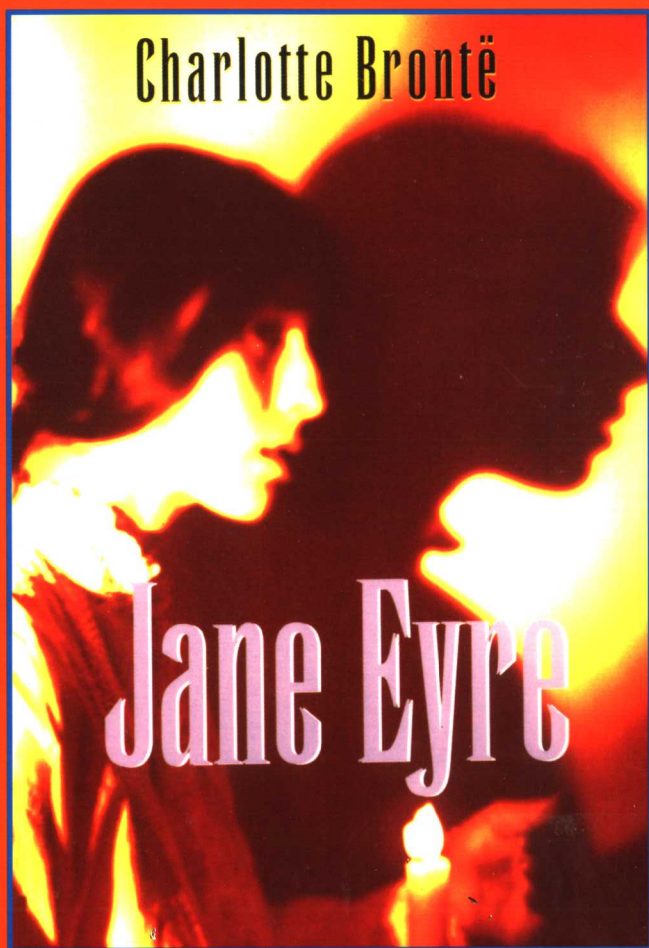




企鵝英語簡易读物精选

简·爱



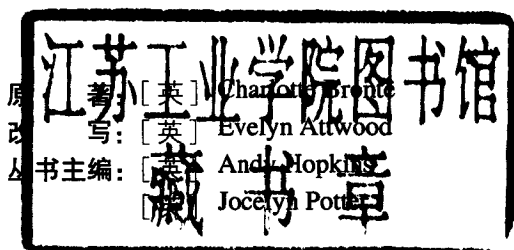
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Jane Eyre

简·爱



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企鹅英语简易读物精选 (大一学生)

简·爱

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大量阅读简易读物 打好英语基础（代序）

北京外国语大学英语系历来都十分重视简易读物的阅读。我们要求学生在一、二年级至少要阅读几十本经过改写的、适合自己水平的英语读物。教学实践证明，凡是大量阅读了简易读物的学生，基础一般都打得比较扎实，英语实践能力都比较强，过渡到阅读英文原著困难也都比较小。这是我们几十年来屡试不爽的一条经验。

为什么强调在阅读英文原著之前必须阅读大量的简易读物呢？原因之一是简易读物词汇量有控制，内容比较浅易，而原著一般来说词汇量大，内容比较艰深。在打基础阶段，学生的词汇量比较小，阅读原著会遇到许多困难。在这种情况下，要保证足够的阅读量只能要求学生阅读简易读物。其次，简易读物使用的是常用词汇、短语和语法结构，大量阅读这类读物可以反复接触这些基本词语和语法，有助于他们打好基础，培养他们的英语语感。第三，简易读物大部分是文学名著改写而成，尽管情节和人物都大为简化，但依旧保留了文学名著的部分精华，仍不失为优秀读物。大量阅读这些读物对于拓宽学生视野、提高他们的人文素养大有帮助。

在这里我们还可以援引美国教学法家克拉申（Stephen Krashen）的一个著名观点。他认为，学生吸收外语有一个前提，即语言材料只能稍稍高于他们的语言理解水平，如果提供的语言材料难度大大超过学生的水平，就会劳而无功。这是克拉申关于外语学习的一个总的看法，但我们不妨把这个道理运用到阅读上。若要阅读有成效，必须严格控制阅读材料的难易度。目前学生阅读的英语材料往往过于艰深，词汇量过大，学生花了很多时间，而阅读量却仍然很小，进展缓慢，其结果是扼杀了学生的阅读兴趣，影响了他们的自信心。解决这个问题关键是向学生提供适合他们水平的、词汇量有控制的、能够引起他们兴趣的英语读物。“企鹅英语简易读物精选”是专门为初、中级学习者编写的简易读物。这是一套充分考虑到学生的水平和需要，为他们设计的有梯度的读物，学生可以循序渐进，逐步提高阅读难度和扩大阅读量，从而提高自己的英语水平。

应该如何做才能取得最佳效果呢？首先，要选择难易度适当的读物。如果一页书上生词过多，读起来很吃力，进展十分缓慢，很可能选的材料太难了。不妨换一本容易些的。总的原则是宁易毋难。一般来说，学生选择的材料往往偏难，而不是过于浅易。其次，要尽可能读得快一些，不要一句一句地分析，更不要逐句翻译。读故事要尽快读进去，进入故事的情节，就像阅读中文小说一样。不必担心是否记住了新词语。阅读量大，阅读速度适当，就会自然而然地记住一些词语。这是自然吸收语言的过程。再次，阅读时可以做些笔记，但不必做太多的笔记；可以做一些配合阅读的练习，但不要在练习上花过多时间。主要任务还是阅读。好的读物不妨再读一遍，甚至再读两遍。你会发现在读第二遍时有一种如鱼得水的感觉。

青年朋友们，赶快开始你们的阅读之旅吧！它会把你们带进一个奇妙的世界，在那里你们可以获得一种全新的感受，观察世界也会有一种新的眼光。与此同时，你们的英语水平也会随之迅速提高。

Introduction

Charlotte Brontë was born in Yorkshire, England in 1816, the third and most famous child in a family of writers. Their father Patrick was an Irishman who became the minister of a church in Haworth in 1820. Their mother, Maria Branwell, died in 1821, and her older sister came to look after the family. Mr Brontë himself educated Branwell, the one boy of the six children, at home. But their aunt was not able to deal with the girls' education and in 1824 the two oldest girls, Maria and Elizabeth, were sent away to a school for clergymen's daughters, where Charlotte and Emily joined them later. Conditions at the school were difficult and Maria and Elizabeth were taken ill and sent home, where they both died in 1825. Charlotte and Emily were then taken away from the school.

For the next five years the four remaining children stayed at home. Branwell received lessons from his father and the girls, Charlotte, Emily and Anne, educated themselves as well as they could. The children all read widely. They saw little of other families and, to make their dull life in the small village where they lived more interesting, they began to invent stories. Many of those stories still exist today.

In 1831 Charlotte went away to school again, returning a year later to teach her sisters. She went back to the school as a teacher in 1835 and took Emily with her, but she found teaching difficult both at the school and in the two positions as governess that followed. During this period she had two offers of marriage, which she refused. She was keen to open a school of her own, and in 1842 she went to Belgium with Emily to improve her French. When their aunt died, the girls returned home. Charlotte then went back to Brussels by herself but was lonely, became ill and left again for Haworth. Her brother Branwell had failed at

every job he tried and increasingly turned to alcohol and drugs. To add to her unhappiness, Charlotte's attempts to open a school in Haworth failed.

In 1846, Charlotte persuaded her sisters Emily and Anne to allow their poems to appear in a book with her own poems. The book, which they paid for themselves, was not a financial success, but they all continued to write. Charlotte's story *Jane Eyre* came out first, in 1847, and was an immediate popular success. Later the same year Anne's *Agnes Grey* and Emily's *Wuthering Heights* appeared.

Branwell died in September 1848. At his funeral Emily caught a fever and became very ill. She died in December. Anne died in May of the following year, at Scarborough, where she had hoped the sea air would help to improve her health. In spite of these terrible events, Charlotte struggled on with her writing and managed to complete two more books. She married in 1854, but died a year later. Her husband continued to look after Mr Brontë, who lived longer than all his children and died at the age of eighty-four.

The first of Charlotte Brontë's full-length stories, *The Professor*, did not actually appear until 1857, after her death. It tells the story of an English teacher in a school in Brussels, and is based on Charlotte's own experiences there. *Shirley* (1849) is set in Yorkshire at a time of great industrial changes. *Villette* (1853) is set once again in Brussels, in a school for young ladies.

Charlotte began writing *Jane Eyre* in a nursing home in Manchester, where her father was receiving treatment. It is the story of a young woman's struggle to make a life for herself while keeping her self-respect and obeying her own principles, particularly when she falls in love with a man from a much higher class than herself. Some readers of the time were shocked that a girl as poor and plain as Jane should have the right to passionate emotions, but *Jane Eyre* is a woman who knows her

own mind and is not afraid to express it. These readers were particularly shocked that such a book was written by a woman. Most people, though, including Queen Victoria, praised the story, and it has been popular ever since.

Jane Eyre is an orphan who knows little about her family, and is growing up with her aunt and cousins. They are not pleased to have to give her a home, and she is treated with less consideration than the servants. When she finally expresses her misery, she is sent away to a school for orphans. Life is hard there, but Jane learns all she can and makes the most of the experience. It is only when she obtains a position as governess in the house of Mr Rochester, though, that she finds any real promise of happiness. But the mysteries and dangers hidden in the house threaten to destroy even that promise of happiness for ever.

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Chapter 1 Gateshead

There was no possibility of taking a walk that day. We had, in fact, been wandering in the leafless garden for an hour in the morning, but since dinner the cold winter wind had brought with it such dark clouds and such heavy rain that further outdoor exercise was impossible.

I was glad of it; I never liked long walks, especially on cold afternoons. I hated coming home with frozen fingers and toes, with a heart saddened by the rough words of Bessie, the nurse, and by the consciousness of how weak I was, compared with Eliza, John and Georgiana Reed.

Eliza, John and Georgiana were now with their mama in the sitting room at Gateshead. She lay resting by the fireside, and with her loved ones near her (for the moment neither quarrelling nor crying) she looked perfectly happy. She had dismissed me from the group, saying that she was sorry she was forced to keep me at a distance, but that until I tried seriously to develop a more friendly and attractive nature, she really could not allow me to join in the pleasures intended only for happy little children.

‘But what have I done?’ I asked.

‘Jane, I don’t like questions or objections. Children should not speak to those older than themselves in such a way. Sit down somewhere, and until you can speak pleasantly, remain silent.’

A small breakfast room lay next to the sitting room. I slipped in there. It contained bookshelves, and I soon took possession of a book, making sure that it was one full of pictures. I climbed onto the window seat and, pulling my feet up, I sat cross-legged. I then closed the red curtains, so that I was hidden from view.

Every picture in the book told a story, often mysterious to my undeveloped understanding, but always deeply interesting – as

interesting as the stories of love and adventure that Bessie sometimes began on winter evenings, when she happened to be in a good humour.

With the book on my knee, I was happy. I feared nothing except interruption, and that came too soon. The voice of John Reed called me. Then there was a silence as he found the room empty.

‘Where in the world is she?’ he cried. ‘Lizzy! Georgy!’ he called to his sisters. ‘Jane is not here. Tell Mama she has run out into the rain. Bad creature!’

‘It is lucky that I closed the curtain,’ I thought, and I hoped with all my heart that he would not discover my hiding place. He would not in fact have found it by himself, as he was neither sharp-sighted nor intelligent, but Eliza put her head round the door, and said:

‘She is in the window seat, surely, John.’

I came out immediately, because I trembled at the idea of being dragged out by John.

‘What do you want?’ I asked.

‘Say, “What do you want, Master Reed?”’ was the answer. ‘I want you to come here.’ Seating himself in an armchair, he made a sign to me to move closer and stand in front of him.

John Reed was a schoolboy of fourteen years, four years older than I was; he was large and fat for his age, with an unhealthy skin, unattractive features and thick arms and legs. He ought now to have been at school, but his mama had brought him home for a month or two, “on account of his delicate health”. His schoolmaster said that his condition would improve if he received fewer cakes and sweets from his family, but his mother’s heart found such a severe opinion unacceptable, and she preferred to believe that he worked too hard and missed his home.

John was not very fond of his mother and sisters, and he hated

me. He treated me badly, and punished me, not two or three times a week, nor once or twice a day, but continually. I had no protection from him; the servants did not like to offend their young master, and Mrs Reed never appeared to see him strike me or to hear him insult me.

Having learnt to be obedient to John, I came up to his chair. He spent about three minutes in putting out his tongue at me. I knew that he would hit me soon, and while I waited fearfully for the blow, I thought about his disgustingly ugly appearance. I wonder whether he read my mind in my face; suddenly, without speaking, he struck me sharply and hard. I almost fell, and when I was upright again, I stepped back from his chair.

‘That is for questioning Mama,’ he said, ‘and for hiding like a thief behind curtains, and for the look you had in your eyes two minutes ago, you rat!’

I was so used to John Reed’s insults that I never had any idea of replying to them. My anxiety was about how to receive the blow that would certainly follow.

‘What were you doing behind the curtain?’ he asked.

‘I was reading.’

‘Show me the book.’

I returned to the window and brought it in silence.

‘You have no right to take our books. You are a poor relation, Mama says. You have no money; your father left you none. You ought to beg, and not live here with gentlemen’s children like us, and eat the same meals as we do, and wear clothes that our mama has to pay for. Now, I’m warning you not to touch my bookshelves again, because they *are* mine. The whole house is mine, or will be in a few years. Go and stand by the door, out of the way of the mirror and the windows.’

I did so, not at first realizing his intention. When I saw him lift and balance the book and stand in the act of aiming it, though, I jumped to one side with a cry of fear. Not soon enough. The

book was thrown, it hit me, and I fell, striking my head against the door and cutting it. The cut bled, and the pain was sharp. My fear had by now passed its limit, and other feelings took its place.

‘Wicked and cruel boy!’ I said. ‘You are like a murderer – you are like a slave driver – you are like the evil rulers of ancient Rome!’

‘What! What!’ he cried. ‘Did she say that to me? Did you hear her, Eliza and Georgiana? I’ll tell Mama! But first–’

He ran straight at me. I felt him seize my hair and shoulder, but now I was desperate; I really thought him a murderer. I felt a drop or two of blood from my head running down my neck, and my sense of suffering for the moment was stronger than my fear. I fought him madly. I am not sure what I did with my hands, but he called me ‘Rat! Rat!’ and screamed loudly. Help was near; his sisters had run for Mrs Reed, who had gone upstairs. Now she came on the scene, followed by Bessie and by Abbot, one of the servant girls. We were separated. I heard the words:

‘Oh! What a wicked little thing, to fly at Master John like that!’

‘Did anybody ever see such evil passion!’

Then Mrs Reed commanded:

‘Take her away to the red room, and lock her in there.’ Four hands seized me, and I was carried upstairs.

Chapter 2 The Red Room

I fought all the way. This was unusual for me, and greatly strengthened the bad opinion of me that Bessie and Abbot already held.

‘Hold her arms. She’s like a mad cat.’

‘For shame! For shame!’ cried Abbot. ‘What terrible behaviour, Miss Eyre, to strike a young gentleman, your

guardian's son – your young master!’

‘Master! How is he my master? Am I a servant?’

‘No, you are less than a servant, because you do nothing to support yourself. There, sit down, and think over your wickedness.’

They had got me by this time into the room named by Mrs Reed, and had pushed me onto a chair. I began to rise from it again, but their two pairs of hands prevented me.

‘If you don’t sit still, you must be tied down,’ said Bessie. ‘Miss Abbot, lend me your belt. She would break mine immediately.’

‘Don’t do that,’ I cried. ‘I will not move.’

‘Take care that you don’t,’ said Bessie, and when she had made sure that I really was becoming quieter, she loosened her hold on me. She and Abbot stood with folded arms, looking darkly and doubtfully at my face.

‘She never did this before,’ said Bessie at last, turning to Abbot.

‘But it was always in her,’ was the reply. ‘I’ve often given Mrs Reed my opinion of the child, and she agrees with me. She’s a deceitful little thing.’

Bessie did not answer, but before long she addressed me and said:

‘You ought to know, miss, that you should be grateful to Mrs Reed. She supports you. If she were to send you away, who would look after you?’

I had nothing to say to these words. They were not new to me. I had heard many suggestions of the same kind before, very painful and wounding to my pride, but only half understood. Abbot joined in:

‘And you ought not to think yourself equal to the two Misses Reed and Master Reed, just because Mrs Reed kindly allows you to be brought up with them. They will have a great deal of money in the future, and you will have none. It is your duty to be grateful, and to behave well.’

‘What we tell you is for your own good,’ added Bessie in a softer voice. ‘You should try to be useful and to please them. Then, perhaps, you will have a home here. But if you become angry and rude, Mrs Reed will send you away, I am sure.’

‘Besides,’ said Abbot, ‘God will punish you. He might strike you dead in the middle of your anger. Come, Bessie, we will leave her. Say your prayers, Miss Eyre, because if you are not sorry for your wickedness, something bad might come down the chimney and take you away.’

They went, shutting the door and locking it behind them.

The red room was a square bedroom with dark wooden furniture, a heavy red rug, a very large bed, and red curtains always closed across the windows. This room was cold, because it rarely had a fire; silent, because it was far from the nursery and the kitchen; frightening, because it was rarely entered. It was here that Mr Reed had died nine years before.

I was not quite sure whether they had locked the door, and when I dared to move, I went to see. Ah, yes! There had never been a surer prison.

My head still ached and bled from the blow that I had received and my fall. No one had blamed John for striking me without cause. ‘Unjust! Unjust!’ I thought. I began to plan some escape, such as running away, or never eating or drinking any more, and letting myself die.

It was past four o’clock, and daylight began to leave the red room. I heard the rain beating against the windows, and the wind crying in the trees behind the house. Gradually I became as cold as a stone, and then my courage sank. Everyone said that I was wicked, and perhaps I was.

My thoughts turned to my uncle. I could not remember him, but I knew that he was my mother’s brother, that he had taken me as a parentless baby to his house, and that before he died he had received a promise from his wife, Mrs Reed, that she would

look after me as one of her own children.

A strange idea entered my head. I never doubted that if Mr Reed had been alive, he would have treated me kindly, and now, in the growing darkness, I began to remember stories of dead men, troubled in their graves by the knowledge that their last wishes were not carried out, revisiting the earth. Perhaps Mr Reed's ghost might rise before me. This idea, instead of comforting me, filled me with fear. At this moment, a beam of light shone on the wall. Probably it was from a lamp carried outside across the garden, but to my shaken nerves, prepared for terror, it appeared like a sign of someone coming from another world. My heart beat fast, my head became hot. A sound filled my ears, which seemed like the rushing of wings. I ran in despair to the door and shook the lock. Footsteps came hurrying along the outer passage, the key was turned, and Bessie and Abbot entered.

'Miss Eyre, are you ill?' said Bessie.

'What a terrible noise! It went right through me!' cried Abbot.

'Take me out! Let me go into the nursery!' I begged.

'What for? Are you hurt? Have you seen something?' Bessie demanded again.

'Oh, I saw a light, and I thought a ghost had come.' I had now got hold of Bessie's hand, and she did not take it from me.

'She has screamed on purpose,' Abbot said in disgust. 'And what a scream! If she had been in great pain, there would have been some excuse for it, but she only wanted to bring us all here. I know her wicked tricks.'

'What is all this?' demanded another voice sharply. Mrs Reed was coming along the passage. 'Abbot and Bessie, I believe I gave orders that Jane Eyre should be left in the red room until I came to her myself.'

'Miss Jane screamed so loud, madam,' replied Bessie.

‘Let her go,’ was the only answer. ‘Loose Bessie’s hand, child; you cannot succeed in getting out by these means. I hate tricks, especially in children. It is my duty to show you that they will not succeed. You will stay here an hour longer, and it is only on condition of perfect obedience and silence that I shall let you out then.’

‘Oh, Aunt! Have pity! Forgive me! I cannot bear it! Let me be punished in some other way!’

‘Be quiet! This passion is almost disgusting.’ She did not believe in my sincerity, and really thought that I was pretending.

Bessie and Abbot left us, and Mrs Reed pushed me roughly and impatiently back into my prison and locked me in without a further word. I heard her go away, and soon after she had left my head seemed to go round and round and I fell to the ground in a faint.

Chapter 3 Illness

The next thing I remember is waking up feeling as if I had had a fearful dream, and seeing in front of me a terrible bright red light, crossed with thick black bars. I heard voices, too, speaking with a hollow sound. Uncertainty and fear confused my senses. Then I became conscious that someone was lifting me up more gently than I had ever been raised before. I rested my head against an arm, and felt comfortable.

In five minutes the cloud of confusion melted away. I knew quite well that I was in my own bed, and that the red light came from the nursery fire. It was night: a candle burnt on the table. Bessie stood at the foot of the bed with a bowl in her hand, and a gentleman sat in a chair beside me, leaning over me.

I experienced a warm feeling of protection and safety when I knew that there was a stranger in the room, a person not