



Graded
Readers
In
English

THE HOUSE ON THE HILL
500 Word Level
Eugene J. Hall

The title 'THE HOUSE ON THE HILL' is rendered in large, bold, black, blocky capital letters. The letters are arranged in four lines: 'THE', 'HOUSE', 'ON THE', and 'HILL'. The text is integrated with a stylized illustration of a house. A small roof with a chimney is positioned above the 'E' in 'THE'. A door with a small window is located between the 'O' in 'ON' and the 'T' in 'THE'. A set of stairs leads up from the bottom right towards the 'H' in 'HILL'. The entire design is set against a textured, brown background.

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Illustrations by Oscar Fernández

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Foreword

The House on the Hill is one of a series of readers intended for students who are learning English as a second or foreign language. Language learners are usually presented with a number of different structures and patterns which they master one by one. In actual use, however, all these structures occur mixed together rather than neatly separated. Reading is one of the best methods to familiarize students with the normal mixture of structures as they are used by native speakers. Reading also helps the students to build vocabulary both by acquiring additional words and expressions and by using old and new items within a context that makes their meaning clearer.

The books in this series are entirely new works. They are adventure, action, and suspense stories that capture and hold the interest of the students. Each chapter is arranged in short sections followed by comprehension questions. With this convenient arrangement, the students do not have to try to recall several pages of text and then answer a long list of questions. The interesting illustrations also help the students to follow the action of the story and to answer many of their questions about meaning.

The House on the Hill is intended for students at the intermediate level. It uses the structures that are basic to narrative writing in English, but it avoids complicated clause structures and the passive and the conditional that are taught at more advanced levels. *The House on the Hill* has a vocabulary range of 500 words. The majority of these words are basic items of high frequency. In the vocabulary list at the end of the book, separate entries are not given for the noun and verb uses of the same word when they are similar in meaning—*to look* (the verb) and *look* (the noun), for example, receive only one entry. There is also only one entry for each irregular verb with the exception of *to be* and *to go*. Only a few other inflected forms are given separately; they are the subject, object, possessive adjective, and reflexive forms of the personal pronouns, as well as the comparative and superlative forms of *good* and *bad*. Adverbs that are formed regularly with *-ly* are included under the adjective form of the word—the entry for *slow* includes both *slow* and *slowly*. A few semantic distinctions are given separate listings—the verb *to like* and the preposition *like*, for example, and *to close* and *close to*.

It is hoped that the students will not only learn more English from these books but will enjoy reading them as well.



KEN



PATTY



TERRY



SHARON



RICK

CHAPTER ONE

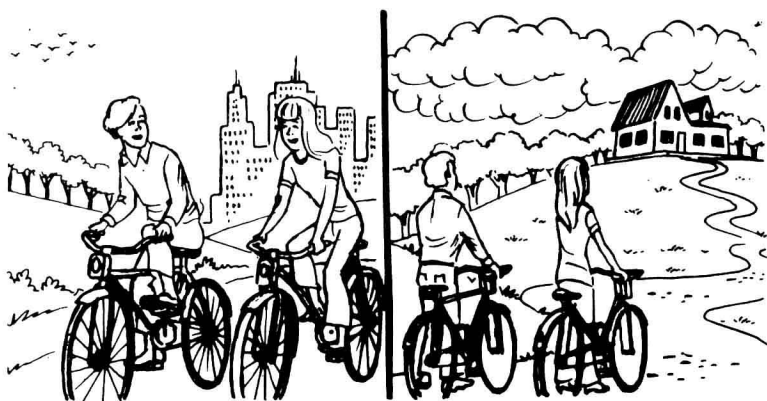
Ken and Patty got off their bikes to look at the old house at the top of the hill. Trees almost hid the house, but they could see that nobody lived in it. Many of the windows were broken, and the paint was peeling away from the wood. The wind blew gray clouds across the sky and shook the trees around the house.

It was Saturday, and there was no school. Ken Anderson and Patty Melville liked to come out of the city on their bikes on their free days. Ken was sixteen years old, and Patty was six months younger. They were both in the same class in high school. They started out this morning under a sunny sky and came farther than usual. Now, however, the clouds and the wind were threatening rain.

- 1 Why did Ken and Patty get off their bikes?
- 2 What almost hid the house? What could they see?
- 3 What did the house look like?
- 4 What did the wind do?
- 5 Was it Saturday? Was there any school that day?
- 6 What did Ken and Patty like to do?
- 7 Was Patty older or was Ken older?
- 8 What class were they in?
- 9 What did they do this morning?
- 10 What was happening now?

"I'd like to stop and take a look inside that place," Patty said.

"We don't have time," Ken said. He looked up first at the gray clouds



and then at the old house. Something about the old house made him feel afraid. "It's getting cold and it's going to start raining in a few minutes. It's time for us to start back home." He got on his bike and started to ride away.

"We'll have to come out here some other day," Patty said, and followed after him.

- 11 What did Patty say that she'd like to do?
- 12 Did Ken want to go inside the house too?
- 13 What did he look at?
- 14 What made him feel afraid?
- 15 What was happening? What was going to start in a few minutes?
- 16 Was it time for them to start back home?
- 17 What did he do?
- 18 What did Patty say? Did Patty follow Ken or did Ken follow Patty?

They went only a little way, and then they began to feel the first rain. Soon the rain was coming down harder and harder. There was no place on the road where they could get out of the rain. "We'll have to go back," Ken called. "We can go up to that house on the hill until the rain stops."

They turned back and went up the hill to the old house as fast as they could go. All their clothes were wet through by the time they reached the front porch. Even there, however, the wind still blew the rain against them. Ken tried to open the front door, but it didn't move.

"Now I don't want to go inside," Patty said.

"But we've got to get out of this rain," Ken replied.

- 19 What did they begin to feel?
- 20 What was coming down harder soon?
- 21 Where could they get out of the rain?
- 22 What did Ken say that they could do?
- 23 What did they do?
- 24 Were their clothes wet or dry by the time they reached the house?
- 25 What did the wind still do?
- 26 Did Ken try to open the front door or the back door?
- 27 Why did he want to get inside the house?

Ken went to one of the broken windows and put his hand inside to find the lock.

"Can you see? Maybe someone lives here," Patty warned him.

"It's just an empty house. Nobody's lived here for years," Ken replied. Then he said to himself in a low voice, "There isn't anything to be afraid of." His hand found the lock, and he pushed the window open. "There!" he said. "Now we can go inside."

He climbed through the window into the house, and after a moment Patty followed him. They stood close together while they tried to see the room they were in. It was very dark inside, and they could only make out the shapes of a few pieces of furniture. Ken felt Patty shiver, so he put his arm around her shoulder and said, "We'll be dry in a few minutes."

"You're shaking too," she said.

"Are you cold or afraid?" he asked.

"I'm a little of both," she said.

28 What did Ken do? Why did he put his hand inside the window?

29 What did Patty warn him?

30 What did Ken say to himself?

31 What did he find? What did he do?

32 How did Ken go into the house? Did Patty go in too?

33 Where did they stand? What were they trying to see?

34 Could they see everything? What could they make out?

35 What did Ken feel? What did he do? What did he say?

36 What did Patty say?

37 Was she cold or afraid?

"There isn't anything to be afraid of," Ken said, wanting to believe it. "It's just an old house. Nobody lives here."

"Why is there furniture here then?" Patty asked.

"It's just old furniture that nobody wanted," Ken said. "Look! There's a candle over there. We can have a little light." He went over to the table where he saw the candle. He got a match out of his pocket; it was still dry, so he was able to light the candle. In its dim light they could see the peeling paper on the walls and the dust that covered everything. "Now we can take a look around the place," Patty said.

"Let's stay right here," Ken said. He sat down on a chair near the window. "I just want to dry off, and then we can go on home."

"Oh, come on," Patty said. "I want to see what the place looks like."

38 Why did Ken think there wasn't anything to be afraid of in the house?

39 Why did he say there was furniture in the house?

40 What did he see?

41 What did he get out of his pocket? Was it wet or dry?

42 What could they see in the light from the candle?

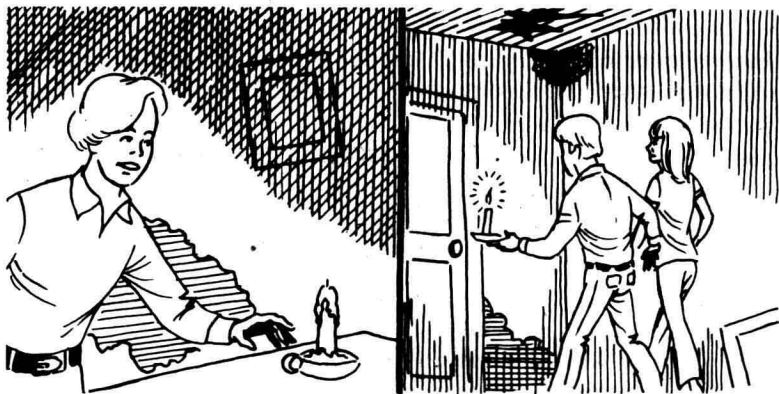
43 What did Patty want to do then?

44 What did Ken say they should do?

45 Did Ken sit down on a chair or on the floor?

46 When did he say they could go home?

47 What did Patty want to see?



As Patty walked toward the door with the candle in her hand, Ken got up. "I'd better go with you," he said. "You shouldn't be alone in this place, and I shouldn't either."

"Well, come on then," Patty said and opened the door to the room. Ken took the candle and went through the door. Patty followed him across the dark room. At the door, her hand touched something—a light switch, she realized. Without thinking, she pushed it, and suddenly the room was filled with light.

She gave a cry. "There!" she exclaimed. "I told you that someone still lived here!"

- 48 Where did Patty walk? What did Ken do then?
- 49 What did he say to Patty? Why did he want to go with her?
- 50 Where did Ken go then?
- 51 Did Patty go after him?
- 52 What did her hand touch?
- 53 What happened when she pushed the switch?
- 54 What did the light make her think?



CHAPTER TWO

Ken stood looking at the light. He couldn't believe what he was seeing with his own eyes. But in the sudden light he saw that the floor was covered with dust; and the only footsteps on it were his and Patty's.

"I don't understand," he said, more to himself than to Patty.

"Maybe the people who lived here forgot to get the electricity turned off when they moved," Patty said. "I don't like it. Let's not stay here." They went back to the window where they first entered.

Outside the rain was still blowing hard against the walls of the house. Every minute or two a crash of thunder shook the house. "We can't go out in this storm," Ken said. "Listen to that!" There was another violent crash of thunder. The light grew dimmer for a moment, but then came back on strong again. Ken started back through the door of the room again.

- 1 Why did Ken stand looking at the light?
- 2 What did he see? Whose footsteps did he see in the dust?
- 3 What did Patty think might have happened?
- 4 What else did she say?
- 5 Where did they go?
- 6 What was happening outside?
- 7 What shook the house?
- 8 What happened to the light when there was another crash of thunder?
- 9 Did Ken leave the house or did he start back through the door?

"Where are you going?" Patty called to him.

"I'm going to see if there's anyone in the house," Ken said. "I'm sure they'll let us stay here until the storm is over."

"I'm not staying here alone. Okay then, let's go," Patty said, following him quickly.

They went through the door, which led into the front hall. At one end they could see the door of the house. There were also several doors that opened into other rooms. On one side there was a staircase that led up into the dark. Ken had only the dim light of the candle, but he could see that there were no footsteps in the dust here either. Near the front door there was another light switch. He went over and tried it, but nothing happened.

"Maybe it's the storm," he said. "Maybe it did something to the electricity."

"You know that isn't possible," Patty said.

- 10 Where did Ken say he was going?
- 11 What was he sure about?
- 12 Why did Patty follow him?
- 13 Did the door lead outside or into the front hall?
- 14 What could they see at one end of the hall?
- 15 Were there any other doors?
- 16 What was there on one side of the hall? Where did it lead?
- 17 Did Ken have strong light or dim light? What could he see?
- 18 What was there near the front door?
- 19 What happened when Ken tried the switch?
- 20 What did Ken say? What did Patty answer?

One by one, they opened all the doors, but each room they looked into was empty. There were no footsteps in any of them, no sign of any people in the house. They went to the door at the back of the hall last. "This must be the kitchen," Patty said. "If anyone lives here, they'll use the kitchen."

As Ken started to open the door, Patty put her hand on his arm to stop him. "But we don't have to keep looking. Let's just go back to the room where we came in and wait for the storm to end. It can't go on like this much longer." But even while she was speaking, another crash of thunder made the house shake, and the wind blew through the broken windows. They were suddenly in the dark again as the candle and the light from the room went out at the same time.

- 21 What did they do? Were there people in any of the rooms or were the rooms empty?
- 22 Did they see any footsteps or any sign of people?

- 23 Where did they go last?
- 24 What did Patty say that room must be?
- 25 Did she think there might be someone in the kitchen?
- 26 What did Patty do when he started to open the door?
- 27 What did she say to Ken?
- 28 What happened while she was speaking?
- 29 Why were they in the dark again?

Ken felt in his pocket for the matches and tried to light the candle, but the matches were wet now. Patty tried to pull him back. "Let's just go into that other room and wait," she said.

But Ken opened the door to the kitchen. "Maybe we can find some matches in here," he said. "Or some people."

- 30 What did Ken do? Why couldn't he light the candle?
- 31 What did Patty try to do?
- 32 What did she say?
- 33 Did Ken open the door to the basement or to the kitchen?
- 34 What did he think he might be able to find?

Ken went on through the door, but Patty stayed where she was. Ken couldn't see anything in the thick dark. He took a careful step ahead into the dark room, and then another one. Then there was another crash that wasn't caused by the storm this time.

"Ken! Ken!" Patty called. "What happened?"

"Patty, stay back!" he called, but his voice became weak and sounded far away. "Don't come through that door! Stay back!"

"What happened?"

"I fell right through the floor," he said.



- 35 Where did Ken go? What did Patty do?
- 36 How much could Ken see?
- 37 What did he take?
- 38 What sound was there then?
- 39 What happened to Ken's voice? What did he call to Patty?
- 40 Did Ken fall through the floor or did he fall through the door?



CHAPTER THREE

"Oh, no!" Patty cried. "Are you all right? Did you hurt yourself?"

"I don't know," he answered, but his voice sounded weak. "A little, maybe."

"I'm going to try to get down there," Patty said. "There must be some stairs."

"Just stay where you are," he called back to her. "I'll try to get out of here after the storm ends." But his words ended with a cry of pain when he tried to move.

"What is it?" Patty called. "What's the matter?"

"My leg," he said, but his voice wasn't very strong. "I guess I hurt it when I fell."

"I'm coming down there to get you," Patty said.

"Be careful!" Ken called.

- 1 Did Ken hurt himself? How did his voice sound?
- 2 What did Patty say she was going to try to do?
- 3 What did Ken say he was going to try to do?
- 4 How did Ken's words end?
- 5 Did Ken hurt his leg or did he hurt his head?

Patty felt her way along the wall to the staircase. She could only make out dim shapes in the dark, so she had to use her hands to guide herself. In what seemed like the darkest part of the hall, she could feel that the staircase went down. She carefully put a foot down on the first step.

When it held her weight, she followed with her other foot. Step by step she went on down. Some of the steps were broken, but she was able to get to the bottom of the staircase without falling. "Ken?" she called. "Ken! Where are you?"

"In here," he answered, but he sounded weak and far away.

Patty carefully moved her hands along the wall at the bottom of the staircase. The wall was cold and wet, and Patty shivered when she touched it. She didn't want to think about what there might be down here in the dark. After moving a few feet, she felt the wood of a door. She opened it and again called, "Ken! Ken!"

- 6 What did Patty do?
- 7 Why did she have to use her hands to guide herself?
- 8 What did she feel in the darkest part of the hall?
- 9 How did she put her foot down?
- 10 When did she follow it with her other foot?
- 11 Did she go down the stairs quickly or slowly?
- 12 Did Patty fall?
- 13 How did Ken sound?
- 14 Was the wall hot and dry or was it cold and wet? What did Patty do?
- 15 What didn't she want to think about?
- 16 What did she feel after moving a few feet?

"In here," he called, but his voice still didn't sound any closer. She tried to guide herself in the direction of his voice. There were more doors, and she opened each one, but she still couldn't find him. "If only I had a light!" she thought, and then she remembered that there were flashlights on both their bikes.

"Ken!" she called. "I'm going back up and get the flashlights from our bikes. I can't see anything at all down here."

"All right," he answered weakly. "Just be careful." His voice sounded a little closer, but Patty knew she would have to have some light not just to find him but to help him.

- 17 Did Ken's voice sound any closer?
- 18 Where did Patty try to guide herself?
- 19 Was there only one door? Did Patty find Ken?
- 20 What did she think? What did she remember then?
- 21 What did she tell Ken that she was going to do?
- 22 Why did Patty know she would have to have some light?

She went back carefully, feeling her way along the wall, and then up the staircase again, trying each step to make sure it would hold her weight. In the hall there was enough dim gray light so she could see the door, to the

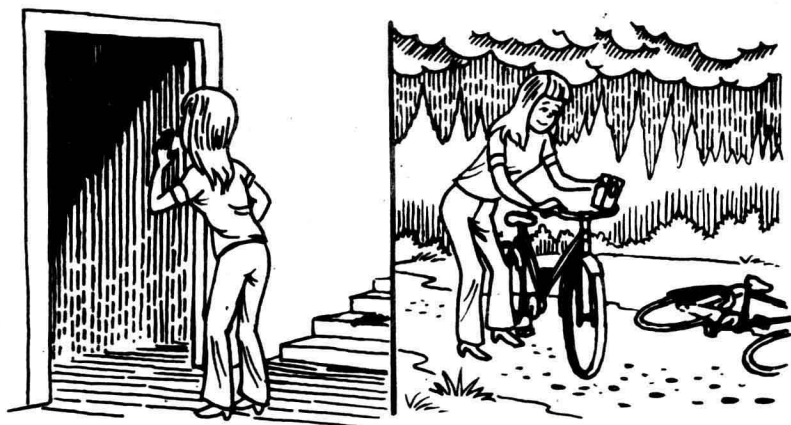
room where they had come into the house. She went across the room quickly and climbed out of the window. The bikes were still standing on the porch. While she was getting the flashlights, she saw that the rain was no longer coming down as hard as it was before, and the thunder now sounded farther away. She took the flashlights and climbed back through the window. With light to see where she was going, she was no longer as afraid as she was before.

- 23 Where did Patty go? What did she do when she went up the staircase?
- 24 How much light was there in the hall?
- 25 Where did she go then?
- 26 Were the bikes standing in the trees or were they standing on the porch?
- 27 What did she see while she was getting the flashlights?
- 28 Where did she go with the flashlights?
- 29 How did she feel when she had some light?

Once again she went down the staircase, more quickly now that she could see which steps were broken. At the bottom she began to call Ken again. This time she realized that his voice was coming from the farthest, darkest end of the long hall which the staircase led into. She went to the door at the end of the hall and opened it.

Ken was there, but it was not the sight of Ken lying on the floor, or the hole that he had fallen through, that caught Patty's eye the moment she opened the door. She could hardly believe what she saw.

"Look!" she cried. "Look at all the silver!" She shined the flashlight all



around the room so that he too could see. "There's silver everywhere! You've fallen into a room full of silver!"

30 Did Patty go down the staircase more quickly or did she go down more slowly?

31 What did she do at the bottom of the staircase?

32 What did she realize this time?

33 Where did she go? What did she do?

34 Was Ken there? Was the sight of him the first thing that caught her eye?

35 What caught her eye?

36 Why did she shine the flashlight around the room?