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BEYOND WORDS

An Advanced Reading Course

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Each pattern has distinct characteristics, vocabulary, and—in some cases—grammatical structures. To most effectively teach these patterns, each chapter has four or five lessons about the textual pattern and at least four reading passages written in that pattern.

The skills, much like the textual patterns, are also taught in short lessons, and these are followed by examples and exercises that serve as reinforcement. In addition, the skills in each chapter are usually related to the structure of the chapter. Chapter 2, for example, introduces a subject—the history of the nuclear age—that can be taught well in conjunction with narration. The skill introduced in this chapter, "detecting sequence," is a logical companion to the narrative discourse pattern.

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

The first six chapters all have similar structures. Each chapter contains a number of readings related to a common theme. The first few readings in any chapter are more general and less complex than the later readings. These early readings provide the framework and background for the topic. In each chapter the readings are accompanied by lessons and exercises concerning aspects of the textual pattern or skill being taught.

Each reading is preceded by a preview section containing questions and activities. The objectives of these sections are (1) to arouse students' interest, (2) to activate and build on any prior knowledge students may have about the topic, and (3) to offer students the opportunity to make predictions about the reading through various skimming, scanning, and thought-provoking activities. This pre-reading phase can be completed either individually, in small groups, or as a class. Completing this phase as a class, however, gives the teacher the advantage of being able to evaluate how much the students know about the topic and how well prepared they are to read about it. In addition, through oral discussion students benefit from the experiences and viewpoints of others.

After completing the pre-reading activities, students should proceed to the reading itself. Most readings are intended as homework but can be done during class if the structure of the class period allows.

The readings are followed by three types of post-reading exercises:

1. **Review questions** that test general comprehension and suggest additional areas for discussion. Students should complete these immediately after reading the passage and should attempt them without referring back to the passage whenever possible.
2. **Textual pattern and skill review exercises** that test material covered in the lessons that precede the readings or lessons studied in earlier chapters. These exercises may require close analysis of the structure of the reading passage, so students may refer to the reading while completing the exercises.

3. **Questions for further discussion** that require students to take the information they have learned one step further by solving related problems or applying the information to their own lives (one of the main purposes of reading). These questions can be used in a number of ways: for individual short responses (either oral or written), as essay topics, for small group discussions, as debate topics, or for class discussions. We strongly suggest that these questions not be overlooked.

Chapter 7 is intended to reinforce what has been learned in the first six chapters. This chapter presents a new theme; but the readings represent a variety of textual patterns and review many of the skills learned in the previous six chapters.

A FINAL NOTE

It is our opinion that reading can be an enjoyable activity. In addition, we firmly believe that reading can be improved by practice—that is, people learn to read by reading. If one's reading is interesting and is accompanied by quality instruction, the practice becomes that much more effective. We hope that both students and teachers will find this text interesting and instructional.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

TO THE INSTRUCTOR

Beyond Words is designed primarily for advanced students of ESL (TOEFL score of 525 +) though remedial students and those who speak English as a second dialect will also benefit from its use. The readings cover broad-based topics of interest, but are intended for students preparing for undergraduate coursework. Sources of readings include common newsstand magazines and newspapers. as well as more specialized sources such as textbooks and professional journals. The instructional approach of this text differs somewhat from the traditional "skills" approach. Although a number of skills have been integrated throughout, the book focuses on comprehensive text processing strategies that improve one's overall comprehension.

RATIONALE TO OUR APPROACH

Over the past few years much has been written about the interactive nature of reading. It is generally accepted that reading is not a passive activity and that the reader's responsibility and contribution to meaning and communication are as great as the writer's. To interact with what one reads, however, a person must have a foundation of knowledge on which to build. This text strengthens that foundation.

David Ausubel, a prominent educational psychologist, noted that the single most important factor influencing learning is what the student already knows. The question then is: What must a reader know to interact successfully with the text and to read efficiently with comprehension?

Specifically, a reader must know three things: (1) the language in which the passage is written, (2) something about the subject matter itself, and (3) the textual or discourse patterns used in that language to present or develop ideas. These, therefore, have become the three areas of focus in this text.

The first area of knowledge, known as *linguistic schema*, includes vocabulary and syntax. Although these are well covered in most reading texts, it is not enough for the reader to know the meanings of all the words and to be able to identify the grammatical structures of the prose.

It is also important that a reader approach the material to be read with as much prior knowledge about the topic as possible. This knowledge can come either through direct experience, prior reading, the media, or group discussion, and is used by fluent readers to form expectations about the reading task and material. In this text students build both vocabulary and background knowledge by progressing through thought-provoking pre-reading exercises, activities, and their accompanying readings, all of which are unified by a common chapter theme.

Much of the reading students encounter in their academic or work-related pursuits is expository in nature, and studies (with both native and nonnative learners) have shown that the reader's ability to detect the distinctive expository patterns or structures of the text is a crucial skill for effective comprehension and recall. More importantly, these studies reveal that these discourse patterns can be learned systematically in a reasonable amount of time, given the proper materials and instruction. To this end, each chapter in this text focuses on the instruction and analysis of one discourse pattern, which is modeled in its various forms by the readings in that chapter.

In addition, our experience tells us that the skills of reading and writing are closely intertwined and that practice in each is mutually beneficial. This has led to the inclusion of significant opportunities for students to write about what they know, what they've read, and how that knowledge can be applied to further reading.

ABOUT THIS BOOK

Beyond Words consists of seven chapters—six "instructional" chapters and one review chapter. Because a certain amount of skills reinforcement is recycled from chapter to chapter, it is recommended that the chapters be studied in sequence.

Each of the chapters has three basic objectives: (1) to introduce ESL readers to a common textual pattern used in English, (2) to reinforce a major related reading skill, and (3) to familiarize students with topics of current interest.

The subject area in each chapter is taught like most other subjects learned in school—through reading. Each passage builds knowledge of and familiarity with that particular theme. In contrast to classroom study of a subject, this book does not include introductory lectures for each theme. We therefore suggest that the instructor briefly discuss the topic of each chapter.

Preview activities allow for discussion and thought before each reading. When the subject matter is likely to be new to the student, we have included supplementary readings. These readings are general in nature and should be read as preview material for the main passage.

The textual patterns that are taught in each chapter are some of those most commonly used by English writers (e.g., comparison and contrast, cause and effect, problem–solution, narration, description).

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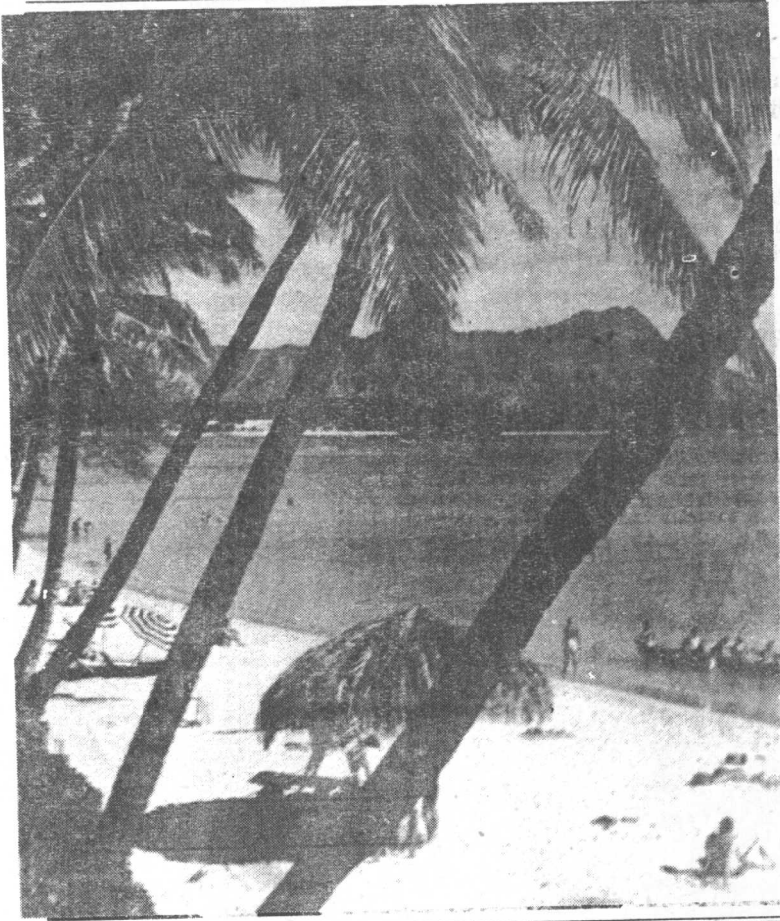# 7   Immigrants in America: A Land of Promise?   *301*
(Review Chapter)

The loveliest fleet of islands that lies anchored in any ocean.

—Mark Twain

HAWAII—THE FIFTIETH STATE

Hawaii. One word—and yet it has the ability to call up strong, conflicting, emotional memories of romance, slave labor, war, sun, and fun. Hawaii is many things to many people. Some came as voyagers hundreds of years ago; some came as soldiers. Others came as daring business entrepreneurs, or simple immigrant laborers. And of course many come each year as tourists seeking paradise. In this chapter we will learn a little of Hawaii's people, geography, and culture as we learn about the patterns and devices used in descriptive writing.

DESCRIPTION

One of the most common types of writing is descriptive writing. The descriptive writer may be technical and objective, or perhaps impressionistic and subjective. This all depends on the purpose of the writer. Though all cultures share this mode of discourse, the tools and patterns differ slightly from one culture to another.

In this chapter we will discuss the purposes and styles of description, as well as the various devices used by writers to make their descriptions effective.

VOCABULARY IN CONTEXT

In addition to learning about patterns of descriptive writing, we will help you improve your word-attack skills and your ability to understand new words through context in order to improve your overall reading proficiency. To understand a word, however, does not necessarily mean you can correctly use the word in speaking or writing. This is the difference between your *passive* and *active* vocabulary. For the purposes of reading, we will concentrate on developing your *passive* vocabulary.

Description: Purpose and Principle

PURPOSE

Description is that form of writing which comes the closest to the fine arts because, like painting, sculpture, and film, it attempts to recreate a likeness or impression of a person, place, or situation for someone else. The writing may be technical and objective, in an effort to recreate every detail exactly as it is, or it may be imaginative and impressionistic, choosing to emphasize only one or two aspects of the whole. The purpose behind the description will determine the pattern and organization that are chosen and the selection of appropriate details. Read the following two descriptions.

Version 1: "The man is approximately 6 ft., 1 in. tall. Weighs about 185 pounds. Dark, wavy hair; brown eyes. Caucasian. Muscular build with a small scar over the right eye. Speaks with a slight slur. He was last seen wearing a black jacket and blue-jeans. Thought to be unarmed but dangerous."

Version 2: "He's a real hunk, Mom. He's tall, dark, and handsome with a really macho-looking face. Wow, and what a body! He looks like Rambo's kid brother. No kidding, Mom! He doesn't talk much, but I like men who are quiet. Anyway, I have to go now, Mom, he's picking me up soon. Bye!"

The two versions above describe the same person, although they are quite different in both detail and tone. Part of the responsibility of the reader is to determine the purpose of the writer in order to understand why the author selected certain details. Can you guess who the authors of these two descriptions might be?

1. ——————————————   2. ——————————————

As mentioned above, descriptions can be either objective or subjective. In the first category, the author is interested in giving details *about* the subject in a systematic way. This type of description is used often in the fields of science and business, for example, where an engineer might describe a newly designed product, or a botanist might describe a rare species of flower.

As opposed to information *about* things, the second type of description, which is subjective, attempts to give us a recreation or feeling *of* things. The details may not be so systematic. This type of description, often used by artists, poets, and novelists, does not accurately portray each and every detail but uses language to bring out a certain impression, quality, or tone. In other words, the description of a river by a marine biologist would be quite different from a description of the same river by Mark Twain: They do not share the same purpose.

This does not mean, however, that we never find technical description in fiction or suggestive description in the world of science. Nor does this mean that the two forms cannot be found together in the same piece of writing.

EXERCISE   Mark each passage as either "obj" (objective) or "sub" (subjective). Underline words or phrases that help you decide.

_____ 1. By the time one has seen the villages, the afternoon is well along. White clouds sail lazily overhead.

_____ 2. Professionally produced and directed, the show consists of two acts that present the historical prologues and thirty-four scenes.

_____ 3. The *mamo* bird . . . was black in color, with small patches of orange-yellow feathers above the base of the tail, on the lower part of the back, and on the thighs.

_____ 4. The buses creep around back streets searching out their hotel stops, traveling close behind each other like multicolored caterpillars. They part together and travel together, picking up and disgorging loads of tourists together, as if afraid to be separated in the wilds of Waikiki.

PRINCIPLE

In the process of description, writers will choose an overall principle of organization. Whether describing a room, a group of objects, or a process, the writer chooses a principle (e.g., spatial, logical, chronological) that will organize the information for the reader. The purpose of the organization, of course, is to allow the reader a better chance of remembering the details. For example, a writer might describe a room from left to right, or from top to bottom. In describing his or her own family members, a writer might choose to start with the oldest and proceed to the youngest. Perceiving which principle the writer has chosen will greatly increase your ability to comprehend and recall the material you are reading.

PREVIEW | HAWAII—THE FIFTIETH STATE

Things to Think About

1. When you see or hear the word *Hawaii*, what comes to mind?

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2. Have you ever been to Hawaii or read about it? If so, what can you remember about Hawaii?

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3. If you haven't been to Hawaii, you may have thought about what tropical South Pacific islands look like. Write down your impressions.

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4. If you had the opportunity to stay in Hawaii for two weeks, would you go? If so, what would you do there?

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Preview

1. Descriptive writing usually has an underlying organization to help the reader follow along. Look at the first sentence of each paragraph and write down how the author has organized this description of Hawaii.

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