

总主编：戴炜栋

# 新世纪研究生 公共英语教材

READING B (TEACHER'S BOOK)

## 阅读

(教师用书)

# B

主编：王 哲 王善平 赵伟礼

  
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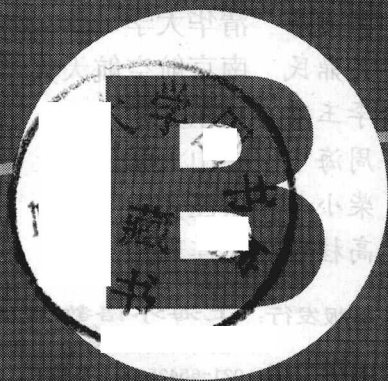
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编者

2002年6月

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## UNIT ONE

### Party Politics

#### Warm-up

**ball:** a formal gathering for social dancing

**prom:** (short for “promenade”) a formal dance held for a high-school or college class typically at or near the end of the academic year

**masque:** (or masquerade) a costume party at which masks are worn; a masked ball

**cocktail party:** a social gathering, usually held in the early evening (between 5 and 8 o'clock), at which cocktails and light refreshments are served. This type of party can range from extremely formal to very casual. For instance there are **Cocktails and Cocktail Party** — Guests are mostly standing and dress attire (服装) can range from business to casual. **Cocktail Buffet** — Small tables and chairs are set up for guests after they fill up their plates at the buffet station. The attire is usually formal or business attire. This event can last 2–3 hours. **Cocktail Reception** — The most formal event. Attire is very dressy for women and usually black tie for men. The reception can be held for a distinguished guest of honor or event, such as an opening of a new performing arts center or film premier. There is so much food that the reception can count as dinner and Champagne is always served.

#### Background Information

1. **Judith Martin** (1938— ): a columnist. She was born in Washington D. C. of the United States and graduated from Wellesley College. She lived in various foreign capitals as a child, as her father, a United Nations economist, was frequently trans-

ferred. She worked at the *Washington Post* for 25 years, covering social events at the White House and the embassies, before becoming a theatre and drama critic. As she spent her time as a reporter, she became aware of the fact that manners and proper etiquette were slowly diminishing in the United States. In 1978, she created the *Miss Manners* column answering questions on etiquette. The column is now syndicated. She has written ten books and two novels.

As her work as Miss Manners grew, situations began to arise that had never been broached before. She was called upon to provide answers to difficult situations. These answers have become the basis for polite society today. Her columns, as well as her books, have become the guidelines for handling everything from rude clerks to the proper way of handling second and third marriages. Her sly wit made reading about etiquette downright fun. She once explained that etiquette “is about all of human social behavior” and is “a little social contract we make that we will restrain some of our more provocative impulses in return for living more or less harmoniously.” (from an interview with Judith Martin by the *Psychology* magazine in 1998)

2. **Miss Manners:** the fictional figure created by columnist Judith Martin. It appears in columns of varied newspapers and magazines in the United States.
3. **receiving line:** a line of people formed to greet arriving guests individually, as at a formal gathering. This custom still survives to this day. It is a quaint and deadly dull tradition which is often practiced at wedding receptions, funerals, and almost anyplace where the food is really good.

## Introduction

**Party Politics** is a column essay written in the 1990s by etiquette expert Judith Martin or Miss Manners for the *Business Week* magazine. As usual as she has been practicing for years, Miss Manners explains in her witty and acerbic style about questions of etiquette, discretion, and professionalism. The essay intends to give some dos-and-don'ts tips on the etiquette for one who goes to office parties which are common in the business community.

The essay begins by listing the entertainments and relaxations one could enjoy from a free office party (para. 1 – 5). The humorous writing impresses readers that office parties are really where one can escape from daily bores and pressure in the workplace.



However, party-goers can never be overjoyed without any worrying because etiquette is omnipresent. Miss Manners (the author) takes pains to elaborate on the manners or behaviors one needs to care about and observe if he or she attends such a party (para. 6–17). For the employers (the ones offering the party), they might be worried about the embarrassment of being left alone by the reveling guests, the unintentional omission or mistake when issuing invitations, or simply the way they behave towards their subordinates (para. 8–11). As to the employees (the ones enjoying the free party), they have to be concerned about containing themselves somehow in every way they behave. No matter whether it is the topic they want to bring up to the boss, the chattering they spread among peers or the dresses they wear, the beneficiaries of the free party have to think a little bit before speak out or act up (para. 9–17).

Finally, Miss Manners suggests several ways to ease the embarrassment, evade the complaint and create a satisfactory party for everyone (para. 18 – the end), including the outdated practice of holding a receiving line. The advice offered in the very last paragraph of the text is probably a best-for-all solution to get rid of all the overly particular manners or etiquette one has to keep an eye on while enjoying a free party.

This essay is typical of Judith Martin's writing style. The wordings are humorous and stinging. The message and ideas are always expressed in a roundabout rather than a straight way. Such a style, while attracting some readers, annoys other readers who prefer a down-to-earth tone in reading books or essays on topics concerning common sense or plain life experience.

## Language Points

1. **etiquette, propriety, protocol, decorum** (para. 1): These nouns refer to codes governing correct behavior (礼仪, 礼节).

**etiquette** and the plural form **proprieties** denote the forms of conduct prescribed in polite society.

*Examples:*

Man is a slave to etiquette.

Even when she was angry, she observed the proprieties.

**protocol** refers to the official etiquette observed in affairs of state. The word now often denotes simply a code of correct conduct.

*Examples:*

The visiting prime minister, dispensing with protocol, exchanged informal remi-

niscences with her neighbor at the table.

Graduation exercises had to be consistent with academic protocol.

**decorum** and the singular form **propriety** denote conformity with established standards of manners or behavior.

*Examples:*

One hour of life, crowded to the full with glorious action is worth whole years of those mean observances of paltry decorum?

He was afraid that, from some obscure motive of propriety she would bring Janet with her.

2. **socialize** (para.1): interact with other people in a social situation

*Examples:*

There will be no socializing during business hours.

I tend not to socialize with my colleagues.

3. **melee** (para.1): a confused, hand-to-hand fighting in a pitched battle or confused, tumultuous mingling, as of a crowd

*Examples:*

The man tried hard to push his way through a melee of bicycles and crowd.

During the rush-hour melee, John lost his briefcase.

4. **petition** (para. 1): a solemn request to a superior authority (as a noun) or ask for or request formally (as a verb)

*Examples:*

The town's people sent a petition to the government asking for electric light for the town.

They petitioned for an early end to the fighting.

5. **looped** (para.1): formed into or having a loop or loops; drunk, smashed, inebriated, intoxicated; enthusiastic, keen

*Examples:*

You were looped last night. You don't remember what happened.

These days he's looped on rodeos (骑术表演).

6. Furthermore, partygoers figure, it offers relief from such pesky obligations as thanking anyone or being kind to wallflowers because there really aren't any hosts. (para.2): Moreover, at office parties, people don't feel as if they have to be nice to less popular people because no one person is host.

**pesky**: troublesome or annoying

*Examples:*

He could not sleep last night because of the pesky mosquito.

The pesky weather could only worsen her sorrow and frustration.

7. **Nobody has to pay (that same nobody who generously provides the telephone line for long-distance personal calls), and so nobody's feelings need be considered.** (para. 2):

In this sentence, the three "nobody"s connote that everything in the office party is free since there is not any host in the traditional sense.

8. **This is all pure hospitality — there for the taking, like the office-supplied felt-tipped pens everyone has been pocketing all year.** (para. 3): The office party lets people take advantage of the company's generosity.

**pocket:** take as one's own, often dishonestly; steal

*Examples:*

He pocketed a clear hundred on the transaction.

I expect the Council will just pocket the proceeds of the sale, not spend it on making improvements to the town.

9. **thrill** (para. 3): cause to feel a sudden intense sensation (as a verb) or a source or cause of excitement or emotion (as a noun)

*Examples:*

The traveler thrilled us with his stories.

It gave me a thrill to know I had passed the examination.

10. **For those still dimly aware of the once-standard give-and-take of real social life, this no-fault approach to business entertaining seems a godsend.** (para. 4): It's wonderful

how you don't have to be grateful to any individual for the company party.

In this sentence, the expression "the once-standard give-and-take" refers to the conventional idea that if one wants to take or gain something he or she has to give or pay at the same time. The word "no-fault" means being free from duty or obligation, and the word "godsend" means a gift from God.

11. **incur** (para. 5): acquire or come into (sth usu undesirable) as a result of certain actions.

*Examples:*

More than half of these companies incurred substantial losses during the stock market crash.

His irresponsibility and dishonesty incurred the anger of his friends.

12. **Flinty Miss Manners does not recognize any holidays from etiquette.** (para. 6): This is a metaphorical expression implying that etiquette or appropriate deeds of act are still necessary for the more relaxing occasions such as a party.

13. **hang around** (para.8): spend time idly or keep company with someone else

*Examples:*

Having no mood to read the books, he hanged around on campus.

Her parents wanted to know more about the friends their daughter has been hanging around with for the past several months.

14. **ingrained** (para.8): (of habits, tendencies, etc.) firmly established or deep-seated

*Examples:*

It's an ingrained prejudice that intelligence concerns one's skin color.

No one can persuade him to get rid of the ingrained habits of a decade.

15. **Discreet questioning establishes that this is an employee's guest.** (para.9): This sentence means that by the way of asking several questions in a careful and clever way the boss finds out that the guest is not one of the employees in the company.

**discreet:** marked by, exercising, or showing prudence and wise self-restraint in speech and behavior

*Examples:*

The secretary is very discreet. She never tells anyone unconcerned anything about the company's business.

One should drive at a discreet distance from the vehicles ahead.

16. **a passing acquaintance** (para.9): someone with whom one is not very familiar except seeing or greeting for one or two times

17. **Now, the reason the invitation said "and guest" was to avoid the ticklish issue of who is still married to whom and what the spouse calls itself.** (para.10): Now, the invitation says "and guest" because it is hard to keep track of who is still married to whom and what the name of the current spouse is.

In this sentence, **and guest** refers to the expression commonly written on an invitation meaning the partner the invitee is with for attending a party.

18. **They will, however, be memorable, darkly charging the company with promoting immorality.** (para.10): These spouses who did not go to the party would remember this event and accuse the company of encouraging their employees to tell lies.

The word **immorality** in this sentence indicates the act of lying or cheating the spouse.

19. **True office romances are the least of them, with their charges of favoritism and melding professional and personal time.** (para.11): This sentence implies that generally those who intend to have some romantic affairs will not develop a relation with a colleague of the company because such a behavior will be regarded as inappropriate.

ate. And persons who do have such a romantic relation would tend to be criticized as favoring one particular employee over others or mixing business with private life.

**favoritism:** a display of partiality toward a favored person or group

*Examples:*

It was a badly run enterprise where the management appointed people by favoritism.

During those years, the joint ventures investing in this special economic development zone enjoyed substantial public favoritism from local government.

**meld:** mix or combine (as a verb); a blend or merger (as a noun)

*Examples:*

Looking afar from the beach, swimmers could see the white clouds and an azure sky melded.

The new prescription is claimed to be a meld of traditional Chinese and western medicine.

**20. unreciprocated** (para. 11): not showing or giving in response or return

*Examples:*

The clerk was disappointed when realizing that his business proposal was actually an unreciprocated one.

Good wishes should never be unreciprocated.

**21. have one's mind on** (para. 12): mind or care about sth

*Examples:*

Having his mind on cars, Peter never talks about anything else.

Mary cannot forget her first lover and she will probably have her mind on him for the rest of her life.

**22. platitude** (para. 13): a cliché or banal remark

*Examples:*

There is nothing original in his article but a pile of words and expressions full of platitudes.

This book on etiquette is no more than water-and-milk platitude.

**23. unaccountably** (para. 13): surprisingly, unacceptably, unsatisfactorily

*Examples:*

The photographer was enraged because his works was unaccountably withdrawn from the gallery.

The young man had to see the doctor for his recent unaccountably forgetful be-

havior.

24. **In one evening, they manage to cut through the entire hierarchy and procedures the boss has painstakingly established for the purpose of being spared this kind of importuning.** (para. 13): This sentence means that those business-minded employees hope to have a promotion or have their business ideas appreciated or proposals approved by their bosses in a shortest time. But actually the bosses have worked for years to build up the steps or blocks which are intended to avoid employees to make such a request.

**spare of:** avoid or be free from

*Examples:*

You might have a relief once you are spared of all the duties.

He tried his best to be spared of trouble in this project.

**importune:** ask for urgently or repeatedly

*Examples:*

The child importuned the mother to take him to the amusement park again.

Don't give him money. He would only importune more for it from you.

25. **What else does talking frankly and informally mean but an invitation to unload opinions without any career consequence?** (para. 14): This sentence means that the idea of frank and free talk implies one could speak out to the boss without worrying that his career would be affected by the not-so-nice words towards the boss.

26. **Here is where the company has pulled a fast one on its employees.** (para. 15): Here is where the company has tricked its employees.

**pull a fast one on sb:** play a trick on someone as in a magic show; engage in unexpectedly unfair or deceitful behavior to achieve one's goal

*Examples:*

He tried to put a fast one on us, but we outsmarted him.

Stossel says that even though the deal might look good on its surface, a closer look reveals the lawyers pulled a fast one.

Customers feel Verant has "pulled a fast one on them" and the bitter taste that it has left them with may be too sour to be sweetened anytime soon.

27. **let loose** (para. 15): give someone freedom or the chance to make changes or be in charge

*Examples:*

Who let the teacher loose on that class?

An inexperienced politician should not be let loose to run the party.

Born in captivity, Chopkins dreams of one day escaping the research lab and really letting loose.

28. **What constitutes a couple is a murkier question than Miss Manners and any sensible employer ought to investigate, ...** (para. 20): This sentence implies that it is very difficult to know who and who will come to the party as a couple.

29. **Having to work is enough distraction from one's more intimate relationships, and the staff was not compiled like a guest list, according to personal compatibility.** (para. 20): This sentence means that working away from home has affected the close relationship among family members. If the employees' spouses or friends were not invited to the party, the invitations would not look like the guest lists in the real sense which identify guests together with their agreeable or harmonious partners.

**compatibility:** the ability of existing or performing in harmonious, agreeable, or congenial combination with another or others

*Examples:*

More and more people realize that spending quality time together is one of the best ways to enhance the compatibility of family relationships.

The negotiators have attempted to prove that compatibility between the two political parties is not only possible but also feasible.

30. **whoop it up** (para. 21): have a wild and enjoyable time usually with drink (alcohol)

*Examples:*

Let's go to the party and whoop it up.

The graduates whooped it up all night in the disco.

Here are some great photos of Japanese festivals and celebrations! You may find some big surprises on what and how Japanese whoop it up!

31. **tell off** (para. 21): find fault with someone; tell one you are angry; tell one he is wrong

*Examples:*

The director told John off for being late for work again.

If we don't want to be told off, we'd better hurry up in processing the task.

If he mentions my toupee (男子假发) once more, I'm going to tell him off.

32. **counter** (para. 22): go against or oppose

*Examples:*

It turned out that what he had done countered his promise.

To my surprise, she countered my proposal with one of her own.

33. **outgrow** (para. 23): lose or discard in the course of maturation

*Examples:*

During the stay in the city all by herself she outgrew her youthful idealism.

When he turned into his forties, she seemed to outgrow all the bad habits he had formed for years.

34. **The clever employee will dress as the executives do, keeping in mind that there are few fields in which people are condemned for looking insufficiently provocative.** (para. 24): This sentence means that the smart employee will wear the same or similar style of clothes as that of the boss because they understand that less bold or vulgar dress is safer and will be free from blame and unfavorable judgment by others.

**provocative:** causing or intending to cause interest or some other emotive reaction

*Examples:*

Inspired by the provocative speech delivered by that politician, the demonstrators marched to the city hall to have a sit-in.

What the opponents have done is highly provocative.

35. **Refusing or limiting drinks is not the handicap at business parties that it may be under the overly hospitable eye of a private host.** (para. 24): This sentence implies that at office parties the guests could refuse to drink or drink as less as they like without being complained. But at a private party, due to the hospitality of the host and out of politeness, the guests have to drink more than they want to.

36. **corner** (para. 24): force someone into a difficult or threatening situation

*Examples:*

The company was cornered for the last business quarter due to the sluggish market.

The police cornered the bank robber in the building.

37. **strand** (para. 24): bring into or leave in a difficult or helpless position

*Examples:*

The convoy was stranded in the desert.

He was stranded in the strange town without money or friends.

## Key to Exercises

### I. Comprehension Check

i

1. D    2. C    3. D    4. A    5. B    6. D    7. D    8. C    9. A    10. B

ii



1. **Paraphrase:** A small piece of lawn outside the office will create the same merry atmosphere as that of a holiday and the staff will easily enjoy themselves.  
**Rhetoric feature:** humor and use of pun, e. g. **looped**
2. **Paraphrase:** Since it seems that the office party is free, the participants feel greatly relaxed. They no longer care about the annoying etiquette rules for common gatherings such as expressing gratefulness to the host or showing consideration towards others in the parties.  
**Rhetoric feature:** humor and sarcasm
3. **Paraphrase:** Thanks to the generous hosts, everything at the office party is free and partygoers can take away anything they would like such as some office stationery they have been taking home all the time.  
**Rhetoric feature:** sarcasm and humor
4. **Paraphrase:** Some partygoers may still be aware of the reality in life, that is, if you want to take you have to give. For these people, such free office party looks like a generous gift from the god.  
**Rhetoric feature:** humor and simile
5. **Paraphrase:** The rules for etiquette still need to be observed in every kind of parties.  
**Rhetoric feature:** sarcasm and metaphor
6. **Paraphrase:** The warmhearted hosts may feel annoyed and depressed when they see that the guests are unwilling to approach them and try to keep away from them as much as possible.  
**Rhetoric feature:** sarcasm and humor
7. **Paraphrase:** In writing an invitation, the host tended to use “and guest” rather than “and spouse” or “and Mrs. /Mr. /Ms so and so” in order to avoid problems or angers resulted from the ignorance of the guests’ identities or families.  
**Rhetoric feature:** sarcasm and humor
8. **Paraphrase:** The employees intend to cross the ranks and gaps between them and their bosses in one evening. But such differences are actually what the bosses have tried to establish through years-long efforts.  
**Rhetoric feature:** sarcasm and humor
9. **Paraphrase:** As a matter of fact, the company has cheated its employees.  
**Rhetoric feature:** sarcasm and metaphor
10. **Paraphrase:** At the end of an office party, the bosses will stand by the door and try to greet every guest to express thanks for his or her presence in the party.  
**Rhetoric feature:** sarcasm, metaphor and humor