



企鵝英語簡易读物精选

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EMMA



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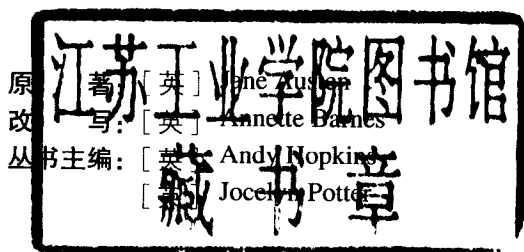




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大量阅读简易读物 打好英语基础（代序）

北京外国语大学英语系历来都十分重视简易读物的阅读。我们要求学生在一、二年级至少要阅读几十本经过改写的、适合自己水平的英语读物。教学实践证明，凡是大量阅读了简易读物的学生，基础一般都打得比较扎实，英语实践能力都比较强，过渡到阅读英文原著困难也都比较小。这是我们几十年来屡试不爽的一条经验。

为什么强调在阅读英文原著之前必须阅读大量的简易读物呢？原因之一是简易读物词汇量有控制，内容比较浅易，而原著一般来说词汇量大，内容比较艰深。在打基础阶段，学生的词汇量比较小，阅读原著会遇到许多困难。在这种情况下，要保证足够的阅读量只能要求学生阅读简易读物。其次，简易读物使用的是常用词汇、短语和语法结构，大量阅读这类读物可以反复接触这些基本词语和语法，有助于他们打好基础，培养他们的英语语感。第三，简易读物大部分是文学名著改写而成，尽管情节和人物都大为简化，但依旧保留了文学名著的部分精华，仍不失为优秀读物。大量阅读这些读物对于拓宽学生视野、提高他们的人文素养大有帮助。

在这里我们还可以援引美国教学法家克拉申（Stephen Krashen）的一个著名观点。他认为，学生吸收外语有一个前提，即语言材料只能稍稍高于他们的语言理解水平，如果提供的语言材料难度大大超过学生的水平，就会劳而无功。这是克拉申关于外语学习的一个总的看法，但我们不妨把这个道理运用到阅读上。若要阅读有成效，必须严格控制阅读材料的难易度。目前学生阅读的英语材料往往过于艰深，词汇量过大，学生花了很多时间，而阅读量却仍然很小，进展缓慢，其结果是扼杀了学生的阅读兴趣，影响了他们的自信心。解决这个问题的关键是向学生提供适合他们水平的、词汇量有控制的、能够引起他们兴趣的英语读物。“企鹅英语简易读物精选”是专门为初、中级学习者编写的简易读物。这是一套充分考虑到学生的水平和需要，为他们设计的有梯度的读物，学生可以循序渐进，逐步提高阅读难度和扩大阅读量，从而提高自己的英语水平。

应该如何做才能取得最佳效果呢？首先，要选择难易度适当的读物。如果一页书上生词过多，读起来很吃力，进展十分缓慢，很可能选的材料太难了。不妨换一本容易些的。总的原则是宁易毋难。一般来说，学生选择的材料往往偏难，而不是过于浅易。其次，要尽可能读得快一些，不要一句一句地分析，更不要逐句翻译。读故事要尽快读进去，进入故事的情节，就像阅读中文小说一样。不必担心是否记住了新词语。阅读量，阅读速度适当，就会自然而然地记住一些词语。这是自然吸收语言的过程。再次，阅读时可以做些笔记，但不必做太多的笔记；可以做一些配合阅读的练习，但不要在练习上花过多时间。主要任务还是阅读。好的读物不妨再读一遍，甚至再读两遍。你会发现在读第二遍时有一种如鱼得水的感觉。

青年朋友们，赶快开始你们的阅读之旅吧！它会把你们带进一个奇妙的世界，在那里你们可以获得一种全新的感受，观察世界也会有种新的眼光。与此同时，你们的英语水平也会随之迅速提高。

Introduction

'Harriet Smith has no family and no money. Robert Martin was a good match for her, Emma. Until she met you, she thought of nothing better for herself, but you have filled her head with ideas of high society and of how beautiful she is.'

Emma Woodhouse is beautiful, clever and rich. She has never thought of getting married herself. Instead, she amuses herself by trying to arrange marriages between her friends and neighbours. But Emma makes a lot of mistakes and causes more problems than happy marriages. Because she is so busy trying to arrange other people's lives, will she lose her own chance of happiness?

Jane Austen was born in 1775, the daughter of a vicar. She had six brothers and one sister, Cassandra, who was her greatest friend. Her home was in Hampshire in the south of England and she lived there for most of her life.

She began writing short stories when she was sixteen but she did not write her first book, *Sense and Sensibility*, until 1811. There were five more books. *Emma* came out in 1816 and many people think it her best work. *Sense and Sensibility*, *Pride and Prejudice* (1813) and *Persuasion* (1817) are three of her books on the list of Penguin Readers. Her books have always been popular and recently many people have been introduced to her stories for the first time through films for the cinema and television.

Although she wrote a lot about falling in love, Jane Austen never married. She died in Cassandra's arms in 1817, when she was forty-one years old.

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Chapter 1 An Offer of Marriage

Emma Woodhouse was beautiful, clever and rich. She lived sixteen miles from London in the village of Highbury and at nearly twenty-one years old she thought her life was perfect. But nothing stays the same for ever and even the most perfect life must sometimes change.

Emma was the younger of two daughters but only she lived with her father at the family home. Her sister Isabella lived in London with her husband and five children.

Emma's mother died when she was only five, and so her father found Miss Taylor to live with them at Hartfield and look after his two daughters. Miss Taylor became their teacher and friend and, even after Emma had grown up and didn't need Miss Taylor as a teacher any longer, she continued to live with them and was part of the family.

But Emma's comfortable life changed when Miss Taylor decided to get married to Mr Weston. Although his house – called 'Randalls' – was very near Emma's, she soon realised there would be a great difference between a Miss Taylor at Hartfield and a Mrs Weston half a mile from Hartfield. And so Emma and her father were left alone together, both wishing that Miss Taylor was still there too.

'What a pity Mr Weston ever thought of Miss Taylor,' said Mr Woodhouse, sadly.

'I cannot agree, Papa. They are very happy together, and I am happy for them. And we shall see them often. They will come here to Hartfield and we shall visit them at Mr Weston's house. We shall always be meeting.'

But although Emma tried to make her father feel happier, she was just as sad as him.

As they sat together playing cards on the evening after Miss Taylor's wedding, their friend Mr Knightley came to visit them. His brother John was Isabella's husband and he had just returned from their home in London.

'How was the wedding? Who cried the most?'

'Everybody was on time and looked their best,' said Emma, 'And there were no tears.'

'But I know how sad you must feel, Emma,' said Mr Knightley.

'Yes, but I am happy that I made the match myself, four years ago. People said Mr Weston would never marry again, but I saw the possibility of love,' said Emma.

'And now Miss Taylor has left us,' said Mr Woodhouse. 'So please do not make any more matches that might break up our circle of friends and family, Emma.'

Mr Knightley did not agree with Emma.

'I cannot see why you think you succeeded. It was no more than a lucky guess,' he said.

But Emma would not listen. She was sure it was because of her help that Miss Taylor had married Mr Weston, and now she had the idea of making another match.

'Mr Elton, the vicar – he is such a good and handsome man, everybody says so. And today, in the church, I could see that he would like it very much if it was *his* wedding. I wish I could help to find him a wife.'

'Leave him to choose his own wife,' laughed Mr Knightley. 'He is twenty-seven and can take care of himself.'



Mr Woodhouse often invited his neighbours to Hartfield for an evening spent playing cards. Emma was happy to entertain their friends, although many of them were closer in age to her father than to her. But on one of these evenings Emma was luckier

because one of their neighbours brought a young friend with her.

Seventeen-year-old Harriet Smith had been a pupil at the school in Highbury and was still living there with the head teacher because she had no living family. Harriet was very pretty and she and Emma immediately became friends. Harriet was very impressed. She thought Emma was wonderful and the surroundings of Hartfield were much better than she was used to. Emma liked Harriet a lot and wanted to introduce her into good society, but first she would have to help by teaching Harriet a few things. She decided this was a very kind and thoughtful plan.

After that evening, Harriet spent a lot of time at Hartfield and she and Emma were often together. Harriet told Emma about her schoolfriend Elizabeth Martin and her family, who she had stayed with in the summer. Emma heard about the Martins' farm and as she listened she began to realise that Mr Robert Martin was not the father of the family, but the son. And he was single.

'Tell me about Mr Robert Martin,' Emma said and Harriet did tell her. He was kind and clever, she said, and she liked him a lot. Emma thought a farmer was a most unsuitable friend for Harriet and knew Mr Elton, the vicar, would be a much better husband. She turned their conversation away from Robert Martin.

'If you compare him to other young men you will certainly see a difference. For example, Mr Elton is a perfect gentleman. Did I tell you what he said about you the other day?' she asked, and told Harriet how beautiful he thought she was. Harriet was very pleased and suddenly seemed to want to talk less about Mr Martin.

'I think Mr Elton likes you a lot. Remember how he wanted me to paint a picture of you? And how he sighed over it when I had finished?'

The painting had been Emma's idea at first but when he heard about it, Mr Elton was immediately enthusiastic and thought it a very good suggestion. Emma painted Harriet in the garden and

Mr Elton wanted to watch. But he walked about so much and asked so many questions that it became difficult for Emma to think about painting and for Harriet to think about standing still. Finally, Emma asked him to sit down and read something to them.

When the picture was finished Mr Elton thought it looked exactly like Harriet, but not everyone agreed.

'The picture is a little too beautiful around the eyes,' said Mrs Weston.

'Not at all!' replied Mr Elton. 'Miss Smith is just as beautiful as Miss Woodhouse has painted her.'

Mr Knightley knew Emma very well and was always honest with her. He said, 'You've made her too tall, Emma.'

'Oh, no,' said Mr Elton. 'Not too tall. Exactly right in my opinion.'

That was when Emma first began to see the possibility of a match between them and had great hopes that it would happen. Then Harriet had started talking about Robert Martin and Emma worried that he might spoil her match-making plans.

The next day she met Harriet in Highbury village and heard some unwelcome news.

'Miss Woodhouse,' said a very excited Harriet, 'Mr Martin has written to ask me to marry him!'

She showed Emma the letter and she agreed it was certainly a very good letter.

'So good that I wonder whether his sister helped him to write it,' she said.

'How shall I reply?' Harriet asked.

'I cannot tell you – it must be your own letter,' Emma replied. 'But I am sure you will write it so that he will not be too unhappy.'

'So you think I should refuse him,' said Harriet sadly, looking down.



*That was when Emma first began to see the possibility
of a match between Harriet and Mr Elton.*

‘I shall not advise you. This is something you must decide yourself.’

Harriet was silent. She looked at the letter again. ‘I had no idea he liked me so much,’ she said.

Emma decided she must speak to save Harriet from an unsuitable marriage.

‘Harriet, if you doubt your answer, of course you should refuse him. If you cannot say “yes” immediately you must say “no”.’

‘Then I will refuse. Do you think I am right?’

‘Perfectly, dearest Harriet. And remember, Mr Martin is only a farmer – he is not your equal or mine. If you married him, I could never visit you,’ said Emma.

Harriet’s letter was written and sent. She was a little quiet all evening and once she said she hoped Mr Martin and his sisters

were not too sad. Emma tried to help her and started talking about Mr Elton again.

'We shall see him tomorrow, Harriet. He will come into this room and look at your picture again, and sigh as he always does when he sees it.'

Harriet smiled and became happier.



When Mr Knightley and Emma were in the gardens at Hartfield the next day he spoke to her about Harriet.

'I congratulate you, Emma. She was always a pretty girl but you have taught her a lot. I think your friend may get some news today that will make her happy.'



When Mr Knightley and Emma were in the gardens at Hartfield the next day he spoke to her about Harriet.

Emma thought at first that Mr Elton might have said something to Mr Knightley but then he continued.

'Robert Martin asked my opinion of her, was she too young to marry? Was it too soon to ask her? I advised him to ask. He's very much in love with her.'

'He has already asked,' said Emma, 'and she has refused him.'

'What? She is a very foolish girl. Are you sure?'

'Of course, I saw her answer.'

Mr Knightley became angry with her.

'Saw it! You mean you wrote it! I think this was your idea, Emma.'

'It was not, but I believe that, although he is a very pleasant young man, he is not Harriet's equal.'

'Harriet Smith has no family and no money. This was a good match for her. Until she met you, she thought of nothing better for herself, but you have filled her head with ideas of high society and of how beautiful she is. She was happy enough with the Martins in the summer.'

Emma was unhappy because he was so angry with her, but she would not agree that she had been wrong.

'Now she knows what gentlemen are, she sees him differently. Now she is looking for something better.'

'Remember, Emma, sensible men do not want silly wives. Harriet may not have another chance to marry,' he replied. He started to walk away from her.

'And if you were thinking of Mr Elton for Harriet, it will not work. He is a good vicar and a good man but he will look for money and good family in a wife.'

Emma laughed. 'I am not trying to make a match for Harriet with Mr Elton,' she said, hoping that Mr Knightley would stop being angry and stay.

'Believe me, Emma, Mr Elton will choose sensibly,' he said over his shoulder. 'Good morning to you.'

Chapter 2 A Second Offer

Mr Knightley was so angry that it was some time before he went to Hartfield again. When Emma saw him again she could see that he had not forgiven her and she was sorry about that.

But she thought her plan was succeeding. Every time Mr Elton met Harriet and Emma he sighed a little more and Emma was certain he really did love Harriet.

Harriet was making herself a little book of poems, and some of the people she knew had suggested their favourites for the book. One day Emma told Mr Elton about it and then she said, 'Perhaps you could write something for Harriet's book? You are so clever it will be easy for you.'

'I'm sure I couldn't do it,' he replied, but the next day he called at Hartfield and left a paper with a short poem written on it. It was addressed to Miss —.

'He means it for you of course,' said Emma.

They read the poem together and saw that it was a very pretty love poem. Harriet was delighted with it.

'Mr Elton! He really is in love with me!' she sighed.

The poem was read to Mr Woodhouse and he said it was probably the best they had found. Then he started talking about Isabella.

'She is coming next week, and they will all be here for Christmas.'

'We must ask Mr and Mrs Weston to dinner while they are here, Papa. And Harriet must come as often as she can,' said Emma. 'You will love my nieces and nephews,' Emma said to Harriet, 'and it will be a Christmas to remember.'



The next day, Emma had to visit a poor sick family in the village and Harriet went with her. The road to their little house passed

the church and then later Mr Elton's house and for a moment they stopped to look at it. It was the first time Harriet had seen where Mr Elton lived.

'What a sweet house!' said Harriet.

'And there you and your book of poems will go one day. Then I shall often walk this way,' replied Emma.

They continued their walk and visited the family. Emma was a very kind young lady and she took them food and clothes for the children and tried to help as much as she could.

As they started their walk back to Hartfield, they met Mr Elton just as he was coming out of his house and he asked if he could walk with them.

Emma wanted to let Harriet and Mr Elton walk together without her and so she stopped and bent down to check her boot. They walked on and seemed to be having an interesting conversation. Emma tried to keep a long way behind but soon they stopped, turned and waited for her to catch up with them. She had hoped Mr Elton might take the opportunity to tell Harriet he loved her, but he didn't.

'He is very careful,' she thought. 'He will not tell her until he is sure she loves him.'

But although she did not succeed with that plan, she was certain they had moved a little closer to the great day of their marriage.



Isabella, John Knightley and their children arrived at Hartfield the week before Christmas. Mr Woodhouse was delighted to see them all again and the family were happy to be together. They talked about their friends in Highbury and of course they talked about Mr and Mrs Weston.

'Do you see Mrs Weston often?' asked Isabella.

'Not as often as I would like, and she always goes away again,' said Mr Woodhouse sadly.

'But remember poor Mr Weston! She must go now that she is married, Papa,' laughed Emma.

'And what about the young man, Mr Weston's son? Has he been to see his father since the wedding?' asked John Knightley.

Everyone in Highbury knew about Mr Weston's son, Frank, but nobody had seen him. Several times he had said he was coming but each time something had happened to stop the visit.

Frank's aunt and uncle, Mr and Mrs Churchill, had adopted him when his mother died. He was only a baby and it seemed to Mr Weston at the time that it was the best thing to do. The Churchills had no children of their own and Frank took their family name. But Mrs Churchill was very jealous and wanted to keep Frank for herself. Although Frank saw his father once a year in London, he had not yet met his new wife.

If Frank Churchill finally did come to Highbury it would be very exciting for Mr and Mrs Weston, and for the whole village. Everybody looked forward to meeting him, especially Emma.

Mr Woodhouse told Isabella, 'I have seen a letter he wrote to Mrs Weston and he seems a very pleasant young man. I am only sorry he is not here now, so that you could meet him, my dear.'



Mrs Weston invited all the family to Randalls for dinner on Christmas Eve* and Harriet, Mr Knightley and Mr Elton were asked to join them. Two carriages were going from Hartfield and Mr Woodhouse arranged to meet Mr Elton at his house and take him to Randalls with them.

The day before, Harriet became ill with a cough and a bad throat and so she could not go. Emma explained to Mr Elton and he said he was very sorry that Harriet was ill. Emma thought he

* Christmas Eve: The day before Christmas Day – December 24th

might be so unhappy that he would not go to Randalls without Harriet but he surprised her.

‘It is a pity our friend cannot join our little party but I am looking forward to the evening,’ he told her. ‘We must hope she will soon feel better.’

Emma thought it strange that he was not more worried but she said nothing. During the journey, he was quite happy and even joked a little. He seemed to have forgotten poor Harriet and was obviously enjoying himself.

When they arrived at Randalls, Emma was surprised to find Mr Elton at her side most of the time. She heard Mr Weston telling the others something about Frank, but because Mr Elton was talking to her she could not hear everything.

Emma had an interest in Frank Churchill, although she had never met him. They were about the same age and because their two families were now joined in marriage it seemed to her that he was the man she should marry. She thought Mr and Mrs Weston had probably had the same idea, perhaps her father also.

At dinner she was sitting next to Mr Weston, and far from Mr Elton, so she had a chance to ask about Frank.

‘I should like to see two more people here tonight – your friend Miss Smith and my son,’ he said. ‘Did you know we had another letter from him this morning? He will be with us in a fortnight. Mrs Weston doubts it, but I am sure he will come this time.’

‘If you think he will come, I shall think so too,’ said Emma. She hoped he was right because she wanted to meet Frank very much.

The evening at Randalls was a very pleasant one and, as they left for home, it started to snow.

Mr Woodhouse, Isabella and John all rode in the first carriage, and so Emma and Mr Elton were alone in the second. They had just driven through the gates and reached the road when