

韩洁 编写

中级美国英语读物系列

美国人的思与行

THE WAY
Inter med i a t e
AMERICAN
English
READING
ACT
series

上海交通大学出版社

An Intermediate American English Reading Series

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The Way Americans Think and Act

美国人的思与行

韩 洁 编写

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前言

当代应用语言学理论认为外语学习进入中级水平阶段时(如大学英语四级),学习者应加强阅读练习;此刻他的主要目标不是外语本身,如语法规则、单词学习等,而是以外语为桥梁,吸取知识及其他信息。这样,外语就在阅读过程中“润物细无声”地滋润着学习者,其结果自然是提高了英语能力。

这一认识已被许多外语教师和广大学生的实践所证明。笔者在几十年教学生涯中所见许多优秀学生无不遵循这一规律,这就是专家们所谓的“习得”(acquisition)。此方法虽与片面追求应试效果的方法背道而驰,但结果往往是学生在考试中不仅有上佳表现,而且以后还会有进一步提高的后劲。这些都是应试教育望尘莫及的。

用“习得英语”提高英语素质,首先要有适当的读物,能引起阅读兴趣。笔者认为英语读物是否适当,除了文字难度以外,必须考虑读物的题材,看它是否适合广大读者的需要。

笔者从1998年美国报刊杂志中精选出一些题材有趣且可读性强的文章,如美国当代社会的文化观念、人际关系、处世态度、经济变革以及科技动态等,汇编成《中级美国英语读物系列》,希望读者在趣味盎然的阅读中潜移默化地吸取知识并提高英语水平。

书中凡超过大学英语四级的词汇均加以注释,并为每篇文章设计了多项选择型阅读理解题(Multiple Choice Questions),供读者在自测中深入思考,加深理解。对于较难的句子或段落,提供了参考译文(Fragment of Translation for Reference)。另外,所有问题均附有答案(The Answer Key)。

编者

1998年11月

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1

Music Practice Time Turns into ¹Playtime

By *Marta Greenwood*

1 I have absolutely no knowledge of music, short of a deep love for it. But when our daughters were born, we decided to give them the gift of music. We listened to classical music at mealtime, in the car, and as background music while reading.

2 When they were 3 and 5, the girls started music lessons. We chose the Suzuki method. Little did I know what I was letting myself in for.

3 I had to learn each piece of music with them. The first songs were easy, but only as far as "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star." Soon, the entire family was involved. My husband wrote the names of the notes above each note, then I would learn the piece and we would practise together.

4 Soon it became evident that I was slowing my daughters down!

5 Gradually, my role became less and less. The girls took off on their own, but not without encouragement and a high degree of creative imagination on my part. I became ²adept at keeping the practices fun and their love of music alive.

6 We turned practice time into playtime.

7 At a ³handicraft shop, we bought an unfinished ⁴floral picture with ready-cut ⁵felt shapes. For every section of their music that they learned to play correctly, they would choose one part of the picture to make. Our walls are still ⁶adorned with many of these pictures.

8 If they had a difficult piece to learn, they would choose a small

gift from a favorite shop and it was put on a high shelf. On the day they learned the music, it was their prize. We have many soft ⁷cuddly toys named after composers that ⁸commemorate their successes.

9 We went through packets of Smarties candies poised on musical lines as notes. Each time they got the note right they could eat one. As it turned out, the Smarties inspired the girls to become wonderful sight readers.

10 My husband and I also looked for ways to make ⁹ballet, opera, and ¹⁰orchestra concerts fun. Before each performance, we would listen to a tape of the music until we all knew it well. Then we would learn the story and all the characters. By the time we got there, the music and story were so familiar that we sat glued to the seats.

11 We also had musical parties and invited friends who played an instrument to come and give little concerts (even some parents took part). At Christmas, we cut a green card in the shape of a Christmas tree. For every piece they played, each child would decorate the tree. They soon became confident performers in front of others.

12 Now they are teenagers, and all those games gave them a great start to their musical careers. The day came when I no longer needed to think of new things to make practising fun. We actually had to get each of them a piano on different sides of the house to avoid arguments over who got to play first.

13 And as for my husband, he is now their music agent.

14 But the best reward is having two children ^{all} "endowed with the gift of music and our house filled constantly with it. ⁷ * sb天生具有

Notes

- 1 playtime—a time for play or diversion
- 2 adept—highly skilled; proficient
- 3 handicraft—a trade, craft, or occupation requiring skills with hands
- 4 floral—of or pertaining to flowers
- 5 felt—薄毛毯料
- 6 adorn—to decorate with or as with ornaments
- 7 cuddly—able to hug tenderly
- 8 commemorate—to honor the memory of
- 9 ballet—芭蕾舞
- 10 orchestra—管弦乐队
- 11 endow—to provide or equip with a talent or quality

Multiple Choice Questions

- 1 When my daughters began music lessons _____.
A I used to teach them every note repeatedly
B I was busy giving music lessons myself
C I didn't know what I could do
D I was even keener than them
- 2 The author bought unfinished floral pictures _____.
A to encourage her daughters when they practised correctly
B to hang up in her daughters' bedrooms
C for herself to finish before sending to market
D for her daughters to learn how to draw pictures
- 3 The small gifts the mother put on a high shelf would _____.
A stay there until her daughters grow up
B be presented to anyone who first wins a prize

- C be used as prizes for her daughters
D be presented to the father when he succeeded
- 4 The author's family learned the story and characters before going to the theater _____.
A so that they would better appreciate the show
B in case they might be asked to play a part in the show
C if the opera was performed in a foreign language
D so as to be able to memorize all the lines
- 5 The author's family held musical parties _____.
A to make a better living
B to make the children more confident in performance
C to please their neighbors
D to compete with other family parties

Fragments of Translation for Reference

- 1 (Para. 5) Gradually, my role became ...

渐渐地我的作用就越来越小了。姑娘们可以自己起飞了,然而她们都少不了我的鼓励以及我高度创造性的想象力。我非常巧妙地使她们的练习变得有趣,使她们对音乐的爱好充满活力。

- 2 (Para. 9) We went through ...

我们把 Smarties 公司的袋装糖果挂在乐谱的线上,当作乐符来读;如果她们读对一次,就可吃一块糖。结果是 Smarties 公司鼓舞了姑娘们,使她们有了绝佳的读谱能力。(若把“sight reader”译成“视谱读者”,则将不知所云。)

2

A Father's Love, Amplified

By *Arthur Bowler*

1 "I'm sorry, son, we don't have the money." These words crushed my 13-year-old spirit. It was 1964, and I wanted nothing more than to be like my heroes, ¹The Beatles. With the right haricut and a good guitar, the only thing I lacked was an ²amplifier for a big "battle of the bands" coming up in our small Massachusetts town. In order to be a member of a local band, I had to have an ³amp. Or else.

2 So when my father told me we couldn't afford it, The Beatles song "I'm a Loser" became my personal No. 1. But as always, Dad had a solution. We could make one, he said, together in the ⁴basement. Make an amplifier? I was ⁵incredulous but worked hard to conceal my skepticism.

3 I had no other choice, it seemed. We began the project. Night after night, Dad sacrificed his evenings for me. We spent hours selecting wood, speakers, ⁶grill cloth, even glue, and I spent hours silently wondering how embarrassed I'd feel when my friends saw this homemade amp.

4 With the occasional help of a local electronics ⁷buff, we worked hard to get ready for the big event at the local junior high school. All the while, I was puzzled by this question: Why were we spending almost as much money on materials as I would have spent just buying an amplifier outright? I wondered, but said nothing.

5 When the day came, the amp was ready, and I was ready to learn an important lesson.

6 I rolled our amp onto the stage. A few friends and other competitors came over to our band, eyeing our stuff carefully. Finally, they fixed on the homemade amplifier, and I ^{was} ⁸beside myself with embarrassment.

7 One kid asked roughly, "What kind of amp is this, homemade or something?" Confession was my only ⁹recourse, so I straightened my back and replied, "Yeah, I made it with my dad."

8 To my surprise, his look turned from critical to envious, and he said, "Gee, my dad never did anything like that for me." With that, my embarrassment turned to pride for a father who had selflessly shared so much of his time with me. I saw him standing in a ¹⁰discreet corner, and we exchanged smiles.

9 Our band didn't win that day. Instead, it was another one with bigger equipment and ¹¹slicker costumes. And my amplifier didn't perform too well; it sounded funny and wasn't powerful enough. But I didn't care as much as I thought I would. Our band had lost, but even at that ¹²tender age, I knew I had won.

10 Now that I'm a father, I asked my dad about this recently. He confessed what I had suspected. It was not entirely true that my parents didn't have the money to buy the amplifier. They had managed to buy things many other times that were important to us.

11 With a smile, Dad admitted that he'd really wanted to spend time with me. All those nights together in the basement, we learned about a lot more than speakers and wires. We learned about each other. We exchanged ¹³affection.

12 And of course he gave me far more than anything money could buy. While other fathers simply gave their sons the money to buy

闪耀
the flashy equipment they dreamed of, my dad gave me his time, his attention, and his love. They dreamed of equipment; I dreamed about a dad who cared.

13 The homemade amplifier is gone now, thrown out decades ago. I'd give anything to touch it again, but I am thankful for so many other things that can never be touched.

14 Today, I can still see it clearly in my mind, can still smell the glue, hear the first sounds of the music, and most of all, see my dad's smiling face—and the very eyes of love. ¹⁵To quote you-know-who, it is all you need.

Notes

- 1 The Beatles—a famous pop music band 甲壳虫乐队
- 2 amplifier—a device to make larger, louder or more powerful
音箱
- 3 amp—short for amplifier
- 4 basement—地下室
- 5 incredulous—disbelieving; skeptical
- 6 grill cloth—蒙在音箱上的编织布料
- 7 buff—(informal) one who is enthusiastic and knowledgeable
about a particular subject
- 8 be beside oneself with embarrassment—窘迫得不能自己
- 9 recourse—one that is turned to for help or support
- 10 discreet—having or showing good judgment and self-restraint in
speech or behavior
- 11 slick—smooth and glossy
- 12 tender—young and vulnerable 脆弱
- 13 affection—a tender feeling toward another; fondness
- 14 glue—胶水

15 to quote you-know-who—用《人名词典》的话来说

Multiple Choice Questions

- 1 "Battle of the bands" in para. 1 means _____.
A a street fight
B a music contest
C a fight between two hooligan groups
D a concert
- 2 "My personal No. 1" in para. 2 means _____.
A I have lost myself
B I began to like it
C My most favorite song
D I had to sing it to myself
- 3 Which of the following is true (para. 3-4)?
A The author did not like to work on his amplifier.
B The author suggested buying an amplifier outright.
C The author faced his friends in embarrassment.
D The author worked hard at the amplifier though skeptical.
- 4 While moving the amplifier on to the stage, the author was feeling _____. (para. 6)
A timid B powerful C sad D happy
- 5 The author's friend envied him for _____ (para. 8).
A his homemade amplifier
B his cleverness at work
C his father
D both him and his father
- 6 The author didn't win that day but he didn't care because _____ (para. 9).
A he had won his father's love

- B he had won his father's time
 C he had won his father's attention
 D all of the above
- 7 The author wanted to touch the amplifier again because _____.
 (para. 13).
 A he wanted to have it back
 B it means something far more significant than itself
 C he wanted to recall the old days
 D none of the above
- 8 The theme the author tries to express is _____.
 A the author's boyhood
 B the homemade amplifier
 C a pop music band
 D what a father's love means

Fragments of Translation for Reference

- 1 (para. 4) I was puzzled by ...

我一直为这个问题而感到纳闷：我们在材料上所花的钱几乎同直接买一个音箱的价钱一样多，我们为什么要这样呢？

- 2 (para. 13) The homemade amplifier is gone ...

这个土制的音箱几十年前就被扔掉了。我愿付出任何代价再来触摸它一下，不过，我对许许多多其他不可能触摸到的东西而感恩倍至。

3

A Frustrated Mom Turns to the ¹House Fairy

By *Karolyn Sewell*

1 As young parents, my husband and I felt that at age 6 and 8, our children were old enough to be cleaning their rooms and making their beds. But they thought otherwise.

2 One particular afternoon I found myself ²nagging (in vain!) at the children to clean up their rooms and begin their homework. ³Frustration mounted with violin practice. Our son and daughter had begged to take violin lessons, but the initial ⁴euphoria had worn off. That day's practice ended with each of them bursting into tears. Clearly, this was not one of the rewarding moments of motherhood!

3 I retreated into our bedroom, closed the door on the ⁵turmoil, and prayed. In one of those ⁶felicitous flashes of inspiration, I realized that I needed to change my methods of "mothering." My nagging, repeating myself, even self-justified shouting were ⁷landing on deaf ears. These really weren't the kinds of communication skills I wanted to share with my children. The tasks my children needed to do were important to their development. But they had "turned off" my voice. I needed a new voice, a child like loving "fairy-voice" which the children would listen to.

4 The next day while the children were at school, I had great fun tidying their rooms. On their desks, in plain sight, I left the first of many little 3 X 5-inch cards: "Dear Bill (the other card was addressed to Sarah), I noticed your room was ⁸messy this morning and I'm sure you like it clean. I like a clean room too so I've put