

高教自学考试学习丛书

(试用本)

英语泛读

第三册

陈雄 编写 郑锡安 审阅

封面设计：翁祖团

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1. The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

GEOGRAPHY AND CLIMATE

[1] To the west of the continent of Europe lie two large islands called the British Isles. The larger of these, consisting of England, Scotland and Wales, is known as Great Britain. The smaller island is Ireland, with Northern Ireland and the Irish Republic. To the British Isles belong also some 5,500 smaller islands^①. The area of the British Isles is 121,600 square miles.

[2] The west coast is washed by the Atlantic Ocean and the Irish Sea, the east coast—by the North Sea, and the south coast—by the English Channel. The English Channel lies between Great Britain and the continent, joining the Atlantic Ocean to the North Sea.

[3] England is the southern and central part of Great Britain. Scotland is in the north of the island, and Wales in the west. Northern Ireland is situated in the north-eastern part of Ireland. England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland form the United Kingdom

of Great Britain and Northern Ireland with a total area of 94,212 square miles.

[4] Mountains are an important part of the geography of a country. The British Isles have no high mountains. Scotland is a mountainous country, especially in the north. Here the main chain of mountains is called the Grampians and its highest peak is Ben Nevis, which is 4,400 feet high and is the highest peak in Britain. The northern part of Scotland is often called the Highlands, and the southern part is called the Lowlands. In England, the Pennine Chain runs down from the north through the centre. In Wales there are the Cumbrian Mountains, the highest peak of which is Snowdon, in North Wales. It is 3,300 feet high. Ireland is covered with mountains and green hills.

[5] The British Isles have many rivers, but they are not very long. The longest of the English rivers is the Severn, which flows southwest into the Irish Sea. The Thames flows through rich agricultural and industrial districts. Scotland's most important river is the Clyde, on which stands Glasgow. Many of the English and Scottish rivers are joined by canals, so that it is possible to travel by water from one end of Great Britain to the other.

[6] England, Ireland and Scotland have many beautiful lakes, the most famous of which are in the Lake District in north-west England.

[7] There are no great forests in the British Isles today. Historically, the most famous forest is Sherwood Forest, in the east of England, north of London. It was the home of Robin Hood.

[8] The climate of the British Isles is generally mild, not very cold in winter, and never very hot in summer. The rivers do not freeze in winter, and snow never lies on the ground for long, except in the north, especially in the Highlands of Scotland. Sheep and cattle can find food in the meadows all year round. All parts of the British Isles have a lot of rain in all seasons. In winter, thick fogs cover many parts of Britain. The British Isles are warmed by the Gulf Stream^③. As a result, the temperature in Britain in winter is between ten and twenty degrees higher than in the Moscow and Leningrad regions, which lie between the same northern parallels as the British Isles^④.

[9] The mild and damp climate in the British Isles is very good for agriculture, especially for vegetable-farming, sheep- and cattle-farming. ✓

POPULATION

[10] In 1972 the population of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland was more than 55 million people.

[11] About 650,000 people work in agriculture, all the others work in industry, transport, education and

other professions. The six industrial areas around London, Liverpool, Leeds, Manchester, Birmingham and Newcastle make up only about 4 per cent of the total area of England, but about 37 per cent of England's population lives there.

[12] People in countries outside the British Isles often call the inhabitants of the United Kingdom *English*. This is incorrect, for there are at least four nationalities, the English, the Scots, the Welsh and the Irish. Besides, these four nationalities each have their own language, and there are schools in Wales and in Scotland where the teaching is in the national language. In some places in the countryside in Wales and in the Highlands of Scotland, the people never speak English, some of them do not even understand it.

[13] Even in England there are different English dialects, for example, in the north-east, in Yorkshire and Lancashire. Very often, people from other parts of England are unable to understand the people who speak these dialects.

INDUSTRY, LARGE TOWNS AND CITIES

[14] Great Britain is rich in coal, iron and other metals. It has highly developed industries.

[15] The biggest coal and iron mines are in the north-east of England, near the industrial centres of

Newcastle and Sunderland, in Lancashire and Yorkshire, in the west and centre of England, in Scotland, near Glasgow, in Wales, near Cardiff, the capital of Wales, and near the port of Bristol.

[16] Until recent times, Britain's heavy industry was mainly in the centre of England and in the London region. Such towns as Birmingham, Coventry and Sheffield produced heavy machines, railway carriages, motor-cars, machines for the house and the office—in a word, everything from the heaviest machines to pins. Modern development has changed Britain's industrial face. New industries are developing in regions which were agricultural, and the old industrial centres have developed new branches of industry, electricity, electronics, wireless, the chemical industry and others.

[17] Big cities and towns such as London, Glasgow, Manchester, and Liverpool have enterprises of nearly all branches of industry, old and new. Oxford, famous because it has the oldest university in Britain, is now also one of the most important centres of the motorcar industry®. Edinburgh, the capital of Scotland, now has electrical, electronic and chemical enterprises.

[18] The ship-building industry is of great importance for Britain. It is centred in London, Glasgow, Newcastle, near Liverpool, and in Belfast.

[19] Britain produces a lot of wool, and the woollen industry is centred in Yorkshire, mainly in such towns

as Leeds and Bradford, which export their products to many countries. Britain imports cotton from America and other countries through the port of Liverpool, and the cotton industry is at home in Lancashire, mainly Manchester, and also in Glasgow and Belfast. Textile machines are also made in all these and other towns.

[20] Up to recently, the only industry in Wales was its coal-mines. But in the last twenty or thirty years the people of Wales have struggled for a better life. Other branches of industry were developed, especially modern branches such as wireless, electronics and the chemical industry. They also have enterprises of the light and food industries.

[21] Northern Ireland is one of the poorest regions of the United Kingdom. Belfast has ship-building and textile industries, and Londonderry has chemical and textile enterprises, but the other parts of Northern Ireland are agricultural. This explains the struggle of the people of Northern Ireland for their rights.

[22] Seaports play a great part in the life of the country. London, Liverpool and Glasgow are the biggest English ports, from which big liners go to and from all parts of the world®. Britain sells industrial products to other countries and imports food and other products. London, the capital of England and of the United Kingdom, has a population of more than eight million; Glasgow, Birmingham and Manchester have

a population of over a million.

[23] Besides the famous universities of Oxford and Cambridge, there are well-known universities in London, Edinburgh, Belfast, Liverpool, Glasgow, Leeds, Bristol, Birmingham and a number of other towns.

[24] Stratford-upon-Avon is the town where William Shakespeare, the great dramatist and poet, was born. People from all countries visit the town to see the house where he was born and other places connected with his name and his life, and also to see his plays at the famous Shakespeare Memorial Theatre.

Notes

1. To the Britain ... smaller islands: 不列颠诸岛还包括大约5500个较小的岛屿。

这个句子可以改写成: Some 5500 smaller islands also belong to the British Isles.

2. Mountains ... of a country: 山脉是一个国家地理的重要组成部分。

3. the Gulf Stream: 墨西哥湾流 (由墨西哥向北流至大西洋的水流)

4. which lie ... as the British Isles: 这两个地区与不列颠诸岛同处一个北纬地带。

5. Oxford, ... the motor-car industry: 由于拥有英国最古老的大学而著名的牛津现在也是最重要的汽车工业中心之一。

6. London ... of the world: 伦敦、利物浦和格拉斯哥是英国最大港口。许多大型的班船来往于这些港口和世界各地。

此句中 from which 引导的从句是定语从句, 从句中 to and from 是短语, 意为“来来往往”。

Exercises

- I. There are more answers than one to each question.
Choose the correct one.
- Which of the following places does not belong to Great Britain?
A. Scotland B. Wales
✓ C. Irish Republic D. England
 - What are the two parts of Scotland called?
A. Northern lands and Southern lands
B. Eastern lands and Western lands
C. Long lands and Short lands
✓ D. Highlands and Lowlands
 - Which word would you use to describe the weather of the British Isles?
✓ A. mild B. cold C. hot D. extreme
 - Britain's heavy industry used to be ____.
A. in the north-east of England
B. around Glasgow C. in Wales
✓ D. in the centre of England and London region
 - What does Britain get from other countries?
A. steel B. cotton C. coal D. wool
 - Northern Ireland ____.
A. is rich B. is industrial
C. has no agriculture D. is poor
 - Which of the following is not one of the biggest ports of the United Kingdom?
A. Glasgow B. London
C. Liverpool D. Belfast

8. William Shakespeare was from ____.

- A. Stratford-upon-Avon B. Oxford
C. Liverpool D. Cambridge

I. For each word in Column A, find a synonym or antonym in Column B and write it.

A

B

- | | |
|------------------|----------|
| 1. total [3] | tender |
| 2. climate [8] | usually |
| 3. generally [8] | weather |
| 4. mild [8] | whole |
| 5. parallel [8] | latitude |

II. Decide which meaning fits the word as it is used in the paragraph.

1. rich [14]

- A. comfortable B. abundant C. valuable
D. splendid

2. region [16]

- A. district B. regime C. nearness
D. record

3. enterprise [17]

- A. attempt B. effort C. venture
D. firm

2. Movies of Long Ago

[1] Where did the movies begin? It is often said that they are an American invention, but this is not entirely true. The motion picture has been the most

international of the arts. Before the dawn of the twentieth century, inventors in France, England, and the United States were among the dozens of men who were trying to develop ways of using photographs to create the effect of motion.

[2] Soon after 1889, when the famous American inventor Thomas Edison first showed motion pictures through a device called the Kinetoscope, other devices for the same purpose appeared all over the world. Edison had solved certain problems making it possible for other inventors to move ahead with their own devices. One other important contribution by Edison was the introduction of 35mm as the international standard film width. When it became possible to use any 35mm machine for showing movies from any part of the world, the international trading of films could begin. Less than ten years after the birth of the movies, American pictures were being shown on the same programs with short films from England, France, Germany, Italy, and Denmark, and in as many countries.

[3] During the first years, there were no special movie theaters. Films were often shown in buildings which had formerly been stores. In America, these became known as nickelodeons because each member of the audience paid a nickel (five cents) to watch the movie. At this low price, millions of people could

afford to go to the movies, and the American producers of films could depend upon having a big audience, whose nickels made the producers financially secure. With financial security, the filmmakers were able to enlarge and improve their businesses, to try new processes, to become more adventurous and ambitious. This gave the film industry a strong and healthy start.

[4] At first, movies pleased people just because the experience of watching them was new. Trains dashed toward the camera, crowds walked along the avenues of distant cities, soldiers marched, waterfalls dashed over rocks, and everyone was delighted. There, in the black and white shadows, one could see larger-than-life images of reality—and they moved! But images alone cannot keep people interested forever. Within a few years, such motion pictures became less popular. Film producers had to begin searching for new ideas to win back the crowds.

[5] Cameras were taken to South Africa and Cuba to photograph wars in action. Prizefights were filmed, and so were religious processions. But none of these attractions could please the crowds for long.

[6] What saved the movies, what gave them the possibility of becoming an art form, was the introduction of narrative. Someone realized that a film could tell a story.

[7] In France, shortly before 1900, Georges Méliès had begun to produce short films with a slight narrative thread. Generally, such a film would be based upon a familiar children's story, which could be told simply through a series of little scenes. To show the continuity of these scenes, Méliès rolled back each shot a few feet in the camera, and began his next scene over the last frames of the shot before. The result delighted his audiences.

[8] Soon others tried stringing together little scenes to tell a continuous story. One of these was Edwin S. Porter, a director and cameraman for Thomas Edison's film company. He advanced the art of the film by a giant step when, in 1903, he produced *The Great Train Robbery*. Although this account of a mail robbery and the pursuit of the robbers was very simple, it required the filming of several different locations. Porter shot his scenes where and as convenient, and then put them together in the order demanded by the story. The result was a film that not only shifted freely from place to place but even enabled viewers to see two actions that occurred at the same time. They watched the robbers escape, then saw the pursuers gathering for the pursuit. Within this brief, eight-minute movie lay the seeds of a true art form.

[9] *The Great Train Robbery*, which cost about \$350 to film, became a huge success. Other filmmakers

copied it, frame for frame^⑩, thus learning Porter's new procedures. In the nickelodeons, five cents could buy an hour's worth of viewing, which soon included brief comedies and chases, cowboys riding and shooting, lessons on the evils of strong drink, and informational films such as *Shipping Live Fish in Bottles*. By 1907, thousands of nickelodeons had appeared in the poorer sections of American cities; those who attended the shows were mainly poor people, many of whom could neither read nor write. Sitting on hard benches, they listened to piano music while watching the films. As a business, the making of movies had become profitable, but the art of the film had advanced little beyond Porter's advances in *The Great Train Robbery*.

[10] In 1908, Biograph, a small film company in New York, employed a man who was to become the first true genius of motion pictures. He was D. W. Griffith, an unsuccessful actor and writer of plays, who had worked briefly for Porter. Griffith preferred writing to acting, but at Biograph he worked as a writer, an actor, and a director. In less than five years, he directed almost 300 pictures, raised Biograph to a leading position among film companies, and laid the foundations for modern film art.

[11] What Griffith did in his five years at Biograph has never been equalled in any other art form. In what other art can one point to a single person who in so