

《英语学习》读者丛书

《循序渐进阅读丛书》文选

SELECTIONS FROM
PROGRESSIVE
READING SERIES

(英汉对照)

杨芳林 郑荣成 编



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外语教学与研究出版社

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外语教学与研究出版社出版发行

(北京市西三环北路19号)

新华书店总店北京发行所经销

北京第二新华印刷厂排版

北京怀柔东晓印刷厂印刷

开本787×965 1/32 7.5印张 127千字

1990年12月第1版 1990年12月北京第1次印刷

印数1—15000册

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ISBN 7-5600-0558-6/H·276

定价：3.20元

《英语学习》读者丛书

编者的话

英语是世界上使用最广泛的语言之一,据《简明不列颠百科全书》统计,全世界人口中有七分之一使用英语作为交流工具。英语不仅是联合国各机构的主要工作语言之一,也是其它国际交流活动的重要语言之一。随着我国对外开放的实行和国内经济改革的迅速发展,我们迫切需要学习外国的先进经验,以加速我国四个现代化的进程,英语必将越来越发挥其巨大作用。

学习英语除必须掌握一定量的词汇外,还必须掌握其基本语法、读音规则和阅读一定量的外语材料,进行口头或笔头练习,才能逐步养成“听、说、读、写、译”五会技能。当然,“五会”技能不可能一蹴而就,需要经过多年的学习才能逐步掌握。

由于条件的限制,并非所有想学英语的人都有机会进入专业院校系统学习,或有机会进修提高。许多人必须通过各种方式在工作中边干边学,其困难是可想而知的。为了帮助广大读者克服学习中的困难,不断提高英语水平;同时,也为弥补《英语学习》因篇幅所限,不能完全满足读者学习需要之不足,我们特编辑出版这套《英语学习》读者丛书。

这套丛书以初级和中级英语水平的读者为对象,

既可作自学之用，也可用作课堂教学的辅助材料。丛书内容广泛，有注释读物、对照读物、语法词汇疑难解答、文学作品的阅读与欣赏、修辞与文体、翻译练习、情景对话等等。各册内容不求系统全面，唯以解决实际语言难点为主要目的。其中有曾在《英语学习》上刊载又经作者修订补充后成书的，也有因《英语学习》篇幅所限无法刊载而单独出书的。

內容提要

本书52篇短文选自《循序渐进阅读丛书》(Progressive Reading Series), 內容丰富多采, 文笔清新流畅, 语言生动活泼, 文字编排由浅入深。现增加汉语译文, 英汉对照, 以便于读者学习。本书部分文字曾在《英语学习》杂志上发表, 深受广大读者欢迎。全书每篇都有录音, 地道的美国音, 速度由慢到快, 适合不同水平的学习者的需要。欲购录音带者, 请与北京 8110 信箱 90 号分箱邮购组联系。

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The Size of the United States

Visitors to the United States are often surprised to learn the distance from the east coast to the west coast. It is more than 3,500 kilometers from the Atlantic Ocean on the east coast to the Pacific Ocean on the west. A jet plane crosses the continental United States in about five hours, but a traveler in a fast railroad train needs more than forty-eight hours to cross the country.

The new state of Hawaii is very far from the states on the east coast of the continent. Hawaii is in the Pacific Ocean. It is more than 3,000 kilometers from Hawaii to the mainland of the United States.

The Four Largest Cities

New York has a larger population than any other American city. In 1970, its population was about 8,000,000.

Chicago has the second largest population. More than 3,000,000 people lived in Chicago in 1970.

The third largest city is Los Angeles, with a population of 2,810,000. Philadelphia is the fourth largest city. More than 2,000,000 people live in Philadelphia, the first capital city of the United States.

New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, and Philadelphia are all larger than the nation's capital city, Washington,

D.C. The population of Washington is more than 700,000, but several cities have a larger population than that. Washington is one of the most beautiful American cities, but it is only the ninth city in size.

Schools in the U.S.A.

In the United States, boys and girls start school when they are five years old. In some states they must stay in school until they are sixteen. Most students are seventeen or eighteen years old when they graduate from secondary school. Another name for secondary school is high school.

Most children go to public elementary and secondary schools. The parents of public school pupils do not have to pay directly for their children's education because tax money supports the public schools. If a child attends a private school his parents pay the school for the child's education.

Today about half of the high school graduates go on to colleges and universities. Some colleges and universities receive tax money from the government. A student at a state university does not have to pay very much if his parents live in that state. Private colleges and universities are expensive, however. Almost half of the college students in the United States work while they are studying. When a student's family is not rich, he has to earn money for part of his college expenses.

Two Great Men of Science

George Washington Carver and Thomas Alva Edison were American scientists who were born during the nineteenth century. Carver, who was black, was born in Missouri in 1864. Although his parents were slaves, he was able to get a college education. After he graduated from Iowa State College, he developed many important new methods of farming. He also discovered many new uses for farm products. His discoveries included 300 uses for peanuts and 200 uses for sweet potatoes.

Edison, who was born in Ohio in 1847, was not a good student when he was a young boy, so his parents took him out of school and his mother educated him at home. Although he hated school, he loved science. One day, he burned down a barn while he was conducting a scientific experiment. Most people know what a great scientist Edison became. His 6,000 inventions included the electric light bulb, the phonograph, and the mimeograph machine.

How Did the States Get Their Names?

People who visit the United States sometimes wonder how the states got their names. Some of the most interesting names came from American Indian languages.

For example, Illinois was named for the Indians who used to live in that part of the country. In their language, Illinois means "Brave Men." Connecticut means "At the Long River Mouth" in the language of the Indians who used to live there.

Twenty-five of the states have Indian names, but other names were taken from different languages. Georgia and Pennsylvania have names which were taken from the Latin language. Florida and Colorado were named by Spanish people. States like New Hampshire and New Jersey were named for places in England.

The two newest states have names which did not come from any of those languages. Hawaii got its name from a word in the Hawaiian language which means "Homeland." Alaska was named by the Russians, from whom Alaska was bought in 1867.

America in the Machine Age

The population of the United States has more than doubled since 1920. The amount of land for farms has not increased very much. If there are more Americans to be fed, you might think each one must eat less, but that is not true. People in the United States are better fed today than in 1920. How can that fact be explained?

Today more food can be grown because machines are used. Horses have not been used for farm labor for many years; trucks and other machines are used instead of horses. When horses were used, it was necessary to grow food for them on large areas of farm land; but

very little food is needed for horses now. The land which was used for that purpose can now grow food for human beings instead. This is just one of many ways in which American life has been changed by machines.

Stone Walls in New England

In some parts of the United States, farming is easy. But farming has always been difficult in the northeastern corner of the country, which is called New England.

New England has many trees and thin, rocky soil. Anyone who has wanted to start a new farm there has had to work very hard. The first job has been cutting down trees. The next job has been digging the stumps of the trees out of the soil. Then the farmer has had the difficult job of removing stones from his land.

This work of removing stones never really ends, because every winter more stones appear. They come up through the thin soil from the rocks below. Farmers have to keep removing stones from the fields. Even today, farms which have been worked on for 200 years keep producing more stones.

That is why stone walls are used instead of fences around New England fields. The stone walls are not high; a man can easily climb over them. But they keep the farmer's cows from joining his neighbor's cows.

Farm Life in the United States

All big cities are quite similar. Living in a modern

Asian city is not very different from living in an American city. The same cannot be said about living on farms, however.

In many parts of the world, farmers and their families live in villages or towns. In the United States, however, each farm family lives on its own fields, often beyond the sight of any neighbor. Instead of traveling from a village to the fields every morning, American farmers stay on their land throughout the week. They travel to the nearest town on Saturdays for shopping or on Sundays for church. The children ride on buses to large schools which serve all of the farm families living in the area. In some areas, there are small schools serving a few farm families, and the children walk to school.

Of course life keeps changing for everyone, including farmers. Today there are cars, good roads, radios, and television sets. And of course there are modern machines for farming. All of these have changed farm life.

For many years, however, farming in America was often a lonely way of living. Farmers had to deal with their own problems, instead of getting help from others. They learned to try new methods, and to trust their own ideas instead of following older ways.

American Youth

Millions of words have been written about young people in the United States. There are reasons for this great interest in the ideas, feelings, and actions of youth.

Today there are about seven million Americans in

colleges and universities. Young persons under twenty-five make up nearly half of the American population. Many of these will soon be in charge of the nation. Naturally their ideas are important to everyone in the country, and it is necessary for older people to understand what they think and feel.

College students today have strong opinions about right and wrong. They are deeply interested in making a better life for all people, especially for those who have not been given a fair chance before now. They see much that is wrong in the lives of their parents. It is hard for them to see what is right and good in the older ways. As a result, there is often trouble in American families. Your country may be meeting such problems, too.

Which States Have the Most People?

California has the largest population of any of the states. Nearly 20,000,000 people live in California. In 1960 California had the second largest population, and New York was first. Today, however, New York is second with a population of 18,000,000. Pennsylvania is third with a population of 12,000,000. The fourth state, Texas, has a population of 11,000,000.

The fifth, sixth, and seventh largest states in population are Illinois, Ohio, and Michigan. New Jersey, Florida, and Massachusetts are the eighth, ninth, and tenth largest states.

Although Alaska is the largest state in size, it is the

smallest in population. Alaska had only 303,000 people in 1970.

Ecology on a College Campus

The University of California has many campuses. One campus is in Santa Cruz, California. Some of the Santa Cruz students are learning about ecology by living on a farm.

These students do not live in modern buildings. They live in tents on the 17-acre farm on which they raise fruits and vegetables without using machines.

Every morning, before they go to their university classes, the students feed the chickens and milk the goats. They receive no pay for their work, and they do not receive college credit, either. They are working on the farm because they want to learn about the land.

Stephen Kaffka, the 24-year-old manager of the farm, says: "It's a conscious effort to find an ecological and satisfying means of being in the world."

Educating TV Children

Many children act in TV shows. They work several hours every day, so they cannot go to a regular school. How do they get an education?

In Hollywood, where many TV shows are made, about forty teachers give lessons for the children in the shows. They teach wherever their pupils are working.

The teacher's job is very important. She is responsible for making sure that the child works only the permitted hours each week. She is also responsible for making sure that the child learns the required subjects. She makes sure, too, that the child gets enough rest and play, along with his education.

Child actors are required to attend classes twenty hours each week. California law says that they must be taught from September to the middle of June. If they do not get good marks in school, they are not permitted to continue working in TV shows.

TV children are usually good pupils, and most of their teachers like this special kind of work. Their classes are held in many interesting places. Sometimes the "classroom" is a Mississippi riverboat. Sometimes it is the inside of a spaceship. Often the pupils become famous stars.

Adults and Teenagers Together

Young people and older people do not always agree. They sometimes have different ideas about living, working and playing. But in one special program in New York State, adults and teenagers live together in peace.

Each summer 200 teenagers and 50 adults live together for eight weeks as members of a special work group. Everyone works several hours each day. The aim is not just to keep busy. It is to find meaning and enjoyment in work. Some teenagers work in the woods or on the farms near the village. Some learn to make furniture