

“湖南省普通高等教育面向 21 世纪教学内容和课程体系改革计划”重点资助项目

■ 丛书主编 林汝昌

CENTURY ENGLISH  
READING BASIC COURSE

# 世纪英语 阅读基础教程

■ 主 编 王家勇  
副主编 杨 雪

2

■ 中 南 大 学 出 版 社



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Unit  
1

# Christmas



*Home is where the best is.*  
—Pling Elder



## Part One

## A First Look

### ● Look and Say

**Directions:** Look at the picture below and discuss the questions with your classmates.



### Questions for Discussion

1. What's the festival connected with Jesus Christ?
2. Why are they walking so hurriedly?
3. Where are they? Judge from the picture.

## ● Reading the passage

**Directions:** Read the following passage within 10 minutes and try to get the main idea through your first reading.

### The Christmas Story

*By Matthew*

- 1 This is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit. Because Joseph, her husband was a righteous man and did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly.
- 2 But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins."
- 3 All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: "The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel", which means "God with us."
- 4 When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife. But he had no union with her until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus.
- 5 After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem and asked, "Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him."
- 6 When King Herod heard this, he was disturbed, and so did all the Jerusalem. When he had called all the pontiffs and the priests together, he asked them where the Christ was to be born. "In Bethlehem in Judea," they replied, "for this is what the prophet has written: 'But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judea, are by no means least among the rulers of Judea; for out of you will come a ruler who will be the shepherd of my people Israel.'" Then Herod called Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared. He sent them to Bethlehem and said, "Go and make a careful search for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I may go and worship him, too."
- 7 After they had heard the king, they went on their way. The star they had seen in the east went ahead of them, and it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they were overjoyed.
- 8 On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold, incense and myrrh. Having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route.
- 9 When they had left, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. "Get up," he said,



“take the child and his mother and escape to Egypt. Stay there until I tell you, for Herod is going to search for the child to kill him.”

10 So he got up, took the child and his mother during the night and left for Egypt, where he stayed until Herod died. And so it was fulfilled what the Lord had said through the prophet: “Out of Egypt I called my son.”

11 When Herod realized that he had been outwitted by the Magi, he was furious, and he gave orders to kill all the boys in Bethlehem and its vicinity who were about two years old, in accordance with the time he had learned from the Magi. Then what was said through the prophet Jeremiah was fulfilled: “A voice is heard in Ramah, weeping and great mourning. Rachel is weeping for her children and refuses to be comforted, because they are no more.”

12 After Herod died, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt and said, “Get up, take the child and his mother and go to the land of Israel, for those who were trying to take the child’s life are dead.”

13 So he got up, took the child and his mother and went to the land of Israel. But when he heard that Archelaus was reigning in Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. Having been warned in a dream, he withdrew to the district of Galilee, and he went and lived in a town called Nazareth, so it was fulfilled what was said through the prophets: “He will be called a Nazarene.”

(823 words)

## ● Words and Expressions

- pledge [pledʒ] *v.* solemn promise to; vow 保证; 答应
- righteous [ˈraɪtʃəs] *adj.* doing what is morally right; obeying the law morally justifiable 正直的; 守法的; 正义的; 正当的
- expose [iksˈpəʊz] *vt.* uncover; leave uncovered or unprotected; make known 揭露; 使暴露; 揭穿
- disgrace [disˈgreɪs] *n.* loss of respect; favour and reputation 耻辱; 不名誉; 丧失体面
- conceive [kənˈsiːv] *v.* to become pregnant 怀孕
- fulfill [fʊlˈfɪl] *vt.* perform or complete a task, duty, etc; do what is required by conditioning 履行 (工作任务); 做 (根据条件等需要做的事)
- prophet [ˈprɒfɪt] *n.* person who teaches religion and claim that his teaching comes to him directly from God 先知; 代神发言者
- virgin [ˈvɜːdʒɪn] *n.* girl or woman (and in recent use, man) who has not experienced sexual union 处女 (近用法, 处男)
- Magi [ˈmeɪdʒaɪ] *n.* the Magi, the three wise men from the East who brought offering to the infant Jesus 由东方来朝见初生的耶稣的三个贤人 (俗称三博士)
- disturb [dɪsˈtɜːb] *vt.* break the quiet, calm, peace or order of; put out of the right or usual position; upset 扰乱; 惊动; 搅乱; 使骚动; 使紊乱
- incense [ɪnˈsens] *vt.* make angry; incensed by somebody’s conduct 激怒; 被某人的行为激怒
- myrrh [mɜː] *n.* sweet-smelling, bitter-tasting kind of gum or resin obtained from shrubs, used for



making incense and perfumes 没药; 没药树

outwit [aʊt'wit] *v.* to surpass in cleverness or cunning; outsmart 哄骗; 给……上当

vicinity [vi'siniti] *n.* nearness; closeness of relationship; neighborhood 近; 密切的关系; 邻近地区

weep [wi:p] *vi&vt.* (liter) cry; let tears fall from the eyes (文) 哭泣; 流泪  
~ for joy 喜极而泣

~ over one's misfortunes 为某人的不幸而哭泣

mourn [mɔ:un] *vi&vt.* feel or show sorrow or regret (for /over); grieve 哀悼; 悲叹

reign [rein] *n.* (period of) sovereignty, rule 主权; 统治; 朝代; 王朝  
*vi.* be influential; prevail 有势力; 盛行

## ● Proper Names

Jesus Christ ['dʒi:zəs kraɪst] 基督

Mary ['mæəri] 玛丽亚

Joseph [dʒəʊzɪf] 约瑟

Judea [dʒu:diə] 朱迪亚

Bethlehem ['beθlihem] 伯利恒

Jerusalem [dʒe'ru:sələm] 耶路撒冷

Israel ['izreɪəl] 以色列

Jeremiah [ˌdʒeri'maɪə] 耶利米, 耶利米书

Ramah ['rɑ:mə] 拉玛

Archelaus ['ɑ:kiləs] 阿基拉斯

Galilee ['gæləli] 加利利

Nazareth ['næzəriθ] 拿撒勒

## ● Phrases

be pledged to do...

give; engage; make an undertaking to do sth. 答应去做

in accordance with

in agreement or conformity with 依照, 根据

## ● Cultural Hints

**Immanuel** It comes from the seventh chapter of "Isaiah" of Bible Story "The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel." Immanuel, the name of Jesus christ, it means "God with us".

**以马利** 《圣经》中“以赛亚书”第七章第三节“预言童女生子为兆”,人们称他为以马利。以马利为基督教《圣经》中先知以赛亚及圣徒马太等对耶稣基督的别称,意为“上帝与我们同在”。

**Bible Story** The Old Testament of the Bible covers mostly the time from around 1500 B. C. to 100 A. D. The first five books are the Pentateuch (or the Books of Moses; or the Torah) and are sacred to three religions—Jews, Christians, and Moslems. The New Testament of the Bible was





written around 70 to 110 A. D. The first four books of the New Testament (called the "Gospels") tell the story of Jesus Christ—each difference in its presentation and style of the writer. Jesus Christ's life (from the virgin birth to His ministry, crucifixion, and resurrection) is the basis for the four Gospels, the books of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Jesus taught to love others as much as yourself and to love God as the one and only God. Jesus performed many miracles and healings, described the Kingdom of Heaven, and told people how to live as God wished them to live. Jesus' many story-illustrations were used to direct the people with things familiar to them. Jesus selected twelve disciples (since there were 12 "tribes" of Israel) to help Him and to spread the Word of God. Conflict with religious leaders (Pharisees and Sadducees) led to His crucifixion (death on the cross) after it was approved by Roman leaders (at the time of Jesus, Rome ruled the Jewish people, who longed for freedom). Jesus Christ's death/sacrifice led to the saying: "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

**《圣经》** 由《旧约全书》和《新约全书》组成的基督教的经典。《旧约全书》介绍了世界的起源，主要内容涵盖公元前1500年到公元100年期间的的事情，其摩西五书是犹太教徒、基督教教徒、伊斯兰教教徒的宗教经典。《新约全书》中福音书主要介绍了耶稣的出生、磨难与复活。《新约全书》中，耶稣带领十二个门徒向世人传经论道，劝告世人遵循上帝的旨意，为自己死后能进入美妙的天堂而多多行善积德。

**The History of the Christmas Tree** The tradition of having an evergreen tree become a symbol of Christmas goes back past recorded written history.

The Druids in ancient England & Gaul and the Romans in Europe both used evergreen branches to decorate their homes and public buildings to celebrate the Winter Solstice. Over the years, these traditions were adopted by Christians, who incorporated them as part of their Christmas holiday celebration.

Trees used specifically to celebrate Christmas are mentioned in the early 1600's in Germany and surrounding countries. The families would set up these trees in a prominent location of their home and decorate them with colored paper, small toys, food, and sometimes candles. As these people moved or immigrated to other countries, they brought this tradition with them.

Through the years many different things were used to decorate Christmas trees. As the world moved into the 1900's, many trees were decorated with strings of popcorn, homemade cards and pictures, cotton to look like snow, candy in all shapes and sizes, and occasionally, fancy store make glass balls and hand blown glass figurines. Candles were sometimes used, but often caused devastating fires. Electric tree lights were first used just years after Thomas Edison had his first mass public demonstration of electric lights back in 1897. The early Christmas tree lights were handmade and quite expensive.

Today, Christmas tree ornaments can be found in nearly every size, color, and shape imaginable, and they are used to decorate the millions of Christmas trees used throughout the world.

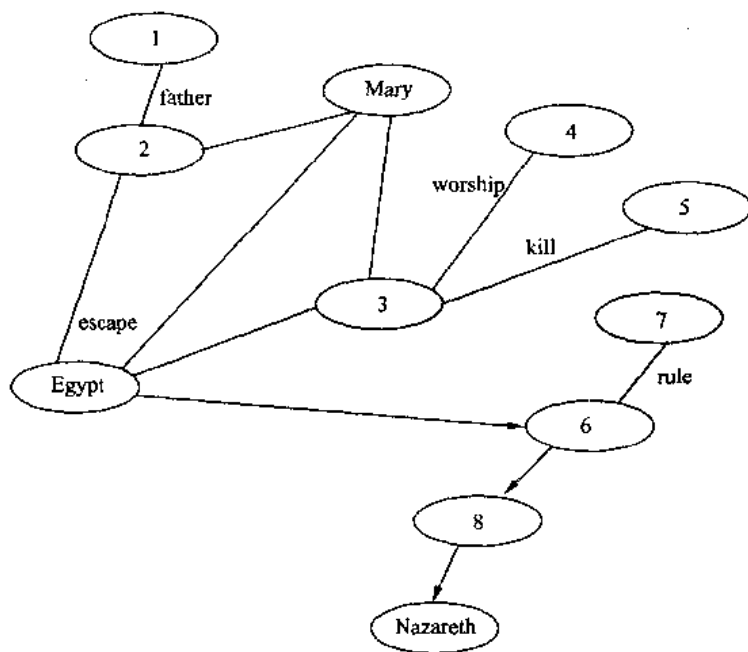
**圣诞树** 用常青树庆祝圣诞节是西方历来的一个传统。在古英格兰与高卢的德鲁伊德人和欧洲的罗马人在冬至时用常青树的树枝来装点自己的房子，后来这成为了圣诞节的一种庆典方式。早在16世纪，德国及其周边国家的人们都用彩纸、小玩具、蜡烛等来装饰常青树



以庆祝圣诞节，随着他们的迁移，这个传统被带到了其他地方。进入 19 世纪以后，常青树的装饰品越来越多，像爆米花、卡片、棉花、小雕像、蜡烛等。但用蜡烛往往存在火灾隐患，爱迪生发明了电灯后，人们开始用彩灯打扮这些树，只是当时价格很昂贵。现在，圣诞树的装饰品花样越来越多了。

## ● Vocabulary Map

① **Directions:** The following vocabulary map may help you form a schema on the main idea of the passage. Fill in the map with what you think suitable according to the passage.



② **Directions:** State the main idea of the text on the basis of the vocabulary map. You may begin with the sentence given.

This is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about: \_\_\_\_\_

## ● Reading Comprehension

**Directions:** Read the passage carefully and find the answer of the following questions.

1. What is the story about?
2. Why did Joseph want to divorce Mary quietly?
3. What does "Immanuel" mean?
4. What did the Magi want to do to the child?
5. Why did Joseph escape to Egypt?
6. What did the King Herod do then?



7. How many times did the angel warn Joseph?

## ● Vocabulary and Structure

**Directions:** Fill in the following blanks with the proper form of the words listed below.

disturb	pledge	expose	disgrace
fulfill	vicinity	weep	incense

1. A man who commits a crime and is sent to prison brings \_\_\_\_\_ on himself and his family.
2. She opened the door quietly so as not to \_\_\_\_\_ the sleeping child.
3. There isn't a good school in the \_\_\_\_\_.
4. She \_\_\_\_\_ over her sad fate.
5. His father was \_\_\_\_\_ to buy him a new bicycle as his birthday gift.
6. She was \_\_\_\_\_ by her sister's naughty conduct.
7. The reporter wrote an article to \_\_\_\_\_ the deeds of the headmaster.
8. Angel would help us to \_\_\_\_\_ our dream if we go on hard working.

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## Part Two Look Again

### ● Timed Reading (1)

**Directions:** Try to finish reading the following passage in 5 minutes and then do the exercises.

### How to Pick the Perfect Christmas Tree

Some people consider the selection of a tree to be one of the most important decisions to make during the Holiday Season. Many people will travel from site to site, farm to farm to look for the quintessential (精萃的) Christmas Tree. This passage is dedicated to those people that simply go to the neighborhood provider and select the first tree they find. The advice offered here will assist you in finding a tree that will stand as a welcome decoration for your home.

(1) Always check for freshness. The proper way to check a tree for freshness is to gently grasp a limb (枝) in your fingers and pull towards you, going with the direction of the needles. The needles of the tree should be brightly colored, give off a good scent and only a few fall off in your hand. If the needles are hard, dull and quite a few come off, the tree has already dried out and won't last long in your home.

(2) Don't buy a tree that's bigger than the space available (可利用的). Keep in mind that the average tree stand adds four to six inches to the height of the tree and the star, angel, or top knot (绳结), can add as much as 12 inches. It's best to measure the available space before you leave to purchase the tree.

(3) Know how much of the tree you can afford. Tree prices can range from \$5 to \$100 or

②

8



more! It should be about the same as last year's or might be a little cheaper. It's best to have realistic (现实的, 实际的) prices in mind when you go to pick out your tree.

(4) If you want the best quality, buy the tree as soon as you can. You might try checking with your local nursery, to find out when they are expecting the next shipment of trees to arrive. Get there as soon as possible to find the best of them.

(5) As soon as you get the tree home, you should cut the tree about 1/2 an inch off the bottom. This is to expose fresh cambium (形成层) which hasn't been sealed off by drying. Your tree will then be able to drink more freely.

(6) Once the tree is up, give it water immediately. You can expect your tree to drink at least 1 gallon of water in the first 24 hours when it's in your home.

(7) Please remember to keep the tree away from fireplaces, heaters, close heat registers that might blow towards the tree. And avoid placing your tree under direct intense (非常强烈的) lights.

(457 words)

## ● Reading Exercises

**Directions:** The following statements are all based on the passage you've just read. Decide whether they are true or false. Put **T** for true and **F** for false in the space provided.

- \_\_\_\_\_ The selection of a tree is one of most important decisions to make during the Holiday season.
- \_\_\_\_\_ The needles of the tree should be brightly colored, give off a good scent.
- \_\_\_\_\_ If your house is 2 meters high, you'd better buy a tree which is at least 1.95 meters tall.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Tree prices are certainly higher than that last year.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Once the tree is up, give it water immediately.
- \_\_\_\_\_ You can not cut about 1/2 an inch off the bottom because it will die.
- \_\_\_\_\_ You should buy the tree as soon as possible if you want the best price.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Keep the tree away from the fireplaces, heaters, and close heat registers.

## ● Timed Reading (2)

**Directions:** Read the following passage within 4 minutes and then do the exercise.

### The Memorable Christmas

- 1 It was a Christmas morning, Ruby Chan would not forget for the rest of her life. Being an office worker, she had to commute (乘车往返) to work every day by MTR (Motor Tram 电车).
- 2 It happened at about 10:30 a. m. She was waiting for a train on the platform at Causeway Bay Station. Before she could shout for help the crowds behind pushed her into the rail tracks below.
- 3 Luckily, she fell into the 60cm deep well between the rails, designed originally for MTR workmen to use in case of an emergency. She escaped with a cut on the head and a sprained (扭伤) leg.
- 4 "It was terribly frightened as people around were screaming after I had fallen. However, I



managed to lie down as flat as a pancake.” said Ms Chan. “Then I felt an overwhelming force rush over me and a sharp pain to my head.” Part of the train struck her head a glancing blow, causing a cut which needed seven stitches (缝针).

5 Ms Chan admitted that she had gone beyond the yellow line along the platform edge despite MTR warning and was only thirty centimeters from the edge when she fell.

6 After the train stopped, MTR conductor leaped down to the rails and helped her climb up to the platform. She was immediately taken to a hospital. She was discharged after treatment.

(237 words)

## 世 ● Comprehension Exercises

纪 **Directions:** Choose the best answer for each of the following based on the passage above.

- 英 1. What happened to Ms Chan while she was waiting for a train?
- 语 A. She fell onto the platform.
- B. She fell into the gap between the platform and the train.
- 阅 C. She fell onto the rails.
- D. She fell into a pit (坑) in the middle of the rails.
- 读 2. By Chan's own account, \_\_\_\_\_.
- A. she had positioned herself at a further point on the platform than allowed by MTR regulation
- B. the force of MTR pulled her down
- 基 C. a man in the crowd deliberately pushed her and caused her fall
- D. she was suicidal (自杀的) that day
- 础 3. Why do you think Ms Chan had not been killed?
- A. It was because the driver braked the train in time.
- 教 B. It was because she managed to keep the greatest part of her body in the well.
- C. It was because her size was so small that she could fit herself completely in the well.
- 程 D. It was because the train had hardly stopped when she fell in the well.
- ② 4. Which word in Paragraph 4 tells us that Ms Chan was only hit lightly and quickly?
- A. Overwhelming.      B. Rush.      C. Sharp.      D. Glancing.

## Part Three

## Look Back

10

## ● Cloze



**Directions:** Complete the short paragraph with proper words in the box, and change the form or tense where necessary.

shut	repeat	whole	after	everyone
kitchen	more	feel	in	curiously

I live in a crowded house. On Christmas Day I wanted something in that house, so I went outside to get it.

I sat down on the front porch (门廊) and waited. I knew, soon ①, I would get what I wanted. ② a few minutes my twin (双胞胎) brothers came out and sat beside me. "Hey, Maggie, what are you doing out here?" they asked.

"I'm looking for something inside the house." I said ③.

"Can we try to guess what you want in the house?" they asked.

"Sure." I said, so the twins started to guess. Was it a book? No. A kite? No. The dog? No. Was it animal, vegetable, or material? No, no, no.

They gave up. One of them thought it would be wise to get some help from our elder sister, Becky. So he cried, "Becky! Come out here and help us guess what Maggie is looking for."

"OK." she sat down on the porch with ④ else. Now the porch was getting crowded. "Is it animal, vegetable or material?"

"We already asked that!" both the boys shouted.

"Okay, okay. Hmm... is it bigger than a bread box?"

"No." I said. Becky tried some ⑤ questions. I said "no" to everything.

Finally Becky gave up too. She went to the door and called, "Hey! Mom!"

Our mother came outside with paint on her hands. "Would you help us try to guess what Maggie wants in the house." Becky said.

"Okay. Is it round? Square? Could I ⑥ it?" When I said "no" to these questions, she said, "This is very interesting. Let's give your father a chance of it. Peter!"

Then Dad came running out of the ⑦. He was always baking things. "I'm making a cake."

"Dad, try to guess what Maggie wants in the house."

"My cake?" He was disappointed when I said no. He tried other things. But no, it wasn't any of those things.

"Well, I give up." the rest of the family just sat on the porch of the empty house, staring at me and thinking.

I stood up and ⑧ the front door. "Do all of you really want to know what I wanted inside the house?" "Yes!" shouted the ⑨ family.

"Privacy (清静)!" I said as I stepped inside the house and locked the door. "Privacy!" I ⑩ and I laughed because I got some.

## ● Translation

**Directions:** Translate the following paragraph taken from a letter answering a girl. Then discuss in groups for the best version to be presented to the whole class.

Yes, Virginia, there is a Santa Claus. He exists as certainly as love, generosity and devotion exist, and you know that they abound and give to your life its highest beauty and joy. Alas! How dreary would be the world if there were no Santa Claus! It would be as dreary as if there were no Virginias. There would be no childlike faith, no poetry, no romance and no enjoyment, except the



empty and desolate in the world.

## ● Writing

**Directions:** *Make a short discussion with your classmates and try to find some information from all kinds of references, and then write an article based on one of the topics below.*

1. Why are Christmas presents given?
2. Why are they delivered on Christmas Eve?
3. Why do we hang up a Christmas stocking?
4. Why does Santa wear a baggy red suit?
5. Why does Santa use reindeers?



# Unit 2

## Fairy Tale



*The cultures of the world are full of unexpected  
green bananas with special value and meaning.*

—Donald Batchelder





## ● Look and Say

**Directions:** Look at the picture and discuss the questions with your partner.

**14 Questions for discussion**

1. What's the woman do you think?
2. Does anyone around you believe the supernatural power?
3. Why are there so many witches and wizards in the world?
4. What are the differences among fables, myths and legend stories?
5. What are the differences of myths between the western and eastern countries?