

Reading and Understanding Book 3

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PREFACE

Reading and Understanding is a series of four books. The series aims to bring to students a considerable body of good and interesting reading passages. The additional study materials in the form of vocabulary exercises, questions for discussion, and oral and written exercises, are designed to foster the student's growth in language skills.

Book Three consists of 22 Units. Each unit is made up of (i) an interesting passage adapted from magazines, newspapers and books; (ii) exercises in comprehension; (iii) vocabulary exercises; (iv) language practice and (v) pronunciation drills.

The need for oral comprehension to develop reading skills and responses is greatly emphasized, but the approach to reading is left to the discretion of the teachers to suit the levels of their own students.

If, finally, students could be made to feel that reading, with all its difficulties, could be interesting and rewarding, the aim of this series would have been achieved.

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BOOKS BY JOHNNY ONG

Malayan Rendezvous (Poetry)

Malaya This, Our Native Land (Poetry)

Sugar & Salt (Novel)

Run Tiger Run (Novel)

The Long White Sands (Novel)

English Practice for L.C.E.

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The Pronunciation Practice sections are based on the methods devised by John L.M. Trim (*English Pronunciation Illustrated*, Cambridge University Press) and Colin Mortimer (*Stress Time*, Cambridge University Press).

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One day a stranger arrived in a small ship and was led in to see Kuan Ping. The visitor wore a square-cut cap and a loose robe. In his hand, he carried a small black bag. He said his name was Hua To and he had heard about the wound sustained by the famous Kuan Yu and had come to heal it.

Kuan Ping went in to see his father. He found him engaged in a game of chess, although his arm was very painful. Kuan Yu agreed to see the physician.

Hua To was ushered in and, after the tea ceremony, was shown the injured arm.

“There is poison in the wound,” said the doctor, “and it has penetrated to the bone. I know how to cure the wound, but I think you will be afraid of the remedy.”

“Am I likely to be afraid of that when I am not even afraid of death?” said Kuan Yu with a smile.

Hua To said, “I shall erect a post with a ring attached to it. I shall ask you, Sir, to insert your arm in the ring, and I shall bind it firmly to the post. Then I shall open up the flesh right down to the bone with a scalpel, and scrape away the poison. But I think you may quail at the severity of the treatment.”

“It sounds easy enough,” said Kuan Yu, “but why the post and the ring?”

Refreshments were then served, and after a few cups of wine the warrior extended his arm for the operation. With his other hand he went on with his game.

The surgeon then performed the operation as he had described. He found the bone much discoloured, but he scraped it clean.

“Hsi, hsi,” went the knife over the surface, and all those around covered their eyes and turned pale. But Kuan Yu went on with his game, only drinking a cup of wine now and again, and his face betrayed no sign of pain. When the wound had been cleansed, sewn up and dressed, the patient stood up smiling and said, “This arm is now as good as it ever was. Indeed, you are a marvel.”

“I have spent most of my life in this art,” said Hua To, “but I have never seen such a patient as you, Sir. You are the real marvel.”

(Adapted from “The Three Kingdoms”)

Comprehension

A Choose the correct answer.

1 _____ carried a small black bag.

A Kuan Ping

B Hua To

C Kuan Yu

D The warrior ()

2 _____ was served to the physician.

A Tea

B A cup of wine

C Poison

D Some food ()

Vocabulary

Choose the correct meaning for each of the words or phrases as used in the passage.

- 1 The visitor wore a square-cut cap. *Square-cut* refers to the _____ of the cap.
A size
B material
C colour
D shape ()
- 2 He had heard of the wound sustained by the famous Kuan Yu. Another word for *wound* is _____.
A harm
B injury
C sprain
D pain ()
- 3 He found him *engaged in a game of chess*. This means he was _____.
A watching a game of chess
B playing chess
C interested in chess
D invited to play chess ()
- 4 Kuan Yu agreed to see the physician. A *physician* is a _____.
A physicist
B dentist
C doctor
D psychologist ()
- 5 It has *penetrated* to the bone. This means that it has _____ the bone.
A entered
B approached close to
C discoloured
D destroyed ()
- 6 I shall bind it firmly to the post. *Bind* means _____.
A insert
B tie
C poke through
D encircle ()

- 7 He found the bone much discoloured. *Discoloured* means that the _____ .
- A colour of the bone had changed
 B bone had a nicer colour
 C bone had no colour
 D bone had many colours ()

Language Practice

Collective Nouns: A collective noun is the name given to a group of people, animals or things taken as a whole. Given below is a list of collective nouns for people.

- (i) a *troupe* of dancers
 a *board* of directors
 a *party* of friends
 a *band* of musicians
 a *tribe* of natives
 a *team* of players
 a *class* of pupils
 a *pack* of rascals
 a *horde* of savages
 a *choir* of singers
 a *staff* of teachers
 an *army* of soldiers
 a *crew* of sailors
 a *gang* of thieves
- (ii) *audience* — people watching a show or a play
congregation — people in a church
crowd — people gathered together but not organized
mob — people who are disorderly
queue — people lining up for a bus, train, taxi, in a cinema, etc. to get tickets.

Fill in the blanks with suitable collective nouns.

- 1 The principal spoke to his _____ .
 2 A _____ of thieves broke into the shop.
 3 The _____ sang many songs and the _____ clapped loudly.

- 4 Our basketball team is the best in the district.
- 5 The robber threw stones at the police.
- 6 The school _____ played stirring music.
- 7 Of the directors in the _____, only one did not agree with the rest.
- 8 My _____ like this teacher very much.
- 9 The _____ cheered the Singapore players.
- 10 There was a long _____ at the cinema.

Pronunciation Practice

p <u>o</u> t	l <u>o</u> t
h <u>o</u> t	sh <u>o</u> t
l <u>o</u> ck	d <u>o</u> t
c <u>o</u> ck	d <u>o</u> ll
n <u>o</u> t	d <u>o</u> llar
r <u>o</u> ck	c <u>o</u> st

3

The pot costs two dollars.

The doll is in the locker.

The rock feels hot.

The robber fired a shot at the lock.

That is not a fighting cock.



The frog-party went through fields of lallang and pools of watery mud that reached up to their knees. The moon was very bright and they had no trouble finding their way. Sometimes the mud splashed on their faces.

Near the left bank of the river, the unlevel stretch had become somewhat like a swamp after the rain. Poh Tak warned everyone to be silent. Barefooted they went down into the mud. It was difficult inching their way through the deep mud. For Ah Chai it was the most thrilling night he ever had. It was his first frog-hunt. He never had such experience back in the town of Ho Wan. He was frightened at times by the sudden hooting of an owl or the strange cries of night creatures.

Ah Chai was terribly scared of snakes. Walking among the lallang without shoes or sandals made every bone in his body shake with fear.

Occasionally there was a yell when a member of the party got pricked by a sharp object. But the yell was always followed by laughter from the other members of the frog-party.

Poh Tak was the best frog-catcher among them. He shone his torch immediately on the spot from where the slightest croak came. On seeing a frog, he would bring down his stick with great speed and accuracy and stun the frog before it knew what had hit it.

Poh Tak seemed to know exactly where the frogs were, no matter how carefully they were hidden in the mud or at the edge of the river.

Sugar and Salt,
Johnny Ong

Comprehension

A Choose the correct answer.

- 1 It was a _____ night when the boys went to hunt for frogs.
A dark
B moonlit
C cold
D strange ()
- 2 The rain caused the _____ to become swampy.
A left bank of the river
B pools of watery mud
C fields of lallang
D unlevel stretch ()
- 3 They moved _____ through the deep mud.
A effortlessly
B quickly
C painfully
D slowly ()
- 4 Ah Chai had never _____.
A seen swamps before
B hunted for frogs before
C seen snakes before
D walked without shoes before ()