tattoo since the 20th century?
- A. Bad name was still connected with people with tattoos.
 - B. Today, tattoos are usually a sign of fashion other than of intimidation.
 - C. Tattoo became in fashion in America again around World War II, with O’Reilly’s invention of the tattoo machine.
 - D. Samuel O’Reilly’s tattoo shop was not well-accepted in his time.

Passage 3

Ten Films That Your Children Ought to See

It is an unusual mix. A cartoon about the Japanese **underworld**, a tale from Sweden and an Iranian epic not available in UK. They are among suggestions for the top 10 films that all children should see before they reach 14.

Fed up with the “**demonisation**” of the cinema, the British Film Institute has drawn to the list to **provoke** schools and parents into studying of film as seriously as books and art.

“The **predominant** debate is about what children should not watch rather than what they should”, said Cary Bazalgette, head of education at the BFI, whose list is part of its debate on children’s cinema at London’s Barbican Centre.

“Good films are a vital part of our cultural heritage. They teach children to develop skills involving narrative, **inference** and deduction of plot development, and recognition of character

traits. It is important for children to see these films before 14 because that is the age after which their cultural tastes tend to be established.”

Melvin Burgess, who adapted the film *Billy Elliot* into a book, questioned the project’s value. “A list of books that children should have read is a bit doubtful because there are a lot of good books out there, and the same is true of films,” he said.

But Michael Morpurgo, the former children’s **laureate** and author of more than 90 books, said that provoking children to watch better films was good: “Children like to be challenged.”

Cary Bazalgette of the BFI gives her suggestion:

***ET The Extra Terrestrial*, US**

10 Directed by Steven Spielberg

Released: 1982

A boy befriends a visitor from outer space who wants to “phone home”.

“A hugely successful American film, but without stars and with the courage to make the power of love its central theme. The best children’s films maintain the integrity of a child’s world.”

***Billy Elliot*, UK**

Directed by Stephen Daldry

Released: 2000

20 A motherless boy, from a pit village begins to take his interest in ballet against the background of the 1984 miners’ strike.

“A modern British film which breaks new ground of film types.”

***The General*, US**

Directed by Buster Keaton

Released: 1926

The hero risks his life as he pursues his railway engine, hijacked by spies during the American Civil War.

“This opens up the world of silent cinema when **stunts** were done for real. One of the best introductions to an earlier age of cinema.”

***Hue and Cry*, UK**

30 Directed by Charles Crichton

Released: 1946

A gang of **East End** kids realize their favourite comic is being used as a means of communication by bad guys and decide to hunt them down.

“Ealing films are central to UK’s cultural heritage: here the characteristic semi-documentary style reveals London’s docklands and bomb site, but celebrates children’s **solidarity**.”

***Kes*, UK**

Directed by Ken Loach

Released: 1969

40 A schoolboy in Barnsley tries to escape his working-class surroundings by training a **kestrel**.

“Perhaps one of the most enduring stories of the Sixties, this film may challenge children used to action and excitement, but the focus and strength of David Bradley’s performance will hold their attention.”

Kirikou et Sorcière, France/Belgium/Luxembourg

Directed by Michel Ocelot

Released: 1998

An African boy and a warrior seek out an evil **sorceress** who has devoured all but one of the males in the village.

“Quite beautiful animated film. Funny and scary, but not too difficult or frightening for very young children. The resolution is not achieved through violence or spectacle but through bravery and tenderness.”

My Life as a Dog, Sweden

Directed by Lasse Halström

Released: 1985

A boy of 12, living with his brother and deadly ill mother, goes to stay with relatives in the country where he meets strange characters.

“A wealth of Scandinavian film is suitable for children. This enduing classic is, by turns, funny, sad and alarming.”

The Princess Bride, US

Directed by Rob Reiner

Released: 1987

A fairytale as told to be a **bedridden** boy: the beautiful Buttercuo is kidnapped and held against her will in order to marry the bad Prince Humperdinck.

“William Goldman’s sparkling script from his own novel ensures complete pleasure from end to end.”

Spirited Away, Japan

Directed by Hayao Miyazaki

Released: 2001

An unhappy 10-year-old girl moving house with her parents stumbles into the world of the Japanese gods.

“Probably the greatest animator alive, Miyazaki’s films always indicate an alternative reality.”

Where Is My Friend’s House?, Iran

Directed by Abbas Kiarostami

Released: 1989

A boy tries to return a schoolmate’s notebook he’s accidentally taken home but has no idea of his address.

“No other director offers such **fidelity** to the **dilemmas** of childhood: the necessity of negotiating adult impatience, rules, power games, philosophizing and **indifference**.”

(782 words, from *English World*, 2004)

Notes

bedridden *adj.* having to stay in bed all the time because of illness or old age 长期卧床的

demonisation *n.* 妖魔化

dilemma *n.* a difficult situation in which one has to make a choice 窘境, 进退两难的境地
East End 伦敦的东区, 靠近海港的工业区, 大多为贫民区
fidelity *n.* faithfulness and loyalty 忠诚, 真实性
indifference *n.* a lack of interest, feeling or reaction towards sb./sth. 冷淡, 漠不关心
inference *n.* the act of reaching an opinion based on what you know 推断, 推理
kestrel *n.* a bird that kills other creatures for food 红隼
laureate *n.* 桂冠诗人 (通常由英国政府指定), 代表诗人
predominant *adj.* most obvious or noticeable 显著的, 盛行的
provoke *v.* to cause a particular reaction or effect 激起, 引发
solidarity *n.* support by one person or group for another because of shared feeling, aims 团结
sorceress *n.* a woman of magical power but evil spirits 女巫, 巫婆
stunt *n.* a dangerous and difficult action sb. does to entertain people, esp. in a movie 特技
underworld *n.* the people and society involved in crime in a particular place 黑道, 黑社会

Questions 11 to 15 are based on Passage 3

11. The BFI made out the list of the ten films in order to _____.
 A. make film industry more influential
 B. get school and parents interested in studying movies
 C. tell children what they should learn
 D. make the public familiar with great directors
12. Melvin Burgess's response to BFI's list of films was _____.
 A. approval
 B. suspicious
 C. neither against nor for it
 D. not mentioned
13. Which of the following movies is made by Great Britain?
 A. *Hue and Cry*.
 B. *The Princess Bride*.
 C. *My Life as a Dog*.
 D. *Spirited Away*.
14. Which of the following movies doesn't have children as the leading characters?
 A. *The General*.
 B. *Where Is My Friend's House?*
 C. *ET The Extra Terrestrial*.
 D. *Kirikou et Sorcière*.
15. If we want to watch an animated film of quality made by Asian director, we can choose _____.
 A. Abbas Kiarostami
 B. Michel Ocelot
 C. Lasse Halström
 D. Ken Loach