



阅读空间 · 新课标英语分级读物

· 英文注释版 ·

英语课程标准五级之六

5

Ben Hur

→ Pete Wright ←

宾虚



中国教育学会外语教学专业委员会推荐

中国电力出版社
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CENTURY ORIENTAL 世纪东方

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— 第 5 级 —

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出版说明

这是一套针对英语为外语的学生而出版的世界文学名著分级读物。丛书的编写紧密结合新《英语课程标准》的要求,按难易程度分为8个级别,适合各阶段学生的阅读需求,帮助学生在语言技能、语言知识、学习策略和文化意识等方面达到新课标的培养目标。

丛书主要有以下特点:

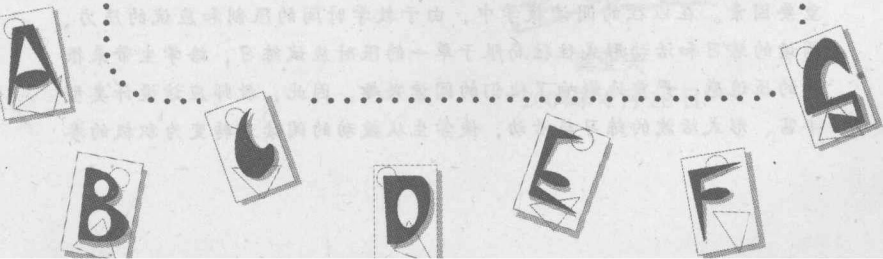
囊括西方经典文学名著,在帮助学生提高语言水平的同时,能通过阅读与自己外语水平相当的简写本一窥文学名著之全貌。

按新课标分级,词汇量从150词到3500词,满足中小学生的阅读需要。语言难度循序渐进,有助于教师拓展学生的语言知识和文化背景信息,提升学生的英语阅读技能。

第1至第5级一页一练,练习量大,测试题型丰富多样,非常有利于学生和教师以量化的方式考核和检测阅读能力与水平,是课堂教学的较好补充。

语言浅显、生动、地道,以英文注释的形式出版,既保留了英文的原汁原味,中英文双语注释又为读者在阅读英文时扫除了语言障碍,能够充分调动读者的阅读兴趣,使英语阅读更轻松。

希望本丛书能够增强我国学生的英语阅读能力,提升他们的文学素养。



序

随着国家《英语课程标准》的颁布和实施，中小学英语教学进入了一个新的阶段。新课标对学生课外阅读量和阅读目标都提出了更高的要求。作为课堂阅读的继续和延伸，课外阅读是中学英语阅读教学中的一个重要环节。新课标对课外阅读的新要求需要广大英语教师更好地解决以下三个问题：

❶ 如何激发和持久地保持学生的阅读兴趣？

❷ 如何将课外阅读活动与课堂阅读活动有效地结合？

❸ 如何在有限的课堂教学指导下监控和评价学生的课外阅读效果？

要解决上述问题，可以从以下几个方面考虑：

阅读选材 阅读材料的题材和难度是影响学生阅读兴趣的主要因素，因此教师在选择和推荐课外阅读材料时，首先应注意阅读材料是否符合学生的认知水平和语言水平，并在两者间找到平衡点。许多材料容易读懂，但对该年龄段的学生可能内容太过浅显，引不起学生的兴趣；也许材料符合学生的心理和认知水平，但语言太难，使学生望而却步。另外，阅读材料还应给学生提供更多的英语国家文化背景知识。许多英语文学名著、寓言故事等在英语国家家喻户晓，人们在言谈、写作时往往予以引用，如同我们引用古诗词和成语一样。如果学生对此毫不了解，就会造成交流和理解上的困难。这套百本之巨的《阅读空间·新课标英语分级读物》（西方文学名著系列）是在《英语课程标准》推广以来出版规模最大的一套中小学生英语阅读丛书，选题的设计者严格按照新课标的各个级别遴选阅读材料，提倡让英语阅读更轻松、更系统、更高效，这样的主导思想和策划方案无疑是正确的。这套丛书分级明确，语言浅显、地道，且与《英语课程标准》的分级标准相匹配，教师可以根据学生的外语水平和兴趣爱好帮助学生选择。

练习活动 阅读的练习和活动形式也是影响学生阅读兴趣的另一个重要因素。在以往的阅读教学中，由于教学时间的限制和应试的压力，阅读的练习和活动形式往往局限于单一的限时应试练习，给学生带来很强的压迫感，严重地影响了他们的阅读兴趣。因此，教师应该设计类型丰富、形式活泼的练习与活动，使学生从被动的阅读者转变为积极的参

与者，并使学生获得更多实践英语和使用英语的机会，如此才能激发和增强他们的阅读热情和兴趣。《阅读空间·新课标英语分级读物》丛书检测方式灵活，其多样化的阅读训练题型，对有意识地培养学生正确的学习策略很有意义。这套丛书的检测训练层级清晰，从初级的看图配话、趣味学用、拼字游戏、常识判断，到较深层的读前思考、推论归纳、背景探索，加上组对练习与互动讨论，明确地突出了学生语言应用能力的培养。

系统性与连续性 阅读材料的系统性，是指根据《英语课程标准》，从语言知识、语言技能、文化意识和学习策略等几个方面，对阅读材料进行科学分级，使学生能够循序渐进，拾级而上。阅读材料的连续性，则是指阅读材料的篇幅和内容的关联性能够让课堂阅读活动延续并拓展到课外。阅读教学中经常采用的短篇限时阅读，虽然容易控制时间，提高阅读速度，但是因学生的阅读能力存在差异而不能“面向全体”，且阅读限时和单一的应试练习形式也很难将课堂阅读活动延伸到课外。市面上的英文名著简写本版本虽多，但像《阅读空间·新课标英语分级读物》这样内容系统、分级明确，并配有大量形式多样、活泼的分项练习的，确实不多。它弥补了短篇阅读理解内容相对独立，不具有连续性的缺陷，使阅读活动能够从课堂延伸到课外。学生可以自己选择他们喜欢的、适合自己水平的读本，教师可以通过诸如写故事梗概、预测故事情节、进行小组讨论等多样、互动的阅读练习与活动，将学生在课堂中的思维延伸到课外，并在下一次课堂教学中检验和评价学生上一次课外阅读活动的结果。

希望有更多的一线教师积极总结自身的教学经验，广泛开展和参与阅读教学的课题研究与探讨，总结出更好、更有效率的阅读教学方法。

中国教育学会外语教学专业委员会理事长
人民教育出版社外语分社社长



龚亚夫

2004年4月18日

第 5 级

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Wanted! Dead or Alive	《通缉令》
The Witness	《证人》
The Bermuda Triangle	《百慕大三角》
Far From the Madding Crowd	《远离尘嚣》
The Monster of London	《伦敦怪物》
Emma	《爱玛》
The Story of an African Farm	《非洲农场的故事》
The Canterbury Tales	《坎特伯雷故事集》
My Granddad Jack the Ripper	《开膛手杰克》
Vanity Fair	《名利场》
Halloween	《万圣节》
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The Pilgrim's Progress	《天路历程》
Ben Hur	《宾虚》
Amistad	《断索怒潮》

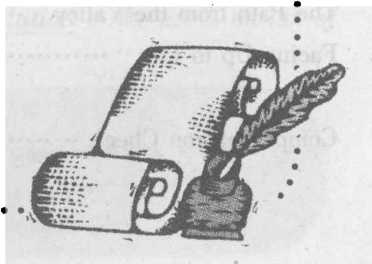
简

介

由小说拍成的电影《宾虚》在第32届(1960年)奥斯卡颁奖典礼上荣获11项大奖,此纪录直到38年后才被《泰坦尼克号》追平。

宾虚是约2000年前基督时代朱迪亚国的一个王子。他的一生经历了那个时代的许多重大事件。占领这个国家的罗马人对任何反抗他们的人都非常严酷和绝不宽恕。耶路撒冷的反抗活动沸腾了。

在一个小小的命运转折将宾虚投入旋涡前,他的生活舒适而安稳,但这种生活一去不复返了。他的故事是爱和恨的故事。



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Characters

Judah Ben Hur: a wealthy prince of Judea

Messala: a Roman, Ben Hur's childhood friend

Ben Hur's mother

Tirzah: Ben Hur's sister

Quintus Arrius: admiral and commander of the Roman fleet

Simonides: steward¹

Esther: Simonides' daughter

Sheikh Ilderim: Arabian chief, owner of camels and horses



In the Beginning

OK, I admit it. I am obsessed² with this Jewish man from a family of rich merchants³— Ben Hur, a Prince of Judah. Yes, he was the son of Hur. He lived a long time ago — 2,000 years. What is 2,000 years in Jewish history? — OK, it's a long time, but people don't change that much.

Ben Hur. He feels closer to me than a brother, much closer. I could be him. I hear you laughing, but listen:

I'm Jewish. I was even born here in Israel, which is more than you can say for most of the population⁴. We are a nation of

NOTES

1. **steward**: a manager. 管家, 仆人

2. **be obsessed**: be persistently occupied by thoughts of. 被迷住; 被吸引

3. **merchant**: person who buys and sells things. 商人

4. **population**: the people of a city, country, or district. 人口





immigrants¹. Dad is a big import/export man. Our yearly turn-over² is millions, maybe even a billion, I don't know. Israel is occupied, yes, occupied by the bloody Yanks³. We're America's big boot in this region.

Look at us! The history of the Jews is the history of a people sandwiched⁴ between great empires — in the north, and in the south, both fighting for control of the trade route that is Israel. Then, when they invented big boats, we were invaded⁵ from the sea to the west as well. The only person in our history who managed to side with the right “superpower”, was Solomon. That's why he was so successful. He made friends with the winning side.

Yes, everyone says how great Solomon was. He was just a small time king in a little country on a main road.

“What about his great and wonderful temple⁶?” I hear you say. Well, his great temple was about the size of my father's block of offices. Look at the measurements in the Bible. Pace it out on the ground. It was the size of a medium synagogue⁷, even if you used the most generous estimation⁸ of a “cubit” — which was their unit of measurement at the time. The temple was destroyed, of course. Jerusalem has been knocked⁹ flat so many times, that the city is actually built on a three or four meter pile of rubble¹⁰!

NOTES

1. **immigrant**: a person who comes from one country to live in another country. 移民; 侨民
2. **turn-over**: the amount of money going through a business. 营业额
3. **Yank**: slang for American. 美国人
4. **sandwich**: place tightly between two other people or things. 夹在当中
5. **invade**: go into a country to attack it. 侵略; 侵入
6. **temple**: a place of worship. 神殿
7. **synagogue**: a Jewish temple or church. 犹太教堂
8. **estimation**: the act of estimating or forming a judgment. 估计, 预算
9. **knock**: hit something. 敲; 击; 打
10. **rubble**: a mass of broken stones or bricks. (一堆) 碎石, 瓦砾



Gold? What about all the gold in the temple?

Look, there was loads of gold around at that time — tons of it. Every time one tribe had finished “smiting”¹ another tribe and stealing all the gold out of their temples, they had to put it somewhere. We’re a trading nation. If that gold had found its way onto the money market, the whole financial system in the area would have collapsed². Honest. We had to put it somewhere. Why not put it in the temples? That way we could look, but not touch.

Israel! What a tall, thin country. A modern tank can fire a shell right from one side to the other. Having a country here, is like building a house on a motorway!

Ben Hur had problems. In his time, there was a Roman army of occupation³, but he was a rich kid. Things weren’t too bad. Rich people “get on”. They can afford to! Ben Hur grew up with the son of a leader of the Roman army of occupation. They went hunting together. They played in the streets together. They stole fruit from the market stalls near the temple together. They probably even chased the same girls. They were best friends. They didn’t know what the Romans were doing to Israel. The Israelites were accustomed⁴ to foreigners using their land to fight battles on.

Of course, when Ben Hur grew up a bit and travelled around learning his father’s business, he realised that the Romans would be perfectly happy to flatten⁵ Jerusalem again if the local people made too much trouble. He tried to calm down the Jews, who wanted the Romans out. He tried to calm down the Romans too.

The big problem came when the Romans wanted to put all their bits and pieces representing their own gods, into the Jewish temple. Ben Hur,

NOTES

1. smite: strike or beat. 击败, 毁灭
2. collapse: break down suddenly. (计划, 希望等) 崩溃
3. occupation: capture; seize. 占领
4. accustomed: used to. 习惯了的
5. flatten: make or become flat. 变平



as a member of the rich, trading class, helped keep the Romans out of the temple. This was about 30 A. D. Christian time.

Unfortunately, the Romans of the time didn't think that the Jewish people would be cooperative until the Jewish priests were made a bit more friendly, or a bit more dead! This was a good recipe for trouble. Ben Hur was an inconvenience¹ to the occupying army. He used his influence² to limit the Roman control of Jerusalem. Unfortunately, that made Jerusalem a good place for rebels³ to meet and plot⁴ to throw the Romans out. We were "God's chosen people", after all!

The Romans wanted Ben Hur out of the way. One of the ambitious⁵ young Roman soldiers rising up in the ranks⁶ of power, was his childhood friend, Messala.

You have to admit that the Romans were very advanced for their time, very "civilised". They had swords, spears, archers⁷, chariots⁸, ships, and they had roads — good roads! What did the Jews have? Clubs and knives. Did you ever wonder why the Jews in the Bible were always "smiting" people? Yes, they "smote" anyone they could — in the name of their "One True God", of course — just like everyone else did! Yes, with a stick, or a blunt⁹ sword made out of soft brass¹⁰, smiting was all you could do. The Jews did a lot of it. If they weren't fighting their neighbours, they were fighting each other. They still are!

Most of these smiting battles we lost. Why? Because smiting-

NOTES

1. **inconvenience**: something that gives trouble to someone. 不方便
2. **influence**: ability to affect something. 影响; 作用
3. **rebels**: those who fight to overthrow a government. 反叛者
4. **plot**: secretly plan. 秘密计划
5. **ambitious**: full of ambitions. 野心的
6. **rank**: level of authority in an organisation. 军衔, 地位
7. **archer**: person who shoots with a bow and arrows. 弓箭手
8. **chariot**: two wheeled, horse drawn vehicle. 双轮战车
9. **blunt**: without a point or sharp edge. 钝的, 不锋利的
10. **brass**: an alloy of copper and tin. 黄铜



sticks and little knives, and throwing stones like King David wasn't much use up against all these sophisticated¹ weapons like swords, and bows and arrows, and chariots.

The only advanced thing we had, was our idea of a God who didn't live in a temple and hide all the time. Our God was everywhere! He was bigger, stronger and more wonderful than all the little gods of the other tribes. If the Jews were doing well, God was helping us. If we were doing badly, God was angry about something. I don't know, perhaps we stole the idea for our God from the Babylonians. Babylon was a centre for education and culture while the Jews were still living in tents and scrabbling² about the rocks for a living. We certainly stole a lot of other ideas from them.

Still, the Jews were good at trading. We've always been good at that. Well, if you live on a trade route, you learn fast!

Where was I? Oh, yes, Ben Hur. You're going to laugh when you hear this. I was down at the market. It was hot. I was passing a stall selling old second-hand videos — the tapes, not the machines. Normally, I don't buy from there, because a few hours out in that heat shrinks³ the tapes, and then they can't be played on anything! Useless! BUT...

I saw a battered old video case with a picture of a German "looking" bloke careering⁴ around in a chariot race. Yes, it was Ben Hur — or, rather, it was Charlton Heston — Charles Hestor before he got to Hollywood. I bet you didn't know that!

Big movie. Loooooooong movie. I bought it, took it home, and sat through it — the whole two hundred and twenty two minutes of it.

NOTES

1. **sophisticated**: complex and advanced. 久经世故的; 老练的
2. **scrabble**: grope about to find or collect sth. 扒寻
3. **shrink**: become smaller or shorter after washing or heating. 抽; 缩
4. **career**: travel wildly. 急驰, 飞奔



It was crap, but I was caught. I could see right through all the Hollywood bullshit¹, but I was caught! Ladies and Gentlemen, I am a prisoner of the spirit of Ben Hur. I'm so obsessed with Ben Hur, that I feel more like him than myself, if you know what I mean.

I'm not complaining. Obsessions can be a good thing. They stop you getting involved² with stupid politics like your friends. A lot of my friends, rich kids like me, are joining groups that want to force the government to allow the Palestinians a "fair" share of the land here, and equal treatment with the Jews.

Don't get me wrong, I'm for equality, just as much as the next person, but, if the Palestinians get a good foothold here, they are going to use it to throw all us Jews into the bloody sea!

Well, I watched this film. I watched Charlie Heston as Ben Hur, clambering³ about the desert just outside Hollywood. It doesn't look anything like here — perhaps it looked as hot, that was all. I was like a child. I took it all in. I was convinced and not convinced at the same time. Does that make any sense to you?

You'll think this is stupid. This is what I thought: the film is pure "Hollywood", but I recognise the names of places which are just down the road from my house. The film was made to satisfy the American audiences, but the film was taken from a book. Perhaps the story in the book is true. Perhaps it isn't, I don't know. It doesn't seem to matter whether the story is true, or even partly true. The act of writing it down has given some reality to it. All the things that happen in the story have happened in fragments, in bits and pieces, to people in the past.

NOTES

1. **bullshit**: contemptuous term for something considered rubbish. 胡说
2. **involve**: be very busy with something. 陷入; 专注
3. **clamber**: use your hands and feet to climb over something. 爬; 攀登



.....

The story is like a communal history for the fellowship¹ of humanity. Am I losing you? Are you asleep yet? My mother always says that I think too much for my own good.

She's wrong. First, I feel. Then I try to understand what I feel, by thinking. Sorry, Mum!

This is what I'm doing. I'm following in the "footsteps" of Ben Hur. I've done the first part. I'm a rich kid like Ben Hur. He was friends with a rich Roman's son. I'm friends with the son of one of the American "military² advisers". So far, so good.

You'll laugh at this, too. One of my aunts has got a house right by the gate where the Roman army entered Jerusalem — did I tell you that? I live in Jerusalem. I went to my aunt's house. I thought that I would have some special "experience" there, because Ben Hur's fortune³ went bad when he managed to knock a loose tile off the parapet⁴ from which his family were watching the "Grand Entry". The tile nearly "smote" the new Roman Governor. Nothing, I had no experience, nothing. I didn't feel anything out of the ordinary⁵. I was disappointed. I didn't even get a good feed. My aunt's tighter than a camel's arse⁶. I was lucky to get a cup of tea! What? Oh...

What happened when the tile fell? I'll repeat it for those who don't know the story — where have you been all your life?

NOTES

1. **fellowship**: togetherness and mutual interest. 共同参与, 伙伴关系
2. **military**: of or for soldiers, an army, of or for all the armed forces.
军用的, 军队的
3. **fortune**: future luck. 运气, 好运
4. **parapet**: a wall built high up on a building. (屋顶等边上的) 低矮挡墙
5. **ordinary**: usual, not special. 普通的; 平常的
6. **arse**: (not in polite use) buttocks. (不礼貌用语) 臀部, 屁股



I felt the tile move under my arm. The heavy, baked¹ clay² slab³ rang dully as it settled back in place. The noise coming up from the street was deafening. The Romans were coming. There was a new governor in Israel. The rumours were that the new man was hard and ruthless. Was it true? In that heat, everyone exaggerated.

“Mother, sister, there’s Messala. Do you see him? On the grey horse. I’ve never seen a horse that big!”

Out of the corner of my eye, I saw Tirzah gazing down at Messala. Her skin was unusually pale for one of our race⁴. There was a tinge⁵ of red on her cheekbones. I think she loved Messala. Perhaps she had always loved him.

“Look! The new Governor!”

I pointed at the stern man on the black horse in the street below. He was richly dressed. His armour⁶ shone in the sunlight, silver and gold. As I reached out and pointed, it felt as if someone was tugging sharply at my sleeve. I glanced sideways. Then I heard the grate of a tile sliding over mortar. And then it was gone. My heart stopped. The heavy tile hung in space. It seemed to float on the air, but it was an illusion. It was dropping faster and faster, down towards the street and the people below. Someone shouted. Was it me?

The reins⁷ on the black horse seemed to fly sideways. The horse

NOTES

1. **bake:** cook food in an oven. 烤; 烘; 焙
2. **clay:** stiff, sticky earth that becomes hard when baked. 黏土, 陶土
3. **slab:** big flat piece of something. 平板; 厚板
4. **race:** *here*, ethnic origin. (此处指) 民族, 种族
5. **tinge:** small visible colouring. (较淡的) 色彩
6. **armour:** protective clothing, often of metal. 盔甲
7. **reins:** straps by which a horse is steered and controlled. 缰绳

