



Readings

English as a Second Language

BOOK ONE

Prepared by

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Teachers College, Columbia University



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Introducing Reader's Digest Readings

To the Student

The stories in this book are from Reader's Digest. They will help you in your study of English. You can read them if you know the 500 words most often used in the English language.

To the Teacher

Many teachers of English as a Second Language have used the 1953 edition of Reader's Digest Readings, published in two books.

In this new edition, the Readings are expanded to a series of six books: Books One and Two for students at the elementary level, Books Three and Four for the intermediate level and Books Five and Six for the advanced level.

The series is designed to improve the reader's general proficiency in the use of English and to increase his vocabulary by gradually introducing words which are new to him.

Introduction of Words

In Book One it is assumed that the student knows the 500 words most frequently used in English, as listed by Edward L. Thorndike and Irving Lorge in *The Teacher's Word Book of 30,000 Words*. The articles in Book One introduce about 525 words and expressions not on the 500-word list and treat them as words which are new to the student.

Each new word, set in **bold-face type**, is explained on the page where it first appears. The meanings of most of the new words are given in verbal definitions, but some are explained by illustrations. All verbal definitions are based on the 500-word list plus the new words previously introduced in the text. The context in which many of the new words appear helps to clarify their meanings.

New words and their definitions appear not only at the bottom of the page on which they are introduced, but also in the glossary at the back of the book. As an aid to vocabulary development, the most useful new words are repeated several times in the articles and are used in the exercises.

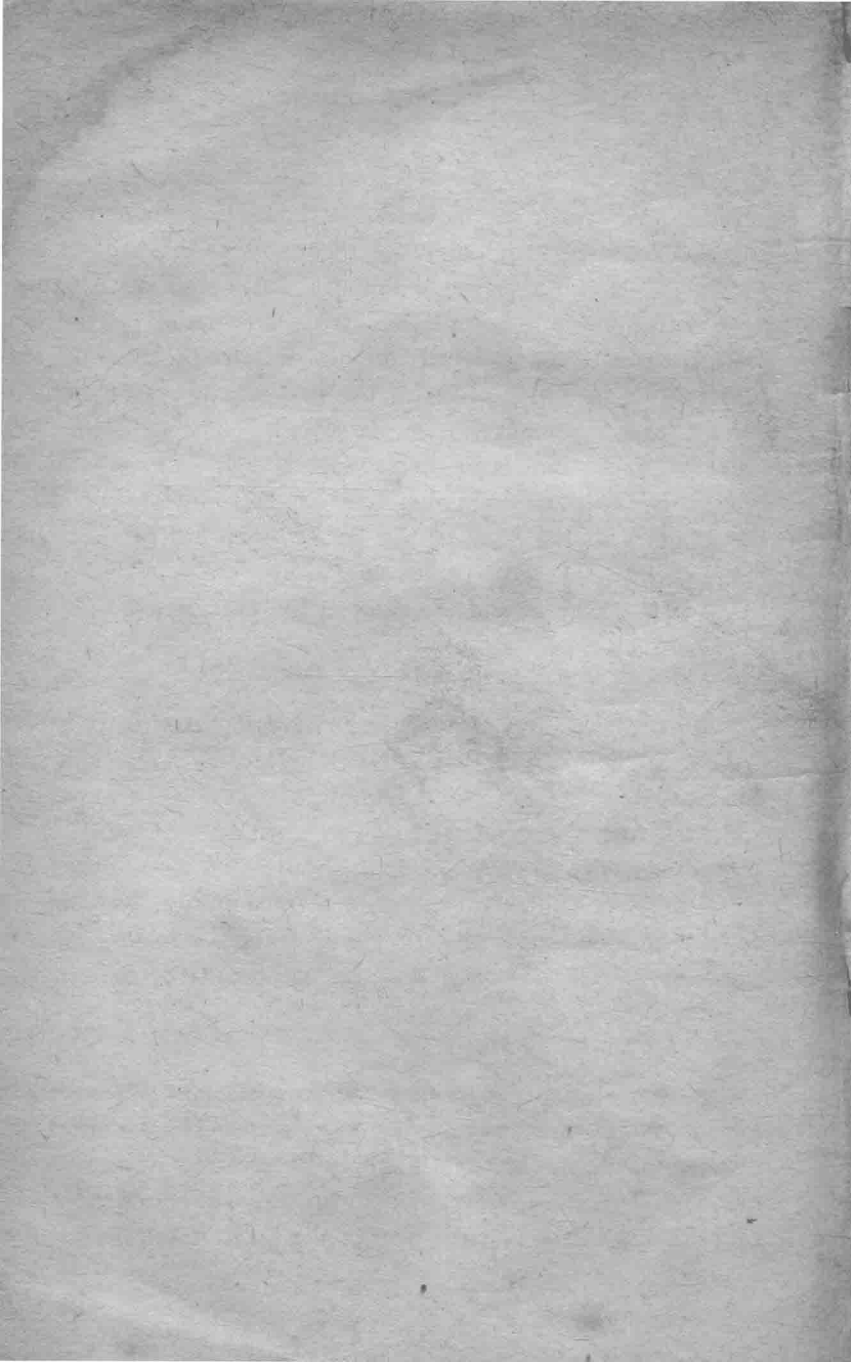
How to Use the Readings

Your students may use Reader's Digest Readings either in class or at home. They will find it helpful to read each story twice—first to gain an understanding of the general content and then to pay special attention to learning new words.

You may wish to supplement this individual study by reading aloud parts of the articles, sentence by sentence. As your students read aloud after you, they will develop a feeling for intonation, syntactic groupings and the significance of punctuation.

How to Use the Exercises

Ask your students to review the definitions of new words in the footnotes before turning to the exercises. The exercises may be done orally in class or they may be given as written assignments to be carried out at home. Students can check their work by referring to the Answer Key in the back of the book.





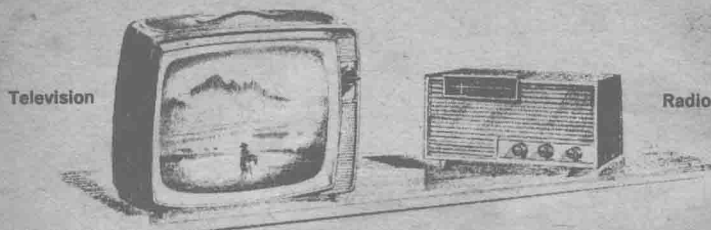
*A story about a young boy
who had a wonderful idea*

Pictures Through the Air

PART ONE

ONE OF the most interesting stories about television begins in the year 1922 in the little town of Rigby, Idaho. Rigby was the home of Philo Farnsworth.

television, a way of seeing moving pictures of things that are happening far away. Voices and other sounds are heard with the pictures. See picture, page 6.



Television

Radio

Philo was 16 years old. He was very shy and didn't talk much to anyone. But one of his teachers, Justin Tolman, knew that there was something different about him.

"I had known hundreds of boys before I knew Philo," Tolman said many years later. "But Philo was different from all the others. I felt that I would never know another boy like him."

The shy boy who didn't talk much to anyone *did* talk with Tolman, his science

teacher. "I want to learn all about science," Philo said.

He began to study science with the first-year class. After a few days, he appeared in the fourth-year class also. "I just want to sit and listen," he said.

Philo studied very hard. Soon he knew everything that the fourth-year class was learning. Then he read all the science books in the school library. He seemed to understand everything that he read.

shy, not sure of oneself in the company of other people
 teachers, persons who help others to learn. To *teach* is to help others to learn. Other form: *taught*.

science, orderly system of facts and laws

study, try to learn about something by reading, thinking, working

class, number of learners studying together under a teacher

listen, try to hear

library, room or building in which books are kept

understand, get or know the meaning of. Other form: *understood*.

One day after school Tolman found Philo in the schoolroom working at the blackboard. Philo had covered the blackboard with drawings.

"What are you doing?" asked Tolman, with interest. "What are these drawings about?"

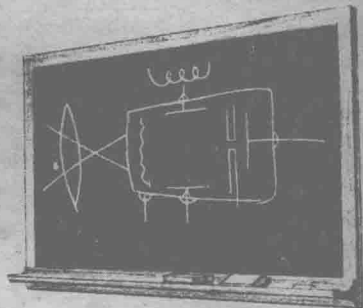
"I want to invent things," Philo answered, "and these are the drawings of my first invention."

"And what is your invention?" Tolman asked, smiling a little.

"I have an idea for television—for a way of sending pictures through the air," the boy answered. "Please let me tell you about it. You are the only person who can un-

derstand what I have done."

In 1922, radio was very new. The United States had fewer than 30 radio stations. But in 1922 a boy of 16 showed his teacher drawings for television!



Drawings on a blackboard

In the school library Philo had read the story of a man who had worked on an idea for television. But the man

blackboard. See picture above.

drawings. See picture above.

invent, have an idea for something new, make drawings of it and build it or have it built

invention, thing that is invented

radio, a way of sending and receiving sounds through the air. See picture of a radio on page 6.

radio stations, places from which sounds are sent through the air by radio. See picture on page 9.

had not succeeded in sending pictures through the air. Philo was sure that his own idea was better and that he would succeed where the other man had failed.

Tolman was not so sure. He asked Philo many questions about the drawings. Philo could answer all his teacher's questions. He could give all the facts and figures.

At the end of that school year, the Farnsworth family left the little town of Rigby. Philo did not see his science teacher again for many years — not until the most important moment of the young inventor's life.

The Big Chance

In 1926, Philo worked as an office boy in Salt Lake City. Many important busi-

nessmen came into the office where he worked. One of these was George Everson, a businessman from San Francisco. Like Tolman, Everson soon became interested in Philo. The shy, hard-working boy was not like other office boys whom Everson had known.

One evening Everson asked Philo to have dinner with him. At dinner Philo began to talk about his idea for television. Everson was not much interested in the invention at first. He listened only because he wanted to be kind to the boy. —

Many years later Everson wrote a book about interesting people he had known. In the book, he told about that evening with Philo.

As Farnsworth talked, he

succeeded, been able to do something. *Able* means having the power to make or do something.

failed, not been able to do; not succeeded
inventor, person who invents something

office boy, boy who works in an office doing helpful things, such as carrying notes, papers and letters from one room or person to another
dinner, largest meal of the day. A *meal* is the food eaten at any one time.

seemed to change, Everson wrote. His eyes lighted up, and he was not shy at all. He talked freely about his invention and about what he wanted to do with it. As he talked, he became a different person. He was no longer an office boy—he was a man of science.

At the end of the evening, Everson was more interested than ever in Philo. He was also interested in Philo's idea for television.

A few days later, he took Philo to San Francisco. There Everson brought together a number of important businessmen, and Philo told them about his invention. The men became so interested in the young inventor—and in his invention—that they gave \$25,000 to help him work on his idea.

Philo was only 20 years old. But now he could stop



Radio station

working as an office boy. He could work on his idea for television. He would have the chance to try it out. And perhaps he would succeed in sending pictures through the air.

Letter to Washington

But first he must write a letter and send drawings of his invention to the United States Government in Washington, D. C. He must ask for a patent on the invention.

The person who first has the idea for a new invention and makes drawings of it is

try it out, see if it would work; see if it was good. *He tried out his new car and found that it worked well.*

patent, ~~right~~ to own an invention

given a patent. Then no other person can own the same idea or sell it.

Only the United States Patent Office can say who is first with a new invention. And only the Patent Office

can give an inventor the U. S. patent rights on an invention.

So Philo sent his drawings to Washington and wrote a letter asking for the patent rights on television.

(Story continued on page 12)

sell, give up something for money. *He wanted to sell his old car but no one wanted to buy it. Other form: sold.*



WHAT HAPPENED WHEN?

The following sentences tell some of the things that happened in the story. Write number 1 before the sentence that tells what happened first. Write 2 before the sentence that tells what happened next, and so on.

- a. Philo read all the science books in the school library.
- b. Some businessmen gave \$25,000 to help Philo with his work.
- c. "I want to learn all about science," Philo said to his teacher.
- d. One day after school Philo covered the blackboard in the school-room with drawings.
- e. The story begins in 1922 in the town of Rigby, Idaho.
- f. "I want to invent things, and these are drawings of my first invention," Philo said to Tolman.
- g. Everson became interested in the shy, hard-working boy.

- h. The Farnsworth family left the town of Rigby.
 i. Everson took Farnsworth to San Francisco.
 j. Philo began to study with the first-year class.

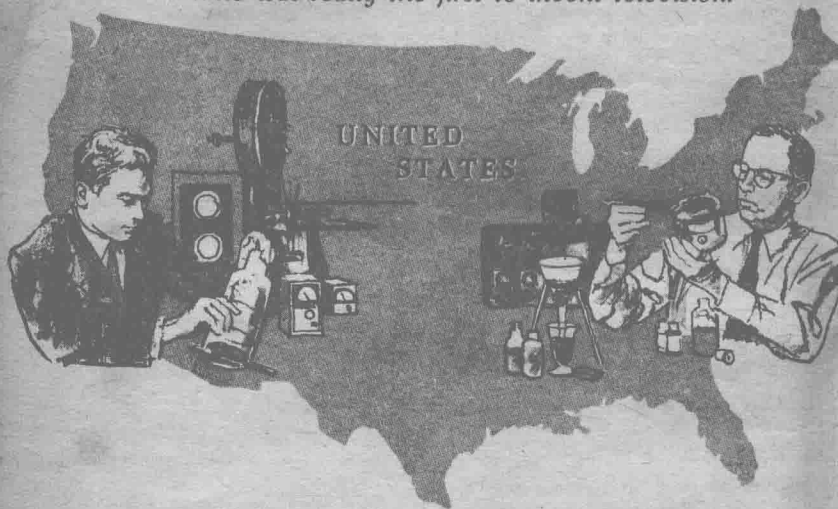
USE YOUR NEW WORDS

In each space write the word from the list that best completes the meaning of the sentence. There are more words on the list than you will need.

blackboard	failed	office boy	shy
class	inventor	patent	station
dinner	listened	sell	understand

- This story is about a boy who wanted to be an
- Philo seemed to everything that he read in science books.
- Philo was not when he talked about his invention.
- Philo read about a man who had to send pictures through the air.
- After a few days, Philo appeared in the fourth-year
- Philo put the drawings of his invention on a
- Philo worked as an in Salt Lake City.
- At first Everson to Philo only because he wanted to be kind.
- The largest meal of the day is called
- The place from which sounds are sent through the air is called a radio

Who was really the first to invent television?



Pictures Through the Air

PART TWO

A NEW YORK inventor named Vladimir Zworykin was also working on television. Many years earlier, he had been a student of the man whose work Philo had studied in the school library. Now Zworykin was working for a big radio company in

New York. The president of the company was interested in Zworykin's ideas for television and gave him money to try them out. Zworykin in New York and Farnsworth almost 3000 miles away in California knew nothing of each other's work or ideas.

student, person who studies; here, one who studies with the help of a teacher

But the United States Patent Office knew about both men. The Patent Office knew that both were working on the same invention and that some of their most important ideas were the same.

At last Zworykin and Farnsworth learned about each other's work. At once they asked the Patent Office in Washington to say who should have the patent rights to television. The man who held the patent would have the right to own or to sell his idea of television. If he should succeed in sending pictures through the air, he could become the head of a great new business and a rich man.

Very soon the Patent Office asked the two men to come to Washington for a hearing.

The important question at the hearing would be quite simple: Which man could prove that he had been the first to invent television?

Before going to Washington, Farnsworth and his lawyer got ready for the hearing. At first, it seemed that Farnsworth would not be able to prove that he had worked on television before he went to San Francisco. But he knew that he had started his work years earlier.

"I suppose the first drawing that I ever made of television was in 1922," Farnsworth told his lawyer.

"Can you bring that drawing to the hearing?" his lawyer asked.

"It was made on a blackboard one day after school."

"Did anyone else see it?"

hearing, chance to be heard; a meeting at which to tell one's story to others who can then say what is true

simple, not hard to understand; also, having few parts

prove, show to be true

lawyer, person who knows the laws and helps others in matters of law else, other. *Anyone else* is any other person.

"Yes, my teacher, Justin Tolman," answered Farnsworth.

"Where is he now?"

"I don't know."

"But he is the only person who can help you, Mr. Farnsworth," said the lawyer.

And so the search for Tolman began. At last he was found, teaching science in a school in Salt Lake City.

At the hearing in Washington, Farnsworth's lawyer first showed that Philo had not seen or heard from his teacher for many years, not since Philo's school days in

the little town of Rigby.

Then the lawyer said, "Mr. Tolman, I want you to remember the time when Philo Farnsworth was a student of yours. Did he ever tell you of an invention that he called television?"

"He did."

"Can you remember what Philo Farnsworth told you about that invention?"

"Yes," Tolman said in a low voice. He stood up and went to a blackboard. On it he put the same drawings that Philo had made years before on the blackboard in

search, act of trying to find, of looking for



the schoolroom at Rigby.

Then Zworykin's lawyer asked Tolman many questions about the drawings. Philo's science teacher could give every fact and figure of the television system which the 16-year-old boy had explained to him. Because Tolman remembered everything that Philo had told him, the patent rights to television were given to Philo Farnsworth.

Since then, television has become a big and an important business in the United States and all over the world. The later work of Zworykin and Farnsworth has been of

equal importance. The present system of television uses the best ideas of both men.

Farnsworth's success came to him partly through his own great genius. But partly it came through the help of two good friends. One was George Everson, the businessman, who took a young boy to see a number of other businessmen in San Francisco and made them believe in him. The other was Justin Tolman, the science teacher, who knew a genius when he saw one and remembered every word that the genius had said to him.

explained, made clear in words

equal, the same

success, ending that is wished for; good result

genius, very great power of mind; a person who has a very great mind

FIND THE MEANINGS

Draw a line under the word or group of words that best fits the meaning of each numbered word as it is used in the story.

1. *search* (a) listening (b) trying to find (c) studying
2. *try out* (a) see if something works (b) make something new (c) learn the meaning of something