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大学英语

泛 读

第六册

张砚秋(主编)

朱 荔 解义明

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前 言

《大学英语》是根据国家教育委员会审定批准的《大学英语教学大纲(文理科本科用)》编写的一套系列教材,分精读、泛读、听力、快速阅读、语法与练习五种教程。

本教材重视英语语言基础,从各方面保证文、理科的通用性,适用于大学英语基础阶段的教学。

本教材的精读、泛读、快速阅读和听力教程各按分级教学的要求编写六册,每级一册;语法与练习编写四册,供1—4级使用。精读与听力教程均配有教师用书和录音磁带。对低于大纲规定入学要求的学生,另编预备级精读、泛读教程各两册。

上述五种教程根据各自的课型特点自成体系,但又相互配合,形成整体,以贯彻大纲所提出的三个层次的要求:“培养学生具有较强的阅读能力、一定的听的能力、初步的写和说的能力。”全套教材由复旦大学、北京大学、华东师范大学、中国人民大学、武汉大学和南京大学合作编写,复旦大学董亚芬教授审订。

大学外语教材编审委员会综合大学英语编审组的全体成员对这套教材的设计与编写自始至终给予关注,分工审阅了全套教材并提出了宝贵意见。上海外语教育出版社的编辑同志在付梓前仔细编审,精心设计,给予我们很大帮助和促进。

《大学英语》泛读教程由北京大学英语系公共英语教研室负责编写,张砚秋副教授担任主编,王岷源教授担任主审。除主审外,还承美籍专家 John Alton, Allan Brown 博士, Sara Kenney 和英籍专家 Anthony Ward 协助审阅,谨此致谢。

本书为泛读教程第六册,由朱荔、解又明等同志参加编写,供大学英语六级学生使用。各册教师用书也由泛读教程主编单位编写,上海外语教育出版社出版。

由于时间仓促,编者水平与经验有限,教材中不妥之处在所难免。希望广大读者批评指正。

编 者

1991年10月

使用说明

本书为《大学英语》泛读教程第六册,供大学英语六级学生使用。

本册共有十个单元,每单元包括三篇课文。每篇课文后有英文注释和练习,后附总词汇表。

课文全部选自原文材料,略有删改。泛读课文的选材原则为力求内容新颖、题材广泛、体裁多样、知识性与趣味性并重,在难度上一般稍浅于相应的精读课文。

注释主要介绍有关背景知识,同时对难句和较新的语言现象用浅近的英文释义,以帮助学生顺利地阅读。少量注释条目用英文不易解释清楚,则直接注出汉意。

练习包括选择题和讨论题两个部分,旨在帮助学生回忆课文内容,检查学生对课文的理解程度,同时配合精读教程在阅读技能方面的教学,注意逐步培养学生在阅读过程中的分析、归纳、综合和推断的能力。

第六册的阅读量相当于大纲的要求,约 50,000 余字。不同的院校可视具体情况,要求学生读完全部或选读部分课文。

泛读课本的目的是为学生提供较系统的课外学习材料,使他们有机会通过大量的阅读实践逐步掌握所学阅读技能,全面地提高阅读能力。泛读是在教师的指导下,由学生在课前进行的。对泛读的要求不宜过高,要注意一个“泛”字,防止对语言现象讲得过多过细,以免影响阅读量的完成。

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1991 年 10 月

College English

Extensive Reading

Book Six

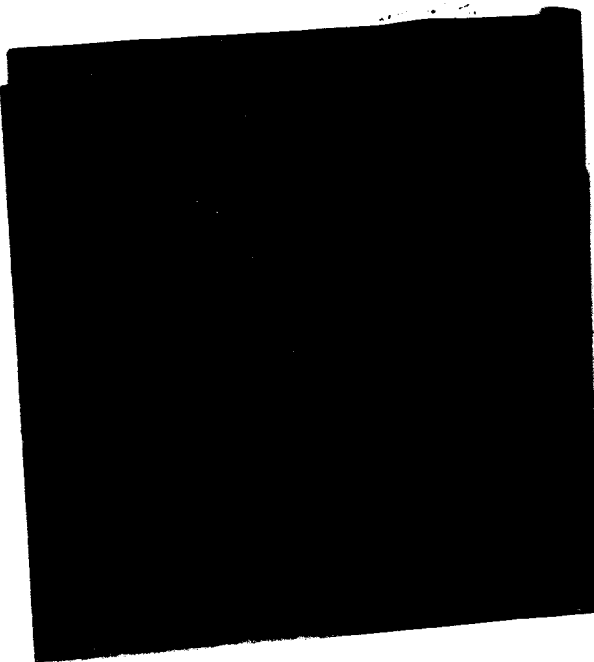
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1. The Open Window

Saki (H.H. Munro)¹

"My aunt will be down presently, Mr. Nuttel," said a very self-possessed² young lady of fifteen; "in the meantime you must try and put up with me."

Framton Nuttel endeavoured to say the correct something which should duly flatter the niece of the moment without unduly discounting³ the aunt that was to come. Privately he doubted more than ever whether these formal visits on a succession⁴ of total strangers would do much towards helping the nerve cure which he was supposed to be undergoing. 5

"I know how it will be," his sister had said when he was preparing to migrate to this rural retreat;⁵ "you will bury yourself down there and not speak to a living soul, and your nerves will be worse than ever from moping.⁶ I shall just give you letters of introduction to all the people I know there. Some of them, as far as I can remember, were quite nice." 10

Framton wondered whether Mrs. Sappleton, the lady to whom he was presenting one of the letters of introduction, came into the nice division.

"Do you know many of the people round here?" asked the niece, when she judged that they had had sufficient silent communion.⁷ 15

"Hardly a soul," said Framton. "My sister was staying here, at the rectory⁸ you know, some four years ago, and she gave me letters of introduction to some of the people here."

He made the last statement in a tone of distinct regret. 20

"Then you know practically nothing about my aunt?" pursued the self-possessed young lady.

"Only her name and address," admitted the caller. He was wondering whether Mrs. Sappleton was in the married or widowed state. An undefinable something about the room seemed to suggest masculine habitation. 25

"Her great tragedy happened just three years ago," said the child; "that would be since your sister's time."

"Her tragedy?" asked Framton; somehow in this restful country spot tragedies seemed out of place.⁹

"You may wonder why we keep that window wide open on an October afternoon," 30 said the niece, indicating a large French window¹⁰ that opened on to a lawn.

"It is quite warm for the time of the year," said Framton; "but has that window got anything to do with the tragedy?"

35 "Out through that window, three years ago to a day, ¹¹ her husband and her two young brothers went off for their day's shooting. They never came back. In crossing the moor to their favourite snipe-shooting ground they were all three engulfed in a treacherous piece of bog. ¹² It had been that dreadful wet summer, you know, and places that were safe in other years gave way suddenly without warning. Their bodies were never recovered. That was the dreadful part of it." Here the child's voice lost its self-possessed
40 note and became falteringly human. ¹³ "Poor aunt always thinks that they will come back some day, they and the little brown spaniel that was lost with them, and walk in at that window just as they used to do. That is why the window is kept open every evening till it is quite dusk. Poor dear aunt, she has often told me how they went out, her husband with his white water-proof coat over his arm, and Ronnie, her youngest brother, singing,
45 'Bertie, why do you bound?' as he always did to tease her, because she said it got on her nerves. ¹⁴ Do you know, sometimes on still, quiet evenings like this, I almost get a creepy feeling that they will all walk in through that window—"

She broke off with a little shudder. ¹⁵ It was a relief to Framton when the aunt bustled into the room with a whirl of apologies for being late in making her appearance.

50 "I hope Vera has been amusing you?" she said.

"She has been very interesting," said Framton.

"I hope you don't mind the open window," said Mrs. Sappleton briskly; "my husband and brothers will be home directly from shooting, and they always come in this way. They've been out for snipe in the marshes today, so they'll make a fine mess over my
55 poor carpets. So like you menfolk, isn't it?"

She rattled on cheerfully about the shooting and the scarcity of birds, and the prospects for duck in the winter. To Framton it was all purely horrible. He made a desperate but only partially successful effort to turn the talk on to a less ghastly ¹⁶ topic; he was conscious that his hostess was giving him only a fragment of her attention, and her eyes
60 were constantly straying past him to the open window and the lawn beyond. It was certainly an unfortunate coincidence that he should have paid his visit on this tragic anniversary.

"The doctors agree in ordering me complete rest, an absence of mental excitement, and avoidance of anything in the nature of violent physical exercise," announced
65 Framton, who laboured under the tolerably wide-spread delusion ¹⁷ that total strangers and chance acquaintances are hungry for the least detail of one's ailments and infirmities, ¹⁸ their cause and cure. "On the matter of diet they are not so much in agreement," he continued.

"No?" said Mrs. Sappleton, in a voice which only replaced a yawn at the last moment. Then she suddenly brightened into alert attention—but not to what Framton was
70

saying.

"Here they are at last!" she cried. "Just in time for tea, and don't they look as if they were muddy up to the eyes!"

Framton shivered slightly and turned towards the niece with a look intended to convey sympathetic comprehension. The child was staring out through the open window with dazed horror¹⁹ in her eyes. In a chill shock of nameless fear Framton swung round in his seat and looked in the same direction. 75

In the deepening twilight three figures were walking across the lawn towards the window; they all carried guns under their arms, and one of them was additionally burdened with a white coat hung over his shoulders. A tired brown spaniel kept close at their heels. Noiselessly they neared the house, and then a hoarse young voice chanted out of the dusk:²⁰ "I said, Bertie, why do you bound?" 80

Framton grabbed wildly at his stick and hat; the hall-door, the gravel-drive, and the front gate were dimly noted stages in his headlong retreat. A cyclist coming along the road had to run into the hedge to avoid imminent collision.²¹ 85

"Here we are, my dear," said the bearer of the white mackintosh, coming in through the window; "fairly muddy, but most of it's dry."²² Who was that who bolted out as we came up?"

"A most extraordinary man, a Mr. Nuttel," said Mrs. Sappleton; "could only talk about his illnesses, and dashed off without a word of good-bye or apology when you arrived. One would think he had seen a ghost." 90

"I expect it was the spaniel," said the niece calmly; "he told me he had a horror of dogs. He was once hunted into²³ a cemetery somewhere on the banks of the Ganges²⁴ by a pack of pariah dogs,²⁵ and had to spend the night in a newly dug grave with the creatures snarling and grinning and foaming just above him. Enough to make any one lose their nerve." 95

Romance at short notice was her specialty.²⁶

From *English For Today*, Book Six,
McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1975.

Approximately 1,200 words.

NOTES

1. Saki (1870—1916): Scottish novelist, short story writer, and journalist whose real name was Hector Hugh Munro. Saki wrote humorous essays and stories that are frequently described as flippant (lacking proper respect or seriousness), witty, ironic, and cynical.
2. self-possessed: calm; not excited or confused
3. unduly discounting: unfairly neglecting

4. (visits) on a succession of total strangers: (visits) on a number of complete strangers one after another
5. retreat: a safe, quiet place, or a place of refuge
6. from moping: from being gloomy
7. communion: exchange of thoughts and feelings
8. rectory: a house in which a minister lives 教区长的住宅
9. in this restful country spot tragedies seemed out of place: in this peaceful country place tragedies seemed not what one would expect.
10. French window: a glass door opening on to a terrace or lawn
11. to a day: exactly
12. engulfed in a treacherous piece of bog: completely swallowed up by a dangerous swampy stretch of deep thick mud
13. falteringly human: full of sad emotion which displayed her sensitivity
14. it got on her nerves: The noisy song her brother was singing irritated her.
15. She broke off with a little shudder.: She suddenly stopped talking and quivered with fear.
16. ghastly: horrible
17. laboured under the tolerably widespread delusion: acted on the false belief which is fairly wide-spread
18. are hungry for the least detail of one's ailments and infirmities: are eager to know even the smallest details of one's ailments and weaknesses
19. with dazed horror: with stunned horror
20. chanted out of the dusk: sang out in the dusk
21. to avoid imminent collision: to avoid immediately running into
22. most of it's dry: most of the mud has dried
23. hunted into: chased into
24. the Ganges / 'gændʒi:z / : a river in India
25. pariah dogs: wild dogs
26. Romance at short notice was her specialty.: She was good at telling frightening or exaggerated stories without preparation.

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. While waiting with the young girl for Mrs. Sappleton, Framton Nuttel felt
 - a. angry at Mrs. Sappleton for being late.
 - b. ridiculous because the girl was much younger than he.
 - c. unsure whether the visit was of any use to him.
 - d. embarrassed because of his illness.
2. Mr. Nuttel visited Mrs. Sappleton
 - a. because his sister had recommended him to do so.
 - b. in order to meet Mrs. Sappleton's young niece.

- c. to receive treatment for his nerves.
 - d. because he was bored and lonely.
3. Mrs. Sappleton's niece asked Mr. Nuttel questions about his knowledge of Mrs. Sappleton
- a. because she was a self-possessed young lady and wanted to make sure Mr. Nuttel understood that she was.
 - b. in order to help him relax.
 - c. because she was an ill-mannered young girl.
 - d. in order to make up a story about Mrs. Sappleton that Mr. Nuttel would think was real.
4. According to the niece, Mr. Sappleton and his two brothers-in-law
- a. got drowned while fishing.
 - b. were swallowed up by deep mud.
 - c. always returned from hunting, muddy and exhausted.
 - d. never returned from hunting, though no one had been able to determine why.
5. When Mrs. Sappleton appeared and began talking to Mr. Nuttel, he seemed
- a. embarrassed because of what her niece had told him.
 - b. afraid that she might harm him.
 - c. disturbed that he was in the presence of an emotionally unstable woman.
 - d. to want to avoid discussing his illnesses.
6. From the story's ending, we can conclude that
- a. Mr. Nuttel was a foolish man.
 - b. the Sappleton family were actually ghosts.
 - c. the niece was insane.
 - d. the niece enjoyed telling frightening stories.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What was the purpose of Mr. Nuttel's visit to the Sappletons?
2. What seemed to be wrong with Mr. Nuttel? Why was this important to the story?
3. How did Vera, the niece, reveal that she was intelligent and clever?
4. After hearing Vera's story, how did Mr. Nuttel's attitude toward Mrs. Sappleton change?

2. You Should Have Seen the Mess¹

Muriel Spark²

I am now more than glad that I did not pass into the grammar school³ five years ago, although it was a disappointment at the time. I was always good at English but not so good at the other subjects!!

I am glad that I went to the secondary modern school,⁴ because it was only constructed the year before. Therefore, it was much more hygienic⁵ than the grammar school. The secondary modern was light and airy, and the walls were painted with a bright, washable gloss.⁶ One day, I was sent over to the grammar school, with a note for one of the teachers, and you should have seen the mess! The corridors were dusty, and I saw dust on the window ledges,⁷ which were chipped.⁸ I saw into one of the classrooms.
10 It was very untidy in there.

I am also glad that I did not go to the grammar school, because of what it does to one's habits. This may appear to be a strange remark, at first sight. It is a good thing to have an education behind you, and I do not believe in ignorance, but I have had certain experiences, with educated people, since going out into the world.

15 I am seventeen years of age, and left school two years ago last month. I had my A certificate for typing, so got my first job, as a junior, in a solicitor's⁹ office. Mum was pleased at this, and Dad said it was a first-class start, as it was an old-established firm. I must say that when I went for the interview, I was surprised at the windows, and the stairs up to the offices were also far from clean. There was a little waiting-room, where
20 some of the elements were missing from the gas fire, and the carpet on the floor was worn. However, Mr Heygate's office, into which I was shown for the interview, was better. The furniture was old, but it was polished, and there was a good carpet. I will say that. The glass of the bookcase was very clean.

I was to start on the Monday, so along I went. They took me to the general office,
25 where there were two senior shorthand-typists, and a clerk, Mr Gresham, who was far from smart in appearance. You should have seen the mess!! There was no floor covering whatsoever, and so dusty everywhere. There were shelves all round the room with old box files¹⁰ on them. The box files were falling to pieces, and all the old papers inside them were crumpled. The worst shock of all was the tea-cups. It was my duty to make
30 tea, mornings and afternoons. Miss Bewlay showed me where everything was kept. It was kept in an old orange box, and the cups were all cracked. There were not enough saucers to go round, etc. I will not go into the facilities,¹¹ but they were also far from hygienic.

After three days, I told Mum, and she was upset, most of all about the cracked cups. We never keep a cracked cup, but throw it out, because those cracks can harbour germs.¹² So Mum gave me my own cup to take to the office.

35

Then at the end of the week, when I got my salary, Mr Heygate said, 'Well, Lorna, what are you going to do with your first pay?' I did not like him saying this, and I nearly passed a comment, but I said, 'I don't know.' He said, 'What do you do in the evenings, Lorna? Do you watch Telly?' I did take this as an insult, because we call it TV and his remark made me out to be uneducated.¹³ I just stood, and did not answer, and he looked surprised. Next day, Saturday, I told Mum and Dad about the facilities, and we decided I should not go back to that job. Also, the desks in the general office were rickety.¹⁴ Dad was indignant, because Mr Heygate's concern¹⁵ was flourishing, and he had letters after his name.¹⁶

40

Everyone admires our flat, because Mum keeps it spotless, and Dad keeps doing things to it. He has done it up all over, and got permission from the Council¹⁷ to remodernize the kitchen. I well recall the Health Visitor,¹⁸ remarking to Mum, 'You could eat off your floor, Mrs Merrifield.' It is true that you could eat your lunch off Mum's floors, and any hour of the day or night you will find every corner spick and span.¹⁹

50

Next, I was sent by the agency²⁰ to a publisher's for an interview, because of being good at English. One look was enough!! My next interview was a success, and I am still at Low's Chemical Co. It is a modern block, with a quarter of an hour rest period, morning and afternoon. Mr Marwood is very smart in appearance. He is well spoken,²¹ although he has not got a university education behind him. There is special lighting over the desks, and the typewriters are the latest models.

55

So I am happy at Low's. But I have met other people, of an educated type, in the past year, and it has opened my eyes. It so happened that I had to go to the doctor's house, to fetch a prescription²² for my young brother, Trevor, when the epidemic²³ was on. I rang the bell, and Mrs Darby came to the door. She was small, with fair hair, but too long, and a green maternity dress.²⁴ But she was very nice to me. I had to wait in their living-room, and you should have seen the state it was in! There were broken toys on the carpet, and the ash trays were full up. There were contemporary pictures on the walls, but the furniture was not contemporary, but old-fashioned, with covers which were past standing up to another wash, I should say. To cut a long story short, Dr Darby and Mrs Darby have always been very kind to me, and they meant everything for the best. Dr Darby is also short and fair, and they have three children, a girl and a boy, and now a baby boy.

60

65

When I went that day for the prescription, Dr Darby said to me, 'You look pale, Lorna. It's the London atmosphere. Come on a picnic with us, in the car, on Saturday.' After that I went with the Darbys more and more. I liked them, but I did not like the

70

mess, and it was a surprise. But I also kept in with them²⁵ for the opportunity of meeting people, and Mum and Dad were pleased that I had made nice friends. So I did not say anything about the cracked lino,²⁶ and the paintwork all chipped. The children's clothes
75 were very shabby for a doctor, and she changed them out of their school clothes when they came home from school, into those worn-out garments. Mum always kept us spotless to go out to play, and I do not like to say it, but those Darby children frequently looked like the Leary family, which the Council evicted²⁷ from our block, as they were far from houseproud.

80 One day, when I was there, Mavis (as I called Mrs Darby by then) put her head out of the window, and shouted to the boy, 'John, stop peeing²⁸ over the cabbages at once. Pee on the lawn.' I did not know which way to look. Mum would never say a word like that from the window, and I know for a fact that Trevor would never pass water outside, not even bathing in the sea.

85 I went there usually at the week-ends, but sometimes on week-days, after supper. They had an idea to make a match²⁹ for me with a chemist's assistant, whom they had taken up too.³⁰ He was an orphan, and I do not say there was anything wrong with that. But he was not accustomed to those little extras³¹ that I was. He was a good-looking boy, I will say that. So I went once to a dance, and twice to films with him. To look at, he
90 was quite clean in appearance. But there was only hot water at the week-end at his place, and he said that a bath once a week was sufficient. Jim (as I called Dr Darby by then) said it was sufficient also, and surprised me. He did not have much money, and I do not hold that against him. But there was no hurry for me, and I could wait for a man in a better position, so that I would not miss those little extras. So he started going out
95 with a girl from the coffee bar, and did not come to the Darbys very much then.

There were plenty of boys at the office, but I will say this for the Darbys, they had lots of friends coming and going, and they had interesting conversation, although sometimes it gave me a surprise, and I did not know where to look. And sometimes they had people who were very down and out,³² although there is no need to be. But most of the
100 guests were different, so it made a comparison with the boys at the office, who were not so educated in their conversation.

Now it was near the time for Mavis to have her baby, and I was to come in at the week-end, to keep an eye on the children, while the help had her day off. Mavis did not go away to have her baby, but would have it at home, in their double bed, as they did not
105 have twin beds, although he was a doctor. A girl I knew in our block, was engaged, but was let down,³³ and even she had her baby in the labour ward.³⁴ I was sure the bedroom was not hygienic for having a baby, but I did not mention it.

One day, after the baby boy came along, they took me in the car to the country, to see Jim's mother. The baby was put in a carry-cot at the back of the car. He began to
110 cry, and without a word of a lie,³⁵ Jim said to him over his shoulder, 'Oh shut your

gob,³⁶ you little bastard.'³⁷ I did not know what to do, and Mavis was smoking a cigarette. Dad would not dream of saying such a thing to Trevor or I.³⁸ When we arrived at Jim's mother's place, Jim said, 'It's a fourteenth-century cottage, Lorna.' I could well believe it. It was very cracked and old, and it made one wonder how Jim could let his old mother live in this tumble-down cottage, as he was so good to everyone else. So Mavis 115 knocked at the door, and the old lady came. There was not much anyone could do to the inside. Mavis said, 'Isn't it charming, Lorna?' If that was a joke, it was going too far. I said to the old Mrs Darby, 'Are you going to be re-housed?' but she did not understand this, and I explained how you have to apply to the Council, and keep at them.³⁹ But it was funny that the Council had not done something already, when they go round condemning. Then old Mrs Darby said, 'My dear, I shall be re-housed in the Grave.' I did 120 not know where to look.

There was a carpet hanging on the wall, which I think was there to hide a damp spot. She had a good TV set, I will say that. But some of the walls were bare brick, and the facilities were outside, through the garden. The furniture was far from new. 125

One Saturday afternoon, as I happened to go to the Darbys, they were just going off to a film and they took me too. It was the Curzon, and afterwards we went to a flat in Curzon Street. It was a very clean block, I will say that, and there were good carpets at the entrance. The couple there had contemporary furniture, and they also spoke about music. It was a nice place, but there was no Welfare Centre to the flats, where people 130 could go for social intercourse, advice, and guidance. But they were well spoken, and I met Willy Morley, who was an artist. Willy sat beside me, and we had a drink. He was young, dark, with a dark shirt, so one could not see right away if he was clean. Soon after this, Jim said to me, 'Willy wants to paint you, Lorna. But you'd better ask your Mum.' Mum said it was all right if he was a friend of the Darbys. 135

I can honestly say that Willy's place was the most unhygienic place I have seen in my life. He said I had an unusual type of beauty, which he must capture. This was when we came back to his place from the restaurant. The light was very dim, but I could see the bed had not been made, and the sheets were far from clean. He said he must paint me, but I told Mavis I did not like to go back there. 'Don't you like Willy?' she asked. I 140 could not deny that I liked Willy, in a way. There was something about him, I will say that. Mavis said, 'I hope he hasn't been making a pass⁴⁰ at you, Lorna.' I said he had not done so, which was almost true, because he did not attempt to go to the full extent.⁴¹ It was always unhygienic when I went to Willy's place, and I told him so once, but he said, 'Lorna, you are a joy.'⁴² He had a nice way, and he took me out in his car, 145 which was a good one, but dirty inside, like his place. Jim said one day, 'He has pots of money, Lorna,' and Mavis said, 'You might make a man of him, as he is keen on you.' They always said Willy came from a good family.

But I saw that one could not do anything with him. He would not change his shirt