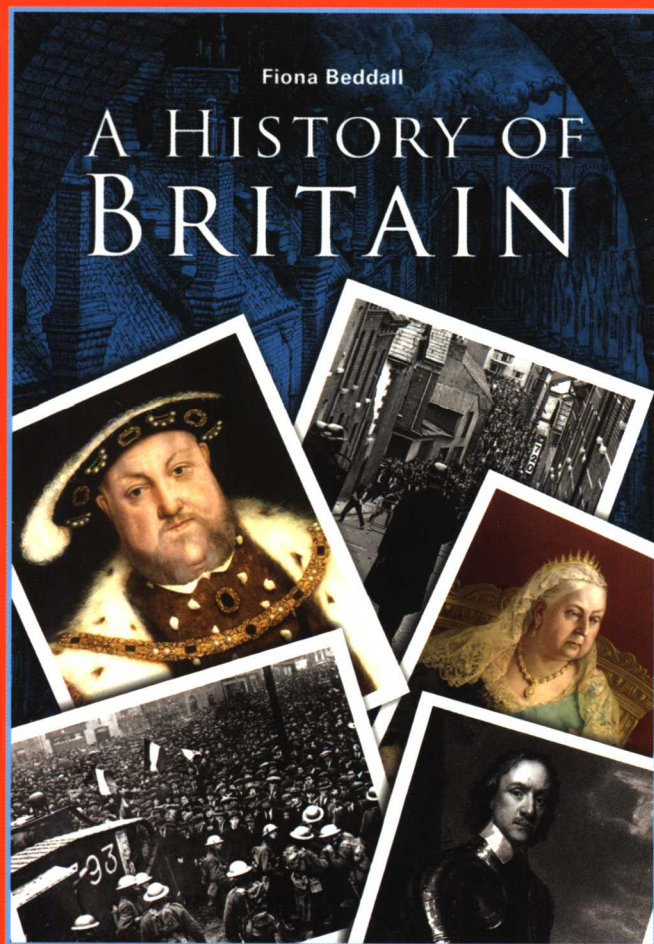




企鹅英语简易读物精选

英国历史



世界图书出版公司

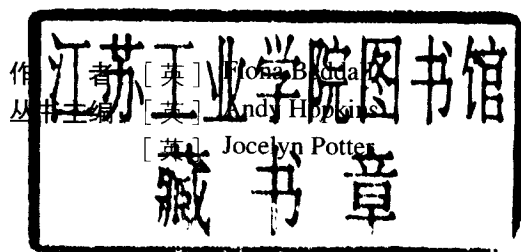




企鹅英语简易读物精选 (高三学生)

A History of Britain

英国历史



(1200 - 1700 词)

世界图书出版公司



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作 者: Fiona Beddall

责任编辑: 张颖颖 王志宇

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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。阅读量大，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，观察世界也会有一种新的眼光。与此同时，你们的英语水平也会随之迅速提高。

Introduction

In the 1930s, about a quarter of the world's population was ruled by the British. 'The sun never goes down on our empire,' they said. They meant that it was always daytime somewhere in the Empire. They also meant that their empire was for ever.

Of course, no empire is for ever. Britain lost its empire after the Second World War, but before that the British Empire was the largest in history.

This book tells Britain's story, from its days as part of the Roman Empire two thousand years ago. It describes the different groups of people who have lived there. It shows how the four countries of the United Kingdom – England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland – came together as one state. And it explains the birth of Parliament and the battles for power between kings, religious groups and ordinary people.

It also tells the stories of some of the great, and not-so-great, men and women who shaped the British nation. In these pages you will find out how Henry VIII's love life brought a new religion to the people of England. You will meet Oliver Cromwell. He destroyed a king's power and then ruled England in his place. And you will learn about some of Britain's great queens. Boudica was a dangerous enemy to the Romans. Elizabeth I was a strong ruler who made England one of the most powerful countries in Europe. Victoria was Empress of India and Queen of Britain's lands around the world.

You will also find out about the ordinary men and women of British history. Some of them left Britain and built new lives across the seas in America, Australia and New Zealand. Others stayed in Britain, but life changed for them too. This book explains how Britain's past formed Britain today.

Contents

	page
Introduction	v
Chapter 1 Invaders	1
Chapter 2 The United Kingdom	4
Chapter 3 God and Government	11
Chapter 4 Parliament against King	17
Chapter 5 Power to the People	23
Chapter 6 Britain's Great Empire	28
Activities	37

Chapter 1 Invaders

It was 1066, and Edward, King of England, was dead. He had no children. The most important people in the country met to choose a new king. They chose Harold. Harold wasn't a blood relative of King Edward, but he was the Queen's brother. He was a popular man for the job.

But other powerful men wanted to be king too. One of them was the King of Norway, Harold Hardrada, and a few months after King Edward's death his army invaded the north of England. King Harold of England went north, defeated the invaders and killed King Harold of Norway. But three days later, there was more bad news.

William of Normandy (in the north of France) was on the south coast of England with an army. 'Before King Edward died, he chose me as the next king,' he said. Perhaps this was true. Edward's mother was a Norman, and Edward lived in Normandy as a child. He preferred Normans to the people of England. So Harold raced south with his army. William was waiting for him at Hastings. At the end of the battle, Harold was dead and William of Normandy was William the Conqueror, King of England.

Roman Britain

The Normans weren't the first people who invaded Britain. In 55 BC* the great Roman Julius Caesar brought an army across the sea from France. For four hundred years, England was part of the Roman Empire. When the Romans first arrived, there were many different groups of people. Each group had its own king. They didn't think of themselves as 'British', but the Romans called the people from all these groups 'Britons'.

* BC/AD: years before/after the birth of Christ

Boudica

The Romans tried many times to conquer the areas of Britain that we now call Wales and Scotland. But they never kept control there. In the rest of Britain, the local people were much easier to control. But Boudica was different.

Her husband was a local king in the east of England. When he died in 60AD, the Romans tried to take all his money. Roman soldiers attacked Boudica and her daughters. Boudica was angry.

Soon she had an army of Britons behind her. They attacked Colchester, London and St Albans – the three most important cities in Britain at that time – and destroyed them completely. But in the end, the Romans defeated her. There is a story that her body lies under London's most famous railway station, King's Cross.

In many places around the country you can still see the straight roads, strong walls and fine houses that the Romans built. In the new Roman towns, Britons started to live like Romans. They wore Roman clothes and went to the theatre and the baths. Most townspeople could speak Latin. Many could read and write it too. In the later years of Roman rule they became Christian.

The Angles and Saxons

But in 409 the Roman army left Britain to fight in other parts of the Empire. Soon after this, invaders from present-day Germany and Denmark, the Angles and Saxons, came to Britain.

The Angle and Saxon armies destroyed everything in their path, and the Roman way of life disappeared from Britain. Many Britons moved west to escape the invaders. By the 7th century, groups of Britons were in control of present-day Scotland, Wales

and Cornwall, but Angles and Saxons ruled the rest of Britain. People started to call this area 'Angle-land'. Later its name became 'England'.

The Vikings

Then, at the end of the 8th century, new invaders started attacking the coasts of Britain – Vikings from Scandinavia. At first they came to steal gold and silver from monasteries. Then some made their homes in Britain, and from the 860s they controlled a large area of northern and eastern England. The Saxon kings fought against them. Alfred the Great defeated the Vikings and sent them away from Britain. But they returned, and in the early 11th century there was a Viking king of England, King Cnut.

The Normans

The Normans came next. Their conquest was probably the most important in British history because it was the last.

Since 1066 and the Battle of Hastings, many people have moved to Britain from other countries. For example, a lot of French and Dutch Protestants* arrived in the 17th century to escape problems with the Catholics* in their homelands. And in the 20th century large numbers of people came from India, the Caribbean and other places that were in the British Empire. But no foreign army has conquered Britain since the Normans.

William the Conqueror had to fight other Saxon armies in England after Harold was defeated. But then he was able to build a new, Norman England. By 1068, he owned all the land. He asked his Norman friends to look after it for him. They made money from the farmland and paid some of it to the king. They

* Protestants, Catholics: people who belong to different Christian groups

also used the money to pay for Norman soldiers. Each Norman lord built a home with strong, high walls and lived there with his private army. The Saxons owned nothing. They belonged to the Norman lords.

For more than two hundred years the language of government and literature was the Normans' language, French. The Saxons continued to speak their own language, Anglo-Saxon, with some Scandinavian words. The Saxons' language finally grew into modern English, but as a result of the Norman invasion, half the words in today's English language come from French.

Chapter 2 The United Kingdom

England is a country but it isn't a state. It is part of a state called 'The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland'. This name is less than a hundred years old, but English rule in other parts of the United Kingdom started soon after the time of William the Conqueror.

Wales

When England was safely under their control, the Normans started the conquest of Wales. The conquest was completed by William the Conqueror's son. There were a few years of independence in the 12th and 13th centuries, but since 1284 the rulers of England have also ruled in Wales. The Welsh language is still spoken by half a million people.

Scotland

Scotland stayed independent much longer than Wales – until the end of the 13th century, when it was conquered by the English king, Edward I. But thirty years later it became independent

The United Kingdom



again. England and Scotland finally came together in 1603. Queen Elizabeth I of England died without children, and her nearest relative was James, King of Scotland. During the next century the two countries had the same kings and queens, but different parliaments and laws.

Twice in that time, the English parliament chose a new king for both countries. The Scots were very angry. Some wanted war with their more powerful neighbour. But others saw a better future. England was growing rich from its empire abroad. Scotland was failing to build its own empire. So Scotland should join England, and as one country they could enjoy the empire together.

The English liked this idea, but the Scots weren't so sure. Finally, in 1707, the Scottish parliament voted to join England. (Many Scottish politicians were paid to vote this way.) Scotland lost its own parliament and the Scottish politicians moved south to London. England, Scotland and Wales were now one state: Great Britain.

When Scotland joined England, the two countries' differences didn't just disappear. In 1715, and again in 1745, people from the Highlands, in the northwest of Scotland, and from other areas fought to have a new king. They were defeated both times. In 1745, the English destroyed complete villages. Many people were killed, and the 'lucky' ones were sent abroad.

The Scots never fought the English again. By the end of the 18th century, they were joining the British army in large numbers and playing an important part in the government of the British Empire.

Ireland

Ireland's story was very different. Ireland was first conquered by an army from Britain in 1171. The Irish finally won independence for most of their island in 1922. In all that time,

British rule brought Ireland very little money and a lot of trouble.

The Norman invasion of Ireland in 1171 was the idea of an Irish king, Dermot of Leinster. When he stole another king's wife, he lost power over his lands. He asked the English king, Henry II, for help. Henry sent an army, and the island of Ireland has never been completely independent since then.

Henry II

Henry II became King of England because of his Norman mother. He was the first king from the Plantagenet family that ruled England after the Normans. He also ruled the French lands of his wife and his father. At its greatest, his empire reached from Ireland to the Pyrenees, mountains in the south-west of France. The kings of England continued to rule lands in France until 1557.

Norman lords ruled the area around Dublin, and most of the time they were independent of the government in England. Irish kings continued to control the rest of the country. Little changed until the 16th century, when most people in Britain became Protestant. Most Irish people stayed Catholic. The Catholics tried to push the Protestants out of Ireland, but they failed. In 1607, the last Catholic lords left the country and, for the first time, all of Ireland was controlled by England.

The Protestant rulers of England wanted to make Ireland less Catholic. So they decided to send large numbers of Scottish Protestants there. Most of these Scots made their home in the north of Ireland, and their families still live there today.

The Irish Catholics didn't like the Protestants in the north or the English government. In every British war of the

17th century, the Catholics fought for the side that lost. As a punishment, Catholics in the early 18th century couldn't own land, or even a good horse. There was an Irish parliament, but Catholics couldn't vote or be politicians. And they couldn't go to university. Irish Catholics became very poor, and the rich Protestant landowners weren't interested in their problems. Some of the laws against Catholics were changed after a few years, but too little was done too late.

In 1798, the Irish fought unsuccessfully for independence from England. After this, the English decided to end the Irish parliament. Irish politicians, like the Scots before them, moved to London. There, they joined the parliament of a state that was now called the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland.

Most Catholics in Ireland ate little except the potatoes that they grew on their very small farms. In the 1840s, potatoes failed to grow in Europe. In most countries this was not a serious problem, because there was other food. But in Ireland the result was terrible. People started to die. The British government did very little to help. The Church of England offered free food, but only to people who became Protestant. Of a population of eight and a half million, about one million died and another million went abroad, most of them to the US.

The Catholic dream of an independent Ireland continued. After battles in Parliament and in the streets of Irish cities, independence finally came in 1922. But the Protestants in the north refused to be part of a Catholic Irish state. So Ireland was cut in two. Northern Ireland continued to be part of the United Kingdom.

Northern Ireland

About 35% of the people in Northern Ireland were Catholic. They wanted to be part of the independent state of Ireland.



Stones are thrown at police in Northern Ireland in 1969.

The Protestants were afraid of the Catholics, so they controlled the votes for politicians unfairly. They also kept the best jobs and houses for themselves. In the 1960s, Catholic demonstrations were stopped violently. So the British government sent their army to protect the Catholics.

But Catholics didn't want the British army in their country. A Catholic group, the IRA, started to fight for independence from Britain in the north. When the first IRA fighter shot a British soldier, many Catholics were pleased. The IRA killed British soldiers and Protestant policemen and politicians. Later they killed anyone who was Protestant or British. Catholic violence was answered with more violence by the British army and the Protestant Irish. Terrible things were done by all sides, but perhaps the worst violence has now passed. In the last few years, IRA activity has stopped. Many Catholic and Protestant politicians, and the British and Irish governments, are trying to build a Northern Ireland which is free of violence and fair for all.

National parliaments

The Welsh and Scots haven't fought battles against the English for many centuries, but the idea of independence from England never really died. England is the biggest of the four countries in the United Kingdom, so it has the largest number of politicians in the parliament in London. Many people in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland felt that the London parliament didn't do enough for them. In the 1990s, the Scots, Welsh and Northern Irish were given their own parliaments. They still have politicians in London, but they have others in their own capitals: Edinburgh, Cardiff and Belfast. These national parliaments make some decisions, for example about schools and hospitals, but tax, the army and other important matters are still controlled from London.

Chapter 3 God and Government

Henry VIII was king of England in the early 16th century. He was handsome and clever. He loved sport, music and dance. No king was ever more popular with his people.

But he was worried. He didn't have a son to follow him as King. In the half-century before Henry's rule, England suffered terribly as two families fought for control of the country. Now these wars were finished and Henry's family, the Tudors, were in control. But the wars could easily start again after his death. For Henry, a son was very important – more important even than his people's religion.

Catholic Britain

From the 7th century, almost everyone in Britain was a Roman Catholic. By the time of Henry VIII, the Catholic Church was very powerful. In those days, only a few people reached the age of fifty. Life after death was very important to them, and for this they needed the Church. Even the poorest farmers gave the Church 10% of the food that they produced. They also worked on Church land without payment. Rich families gave large amounts of money. Everyone believed that they were buying a better life after death. The Church became very rich – much richer than the King of England.

Henry VIII: two women, two churches

Katharine of Aragon was a Spanish princess. She was married to Henry's older brother. He died young and Henry, as the future king, decided to marry Katharine. She was useful to England because Spain was one of the most powerful countries in Europe.