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床头灯英语学习读本 I



THE GREAT GATSBY

了不起的盖茨比

美国作家改编 **纯英文版**

原著 F. Scott Fitzgerald

[美] F·斯科特·菲茨杰拉德

改编 Daniel Barney

航空工业出版社

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江苏工业学院图书馆
藏书章

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写在前面的话

——中国人学英语现状分析

◆英语是语言的帝国

全球 60 亿人中,有 8 亿人的母语是英语;2.5 亿人的第二母语是英语。12.3 亿人学习英语,33.6 亿人和英语有关。全世界电视节目的 75%、E-mail 的 80%、网络的 85%、软件源代码的 100% 使用英语。40~50 年后,全球 50% 的人精通英语。全球约 6000 种语言,本世纪末其中的 90% 将消亡。届时英语作为主导语言的地位将进一步得到提升。

目前中国大约有 3 亿人在学英语,超过英国和美国的人口总和,这是中国努力与时代接轨、与国际接轨的一个重要标志。大量中国人熟练掌握国际通用语言是中华民族走向繁荣富强的必要保障。

◆英语学习的远期目标

在中国,英语已经远远超出一个学科的范畴,一个人英语水平的高低总是和事业、前途、地位,甚至命运联系在一起。对于个人来讲,英语在人生旅途中具有战略意义,不失时机地在英语上投入时间、投入精力、投入金钱符合与时俱进的潮流,是明智之举。

◆目前存在的问题

尽管在中国学习英语的人很多,但收效却令人担忧,学了这么多年英语,能够运用自如的人实在是凤毛麟角。由于运用能力差,无法品尝到英语学习成功的快乐,很多人不得不承认学英语的目的只是为了“考试”。

◆考试的压力对英语学习的积极影响

在我国,与个人命运休戚相关的各类考试,如中考、高考、四六级、

硕士研究生入学考试、博士研究生入学考试、职称考试、出国考试，都考或只考英语。目前，很多人把中国人学不好英语的责任推到英语考试身上，好像中国人学不好英语就是因为有了英语考试，甚至有人还产生了将英语考试废除的想法。

大家可以冷静地反思一下：如果没有各种各样的英语考试，哪里有这么多人坚持学英语？国家正是利用了考试这个指挥棒引导很多人去学英语。说句实话，你不能指望每个中国人都怀着与国际接轨的远大抱负去学英语。中国曾经取消过考试，结果造成了10年的人才断层。所以，我的看法是在谈论考试的不足时，首先应该承认它在选拔人才、培养人才方面的不可替代的作用。英语考试对中国人学英语起到了很大的积极作用，功不可没。但必须承认：如果真想把英语学好，光会做几道考试题是远远不够的。

◆不可缺少的环节

没有几百万字的输入无法学好英语。语言的习得是一个长期的过程，需要大量的“输入”。一个由汉语武装起来的头脑，没有几百万字英文的输入，即使要达到一般水平也难。绝大多数的英语学习者正是由于缺少了这一环节，所以停留在一个无奈的水平上。

◆“圣人”学英语的做法

在学英语的长远目标和考试的压力共同作用下，自然会产生学好英语的强烈愿望，但这一愿望的实现需要有很强的“韧劲（自我约束力）”。春来不是读书天，夏日炎炎正好眠，秋有蚊虫冬又冷，收起书包待明年。随着物质文明的繁荣，总有一些理由使人不能安心学习。这样下去，我们的英语之树永远长不高。古人云：人静而后安，安而能后定，定而能后慧，慧而能后悟，悟而能后得。很有道理。在四川大足佛教石刻艺术中，有一组大型佛雕《牧牛图》，描绘了一个牧童和牛由斗争、对抗到逐渐协调、融合，最后合而为一的故事。佛祖说：“人的心魔难伏，就像牛一样，私心杂念太多太多；修行者就要像牧童训练他们，驯

服他们,以完美自己的人生。”那些具有很强心力的人,我们姑且称其为“圣人”,他们能够驯服那些影响我们学习的大牛、小牛,抵制各种诱惑,集中精力,专心学习,到达成功的彼岸。

◆凡人的困惑

在目前的教育体系中,学好英语是需要坚韧不拔的毅力的。但问题是我们大多数平凡的人无法和圣人相比,所以在学英语的征途上,失败者多,成功者少。客观地讲,即使采用不太高的标准来衡量在中国英语学习的失败率应该在99%以上,有的人说难道我们不能把大多数的人都变成圣人吗,这样大多数人就可以学好英语了。我们不得不承认大多数凡夫俗子是不能够成为圣人的。值得我们深思的是,目前的英语学习体系没有给大多数人提供一条平坦的道路。

◆兴趣——英语学习成功的真正源泉

我和大家一样都是凡人,我也曾经遇到过学英语的困惑,干巴巴的课文无论怎样都激不起我的兴趣。幸运的是我有一个在国外生活多年的姐姐,有一次她回国,给我带来很多浅显有趣的读物。我拿起一本一读,觉得很简单,一个星期就读完了。就英语学习而言,一部英文小说其实就是用英语建构的一个“虚拟世界”。那里有人,有人的心灵和人与人之间关系的揭示,有人与自然、与社会的冲突和调和。走进一部英文小说,你实际上就已经“生活”在一个“英语世界”里了,不愁没有东西可学。经典作品要读,写得好的当代通俗小说也要读。我一共读了50本,从此对英语产生了兴趣,英语水平有了很大的提高。还是爱因斯坦说得好:“兴趣是最好的老师。”

◆《新概念英语》的主编 L. G. Alexander 的启示

中国人读英语书有个特点,越读不懂越读,习惯于读满篇都是生词的文章。L. G. Alexander 先生是世界著名的英语教学专家,他的经典之作《新概念英语》对于中国的英语教学产生了深远的影响。针对这一现状 Alexander 先生说过:“记住,你的接受型词汇量(即你听或阅读英

语时能理解的部分)比你的积极词汇量(即你在说或写时能自如运用的部分)要大得多。如果要扩大词汇量,最好的办法是多听英语,多读英语,但不要超出自己的水平,即阅读那些比你目前水平稍低的书。”这才是提高英语运用能力的诀窍。

本套读物的特色:

●情节曲折:本书选材的时候非常注意作品的吸引力。比方说:

《查泰莱夫人的情人》(Lady Chatterley's Lover):我当年读大学的时候,班上每个同学都买一本看。有的同学甚至熄灯后,打着手电筒躲在被窝里看。

《吸血鬼》(Dracula):这个故事真吓人,我看完以后好几天没睡好觉。后来我的一个学生说他对英语从来不感兴趣,我就把这本小说推荐给他。后来他对我说:“这是我一口气读完的第一本英语书,就是太吓人了。老师,能不能再给我来一本?”

《呼啸山庄》(Wuthering Heights):讲述的是一个骇人听闻的复仇故事,当初没有想到这本书的作者竟然是一个生活在几乎与世隔绝环境中的女孩。

《飘》(Gone with the Wind):几乎所有的美国女孩都读过这本书,主人公斯佳丽是美国女孩的偶像,可以说我见过的每个美国女孩都是一个 Scarlett。

……

本套丛书收入的都是你在一生中值得去读的作品,读这些作品不但可以提高你的英语水平,而且能够提高你的个人修养。

●语言地道:本套读物均由美国作家执笔,用流畅的现代英语写成。他们写作功底深厚,这是母语为非英语的作者很难达到的。

●通俗易懂:本书是用 3300 个最常用的英语单词写成,易读懂,对于难词均有注释,你躺在床上不用翻字典就能顺利地读下去。

●配有高质量的音带:这样大家可以在读懂的基础上进行听的训

练,请注意:阅读需要量,听力更需要量。大量的语音输入是用英语深入交谈的源泉。

这套读物供你在下课后或下班后闲暇时阅读,其优点是帮你实现英语学习的生活化,使英语成为你生活的一部分。这才是英语成功的真谛,更是任何有难度事情成功的真谛。

王若平 于北京

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故事梗概

《了不起的盖茨比》是美国著名小说家弗·司各特·菲茨杰拉德(F. Scott Fitzgerald, 1896—1940)以完美的艺术形式表现的关于“美国梦”的幻灭这一主题思想的一部力作,发表于1925年。

小说的背景被设定在现代化的美国社会中上阶层的白人圈内,通过卡拉韦的叙述展开。卡拉韦出生于美国中西部,后来来到美国纽约学习经营股票生意,并想以此发财。他住在长岛,与故事的主人公盖茨比为邻,并与之交上了朋友。盖茨比原名盖茨,和卡拉韦一样也来自中西部,他出身贫苦,但雄心勃勃,后因贩卖私酒而暴富。他经常在家举办大型豪华聚会,大宴宾客,以显示其阔绰,目的是为了吸引五年前的恋人黛西并赢回她的芳心。五年前在盖茨比服役时黛西曾是他的恋人,在盖茨比去海外参加第一次世界大战期间,由于利欲熏心嫁给了出身于富豪家庭的纨绔子弟汤姆·布坎南。然而物欲和肉欲的满足并没能填补黛西精神上的空虚与贫乏。在卡拉韦的帮助下,与盖茨比重逢后好像又旧情复燃。但黛西已不是原来的黛西,她不再是盖茨比想象中的纯情女孩,而是一个愚蠢、自私、庸俗、美丽的躯壳。盖茨比的美丽旧梦终于被打碎了,但他还在做最后的挣扎,仍对黛西抱有一丝幻想,以至遭遇了更加凄惨可悲的结局。后来黛西在一次酒后驾驶盖茨比的车时轧死了汤姆的情妇,却与汤姆一道密谋并残忍地嫁祸于盖茨比,导致死者的丈夫突然闯入盖茨比家中并开枪打死了盖茨比,然后自杀身亡,使盖茨比最终彻底成为自私而残忍的黛西的牺牲品。卡拉韦与仅有的几位朋友参加了盖茨比的葬礼,这与他生前上百人的豪华聚会形成了巨大的反差。参加完盖茨比的葬礼之后,卡拉韦决定返回中西部的家,远离喧嚣、冷漠、空洞、虚假的东部大都市。

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CHAPTER ONE

Arriving in West Egg

I still don't know why, but it is hard for people from **the Midwest** to live in the big cities of the East. Perhaps the Midwest is too much in our blood. I left the East and came back to my hometown last fall, after only six months in New York I was tired of it. I returned to this Midwestern city where I was a child. My family name is Carraway and my name is Nick. The Carraway family has been living in the Midwest for more than seventy years. My grandfather's brother was the first one to come to the Midwest. He came in 1851 and opened the business that my father still does today.

I graduated from university in 1915. I attended New Haven University, the same university that my father attended twenty-five years before. After university I went over to Europe to fight in the **Great War**. I feel in love with Europe and felt a great energy inside me when I was there. When I came back to the Midwest it felt too small. Instead of feeling that the Midwest was the warm center of the world, the Middle West now seemed like its far edge. So I decided to go to

New York City, the most modern city of the East, and study the business of buying and selling bonds. Many of my friends from university were working selling bonds; I decided that I would follow them and do the same. My father said that he would give me money to live in New York for one year and in the spring of 1922 I moved there — I believed that I would stay there forever.

At first I had wanted to find a room inside New York City, but then I felt that I would miss the green trees and open yards, so when a young man at the office suggested that we rent a house together outside of the city, it sounded like a good idea. We found a small house to rent for only eighty dollars a month. However, just after we rented the house our office ordered him to go to work in Washington, and I **went rented** the house alone. I had an old car; it was a Dodge. I also hired a European woman from my new village to come to make my bed and cook my breakfast. I felt lonely the first few days until one morning **some** man, who had just arrived in the village, stopped me while I was walking down the road.

“How do I get to West Egg village?” he asked, very tired.

Chapter One

I told him. And I was happy to learn that I was not the **newest** person in town now; I was now a guide. As I walked home the sun was shining and the trees were full of thick, green leaves, I felt that my life was starting again with the summer.

I read a lot during that summer. I bought a lot of books about banking and money affairs. All the books sat on my bookshelf looking very important. They promised to tell me the secrets of becoming rich. I planned to read so many books. When I was in university I was very interested in literature, and now I planned to fill my days with great literature and other happy activities.

The house that I had rented was in one of the strangest places in the United States. It was on Long Island, New York State. The island was more than sixty miles long and just east of New York City. Between Long Island and the city was a narrow part of the Atlantic Ocean called Long Island Sound. On the ocean coast, twenty miles from New York City, there are two strange pieces of land, both of which look a lot like eggs. They are called West Egg and East Egg and a small bay flows between them. But although they are the same in shape and size they are also quite different

in many ways.

I lived in West Egg, the cheaper, and certainly less nice, of the two eggs. My little house was near the sea, between two very huge houses. The one on my right side was very large and was a copy of some famous house in France. It had a swimming pool and a huge garden that would take an hour to walk around. I knew that a rich gentleman named Mr. Gatsby lived there. My house was small and ugly and looked very silly next to Gatsby's huge palace, but I could see the water from my house and I was happy.

It was nice to live so close to such rich people. I wanted to know their stories and their secrets. I thought that I might be one of them some day. And this feeling grew as I looked across the water at the expensive white houses of East Egg. They looked almost like palaces standing high above the water.

The story of my summer really begins on the day I drove over to East Egg to have dinner with Tom and Daisy Buchanan. Daisy was my cousin, but not a **close** one. Tom attended the same university that I did. A few years after they got married I had spent two days with them in Chicago. Still, I didn't feel close to them.

In university Tom had been one of the strongest

football players. He seemed to love the game and all of the people that watched him play.

Tom's family was extremely rich. After they left Chicago, they lived for a few years in France for no real reason. They then traveled to many places to live. Tom and Daisy both had horses and they would go anywhere that people rode horses and were rich together. I don't know why they came to the East. Daisy told me that they planned to stay in New York for a long time, but I didn't believe her. Tom would always want to move again and again, it was likely he was looking for the excitement of one of his past football games.

It was hard to understand that Tom, a man my same age, was rich enough to move around the world, **buying houses and riding horses.**

One warm night I went over to East Egg to see Tom and Daisy. I felt that I hardly knew them. Their house was even larger than I could see from West Egg. It was a large house from the nineteenth-century. It was near the water and their garden began at the beach and came all the way up to the front door. The front of the house was full of tall windows; all the windows were open now to let the warm summer winds come in.

Tom Buchanan was standing at the front door