

21st Century College English

Fast Reading

Book I

21 世纪大学英语

快 速 阅 读

(全新版)

第一册

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Reading 1

Suggested Time Limit: 4 minutes

The Professor and the “Swing”*by L. A. Hill*

Mr. Jones woke up early one morning, before the sun had risen. It was a beautiful spring morning, fresh and bright, so he went to the window and looked out. He was somewhat surprised to see a neatly dressed, middle-aged professor, who worked in the university just up the road from Mr. Jones's house, coming from the direction of the town. He had grey hair and thick glasses, and was carrying an umbrella, a morning newspaper and a bag. Mr. Jones thought that he must have arrived by the night train and decided to walk to the university instead of taking a taxi.

Mr. Jones had a big tree in his garden, and the children had tied a long rope to one of its branches, so that they could swing on it for fun.

Mr. Jones was surprised to see the professor come to a halt when he saw the rope, and look carefully up and down the road. When he saw that there was nobody in sight, he stepped quietly into the garden, put his umbrella, newspaper, bag and hat neatly on the green grass and took hold of the rope. He pulled it hard to see whether it was strong enough to take his weight, then ran as fast as he could and swung into the air on the end of the rope, his grey hair blowing all round his face. Backwards and forwards he swung, occasionally taking a few running steps on the grass when the rope began to swing too slowly for him.

Mr. Jones was standing by the window, watching the professor with a broad smile. After a long while, the professor stopped swinging at last. He straightened his tie, combed

his hair carefully, put on his hat, picked up his umbrella, newspaper and bag, and continued on his way to the university. And again, he was looking as quiet and correct and respectable as one would expect a professor to be.

330 words

Reading 1

The Professor and the“Swing”

Comprehension Check

Decide whether each of the statements below is true or false according to the text. Write the letter **T** or **F** before each statement.

- _____ 1. This story happens on a beautiful spring morning; that morning Mr. Jones got up as early as he usually did.
- _____ 2. Mr. Jones looked out of the window, and to his surprise, he saw a neatly-dressed man approaching his house from the direction of the town.
- _____ 3. The man was a professor who taught in a nearby university.
- _____ 4. In Mr. Jones's garden, there was a swing under a big tree, which caught the professor's eye.
- _____ 5. The professor hesitated for a while before he decided to step into the garden.
- _____ 6. He pulled the rope to see if it was solid enough to carry his weight.
- _____ 7. From time to time the professor got off and took a few quick steps so that he could keep swinging high into the air.
- _____ 8. The professor didn't enjoy much, because while swinging he had to keep alert all the time for fear that he might be seen by his students.
- _____ 9. The professor didn't forget to straighten his tie and comb his hair before he left the garden, and put on a look as respectable as a professor is expected to be.
- _____ 10. The author implies in this story that there is always a trace of childlike inno-

cence retained in our heart, and that sometimes we might stop putting on an act and be ourselves.

Reading 2 Suggested Time Limit: 5 minutes**The First Day of School***by Karl Krahne*

I have been teaching for seventeen years now. For the last three years I have been teaching the second grade at Washington Elementary School. Most of what happens on the first day of school every year is not new for me because I have been doing it for too long. But I still approach each new school year differently.

One way that each year is different is that I always hope that each year's new students will be different. I hope that this year's students will be smarter, better behaved, and more ready to settle down and start acting as though they are in school and not on vacation. I also hope that the new students will not cry, will have their lunch money, and will know what bus they are supposed to take to get home or whether their parents will be picking them up.

Another way I hope new school years will be different is that I hope I will be better prepared. I know that I have started school years before, so I should be ready to help the students organize their supplies and put them in the blue and red storage boxes at the back of the room. I should be ready for the children to get tired and start to fall asleep by two o'clock in the long afternoon. I should be ready to check that the students can write their names and can recognize their names when they see them.

But I am always surprised at the beginning of school. This year, for example, I had twenty-three new students. On the first day, six of them had forgotten to bring lunch money and did not have lunches of their own. I had to lend them money so they could eat in the cafeteria. Most of them knew how to get back home, but one little boy, Manfred, got on

the wrong bus, and I had to pick him up and drive him home. He cried all the way.

I was also surprised this year when three of the students did not seem to be able to read, and one of them would not write her name. I had given them easy books to read after lunch, while I was trying to make up some lists of students' names for the office. I noticed that the three children were looking at the pictures in the book but not at the writing. I stopped and asked them what they were reading, but they did not seem to know. I hope that they were just confused and afraid on the first day of school and that they will be able to read along with the other children.

In general, though, the first day of school is an exciting one, for the children and for me. They are excited to get away from home and to be with a lot of other children their age. They look forward to the new year in school and ask me a lot of questions about what we will do during the year. I am excited because I have a new group of students to teach, and I look forward to watching them learn writing, mathematics, and information about the community and the world they live in. Although it is sometimes difficult, it is very satisfying to be a teacher and to know that I am helping so many children become useful and educated adults.

573 words

Reading 2

The First Day of School

Comprehension Check

Choose the best answer for each of the following questions.

1. From the passage we learn that the author is _____.
 - A) an expert on special education
 - B) an elementary school headmaster
 - C) a primary school teacher with many years' teaching experience behind him
 - D) a teacher specializing in teaching beginners
2. Which of the following is true?
 - A) Whatever happens on the first day of school is nothing new to the author.
 - B) The author deals with each new school year in a more or less different way.
 - C) The author has become sort of indifferent to what happens on the first school day.
 - D) What happens on the first day of school seldom takes the author by surprise.
3. To the author, each year is different in that _____.
 - A) he hopes he will have different new students
 - B) he hopes he may have brighter, better behaved students
 - C) he hopes his students may be more ready for the new semester
 - D) all of the above
4. On the first day of school the author is expected to do the following EXCEPT that _____.
_____.

- A) he will see to it that the students can write and recognize their names
 - B) he will help the students organize their supplies and put them in their respective lockers
 - C) he will drive those students home whose parents do not come to pick them up
 - D) he will help the students settle down for the new school year
5. It can be inferred from the passage that _____.
- A) a few students are not well prepared for the new school year after the long vacation
 - B) the author is certain that some pupils in his class have special difficulty in reading
 - C) many parents forgot to give their children lunch money on the first day of school
 - D) quite a few children are scared on the first day of school
6. According to the author, it is both exciting and satisfying to be a teacher because you can _____.
- A) help the students learn more about the world they live in
 - B) watch the children learn reading, writing and mathematics
 - C) help children grow into useful and educated adults
 - D) all of the above

Reading 3 (Suggested Time Limit: 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ minutes)

Learn How to Love Reading

by Laura Gregory

Reading has been a passion all my life. When I was little, my mother read to me. I consumed books growing up. Many nights were spent hiding under the covers with a flashlight to finish a book.

Gone with the Wind captured me at the age of 13, and my parents still talk about how I essentially missed a family trip to the beach. Scarlett and Rhett so absorbed me I resented anything that took me from the hotel room and my book.

Reading is a part of my life every day. Sometimes the newspaper will be enough, other times a book must be at hand as well. Reading was more real to me than most things.

I was a teen-ager before becoming fully aware there were people who didn't like to read and, even worse, people who couldn't read. I can imagine a life without chocolate before a life without books.

Do you know how early you can start reading to a child? Did you know the first day of life isn't too early? Reading to a child isn't just about teaching them to read; it is about teaching them to love to read. Reading to a child from infancy offers several special gifts to the child.

First is the gift of the physical closeness you enjoy as you cuddle up while you read. Children love to be held, and reading together offers a great opportunity to do just that. I have seen readers with three and four children crowded on their laps to listen to a story.

The second gift is you are helping a child's brain develop. Early-brain research shows the first three years of life are the most critical for laying the foundations of literacy. Talking to and reading to children, whether they can respond or not, helps them learn to process words. You are helping them develop language and pre-reading skills that are vital to their readiness to learn when they go to school.

The third gift is you are helping them learn to love reading. Sharing books with children demonstrates reading is a wonderful thing. This should help them approach learning to read — and lifelong reading — with enthusiasm.

Reading should be a joy, not a burden. It is necessary to get along in daily life, it is necessary for learning and it is an open door to everything our world has to offer.

I believe that everyone should learn to read. I support efforts that make reading a reality for everyone. But the skill of reading is just the first step. The second step is to enjoy reading. Whether it is poetry or prose, fiction or nonfiction, books, newspapers, magazines or the Internet, I hope everyone has something they love to read. And I hope they read as often as possible. Reading can be educational, entertaining, inspiring. Whatever you need to get from reading, it can give you.

485 words

Reading 3

Learn How to Love Reading

Comprehension Check

Choose the best answer for each of the following questions.

1. The author has been a booklover since childhood. At 13, she was so absorbed in the novel *Gone with the Wind* that she _____.
A) spent several sleepless nights reading it
B) failed to enjoy to her heart's content a family trip to the beach
C) hid under the covers to finish reading it with a flashlight
D) had her mother read it to her every evening
2. "Scarlett" and "Rhett" must be _____.
A) the names of her best friends
B) the names of the hero and heroine of *Gone with the Wind*
C) the names of characters of another novel
D) none of the above
3. It can be inferred from the fourth paragraph that when grown up, Laura Gregory _____.
A) started to wonder why there were people who didn't like to read
B) began to sympathize with those who couldn't read
C) considered books to be indispensable to life
D) always preferred books to chocolates

4. When does the author suggest parents start reading to a child?
- A) In infancy.
 - B) The first day it was born.
 - C) When he or she is three.
 - D) After he or she is able to talk.
5. The purpose of reading to a child is _____.
- A) to broaden their minds
 - B) to satisfy their desire for curiosity
 - C) to teach them to love to read
 - D) to teach them to read
6. Reading to a child provides an opportunity _____.
- A) for the parent to create in the child a passion for reading
 - B) for the child to meet the desire to be held by his or her parent
 - C) for the parent to help develop the child's brain
 - D) all of the above
7. To lay a good foundation of literacy, parents should _____ before the children reach the age of three.
- A) talk and read to them, no matter whether they can make a response or not,
 - B) spare no pains to teach them how to process words
 - C) help them to understand what is read to them
 - D) make special efforts to help them develop language and pre-reading skills
8. Which of the following does Laura Gregory emphasize by way of conclusion?
- A) Reading should be a joy, a necessity, rather than a burden.
 - B) Reading is an open door to everything our world has to offer.
 - C) Reading can be entertaining and inspiring.
 - D) All of the above.

Reading 1

Suggested Time Limit: 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ minutes)

The Language of Color

by Jill Krieger Swanson

First impressions are lasting impressions — it's a well-known fact. But did you know that when someone first meets you, they remember about 90 percent of what you look like and only 10 percent of what you say? Of that 90 percent, the key thing a person will recall is color-related: the color of your clothing, skin, and hair.

I became keenly aware of this after pouring my heart and soul into a speech and three months later encountering an audience member who said, "I heard you speak last spring at the auxiliary lunch. I remember because you had on such a beautiful orangey-pink suit that day." So much for my well-expressed words and enlightening presentation.

Color talks and color communicates! Before we even open our mouths the colors we wear can speak volumes about us. The color you are wearing right now can be influencing your mood, how you feel about yourself and how you interact with others. It is affecting not only you but each person you encounter.

Using color correctly can add credibility and confidence. For instance, an outfit with red in it, worn to a job interview, will build self-assurance, and research has found that it can give a competitive edge in landing the job. You appear more energetic and capable of handling whatever comes your way.

Colors can be interpreted easily by considering two basic elements: intensity and depth. Intensity deals with how vivid or dull a color is. People tend to believe the brighter the color

(red, orange, yellow), the more outgoing the personality. Duller colors, such as gray and brown, tend to represent a more reserved nature.

When it comes to depth of colors, the general rule is: the darker the color the more authoritative you appear. Colors like black, charcoal and navy project strength, power and drama. Light colors convey an approachable nature, someone who is friendly and gentle. For example, when a woman wears soft pink or baby blue, people are more likely to approach her and ask for help, whether it's for directions or the time of day — because she appears kind and non-threatening.

Different colors send different messages and cause people to respond differently. Choose color not only by what looks good on you, but by the response it might generate. Learn to use color to your advantage, both physically and emotionally. At times, how color feels can be more important than it looks.

405 words