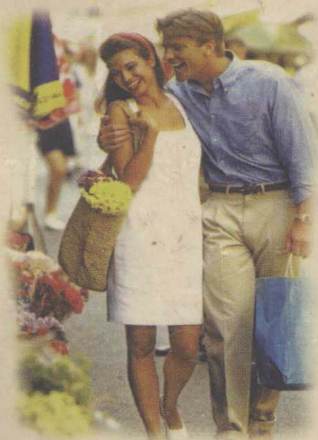


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何兆熊 编著



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丛书总序

现今许多人都热衷于学习英语,因为英语应用范围广泛,便于与外国进行工商贸易、文化交往,也有助于个人进修、吸收新的科技资讯。但是一般英语学习者往往在学了不少入门知识,做了许多听、读、讲、写的练习之后,仍然感到不能真正掌握和通晓英语,还需要想办法进一步提高自己的英语水平。

本丛书就是为这些英语读者设计的。它从英语的各个方面,如词汇、句子、成语、谚语、书信、翻译等,作系统、由浅入深的介绍,同时,除了介绍语言知识之外,还特别注意指出有关的西方生活、文化知识及其准确地道的说法,使读者能在原有的基础上更上一层楼。

本丛书旨在使广大读者在繁忙的生活和工作中,采取每日学一点的形式学好英语。文字力求浅白,内容尽量简明;有分析、有实例;小开本,加插图,读者可以利用自己的零碎时间,随时随地学习,轻松愉快地在增加英语知识和加强运用能力两个方面得到收获。

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前 言

“成语”是指一种语言中长期以来习用的、表达完整意义的、结构相对固定的词组或短句。任何一种语言都存有许多成语,英语中的成语尤为丰富。成语有两个主要特征:语义上的完整性和结构上的固定性。一个成语是一个语义单位,表达一个完整的意思,但它的意义却不能只从它所包含的单词的字面意义去推测。例如 *under the weather* 意为“身体不适”,这和“*under*”、“*weather*”的意义都没有关系;结构上的固定性指的是:一个成语中的词不能随意改动或增减,例如 *under the weather* 就不能改为 *below the weather*, *put on airs* 就不能说成 *put on air*。这两个特征显然给学习者造成困难,因为,学习一个成语就必须死记硬背,记住它的构成,记住它的意义。但另一方面,成语又十分有趣,因为,和任何语言中的成语一样,英语中的成语并不是英语的使用者生拼硬造的,而是在长期的生活过程中自然、渐渐地产生、沿用,最终固定下来的,因此,不少成语的背后都有一个和社会生活、民族文化有关的故事。由此可知,能恰如其分地运用成语无疑会使我们的语言表达得更确切和更生动。

迄今为止,英语成语手册、成语辞典,乃至

成语大全之类的书已经出了不少,而这本只收了三百六十五个英语成语的小册子有什么特色和优点呢?首先,本书有着明确的对象,即具有中等英语水平的读者,在编写过程中,我始终以照顾这个层次读者的特定水平和需要为大前提;其二,本书所收的三百六十五个成语是从几千个英语成语中挑选出来的,其中剔除了那些用得滥和那些过于冷僻的,也免去那些在文体上过分正式,或属于俚语和具有强烈地方色彩的成语,故可以说,所选取的成语均属英语成语中的“核心”部分;三,本书不仅清楚地讲解每个成语的意义和出处,而且更通过简明易懂的例句来展示如何使用该成语,并指出在使用时容易发生的错误;四,全书文字力求生动活泼,以谈话的风格把一个个成语介绍给读者,使人在读来感到轻松、亲切之余,也加快吸收的速度。

总而言之,我的意图是把这个小册子写成本集知识性和趣味性于一身,适合中等水平读者口味和需要的工具书。它“一日一篇”的编排方式能方便读者在繁忙、节奏急促的生活中抽空日读一篇,化整为零;同时,它也可以作为英语学习者的一本案头书,随时查用。

作者

一九九一年三月

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ii 前言



- ① eat one's head off
- ② hide/bury one's head in the sand
- ③ keep one's head above water
- ④ lose/keep one's head
- ⑤ make head or tail of something
- ⑥ put their heads together
- ⑦ turn one's head
- ⑧ beat one's brains
- ⑨ pick someone's brains
- ⑩ let one's hair down ⑪ not turn a hair



- ⑫ keep an eye on
- ⑬ pull the wool over one's eyes
- ⑭ see eye to eye
- ⑮ throw dust in one's eyes
- ⑯ turn a blind eye ⑰ with half an eye
- ⑱ forty winks



- ⑲ all ears/all eyes ⑳ play it by ear
- ㉑ turn a deaf ear ㉒ up to one's ears
- ㉓ wet behind the ears



②4 poke one's nose into something

②5 thumb one's nose



②6 a big mouth ②7 by word of mouth

②8 pay lip-service to

②9 at the tip of one's tongue

③0 bite one's tongue off

③1 lose one's tongue



③2 with one's tongue in one's cheek

③3 cold shoulder ③4 rub shoulders with



③5 catch someone red-handed

③6 come in handy

③7 eat out of one's hand

③8 get the upper hand of ③9 hand in glove

④0 have one's hands full ④1 lend a hand

④2 live from hand to mouth

④3 throw up one's hands

④4 wash one's hands of ④5 all thumbs

④6 rule of thumb ④7 burn one's fingers

④8 cross one's fingers

④9 have a finger in the pie

⑤0 have...at one's fingertips

⑤1 wind someone round one's finger



- 52 pull one's leg 53 Achilles' heel
- 54 cool one's heels
- 55 drag one's feet/heels 56 toe the line



- 57 splite one's sides 58 a bag of bones
- 59 skeleton in the cupboard/closet
- 60 bleed one white 61 sore spot



- 62 heart and soul 63 cross one's mind
- 64 have a good mind 65 read one's mind
- 66 mind one's own business
- 67 sixth sense
- 68 in high/low spirits
- 69 mend one's manners
- 70 at one's wit's end



- 71 above/below par 72 face value
- 73 hold the purse string 74 a pretty penny
- 75 be well off



- 76 spin a yarn 77 birthday suit
- 78 catch somebody with his pants down
- 79 where the shoe pinches
- 80 pull one's socks up 81 after a fashion
- 82 wash one's dirty linen in public
- 83 wet blanket



84 one's cup of tea 85 another cup of tea

86 know which side one's bread is buttered(on)

87 baker's dozen 88 eat humble pie

89 apple-pie order 90 apple of discord

91 apple of one's eye 92 polish the apple

93 full of beans 94 sour grapes

95 a hard nut to crack

96 to put it in a nutshell 97 open sesame

98 beef up 99 a red herring

100 curry favour 101 the salt of the earth

102 worth one's salt 103 sugar the pill

104 bite off more than one can chew

105 be fed up with 106 take pot luck

107 keep the pot boiling

108 born with a silver spoon in one's mouth

109 hit the ceiling/roof

110 darken one's door/doorway

111 mend one's fences 112 sit on the fence

113 back to the wall

114 build castles in the air

115 bring the house down

116 miss the boat/bus

117 put the cart before the horse

118 upset the applecart



- ⑪⑨ put a spoke in someone's wheel
 ⑪⑩ steer clear of ⑪⑪ give (free) rein to
 ⑪⑫ on the spur of the moment
 ⑪⑬ blind alley ⑪⑭ around the corner
 ⑪⑮ cut corners ⑪⑯ turn the corner
 ⑪⑰ beaten track ⑪⑱ lose/keep track
 ⑪⑲ blaze a trail ⑪⑳ come a long way
 ⑫① meet someone half-way
 ⑫② get somewhere
 ⑫③ burn one's bridges/boats (behind one)
 ⑫④ drive home ⑫⑤ bring home
 ⑫⑥ at sea
 ⑫⑦ between the devil and the deep blue sea
 ⑫⑧ in hot water ⑫⑨ in the same boat
 ⑫⑩ full steam ahead ⑫⑪ plain sailing
 ⑫⑫ paddle one's own canoe ⑫⑬ shipshape
 ⑫⑭ give someone/something a wide berth
 ⑫⑮ have an axe to grind
 ⑫⑯ get down to brass tacks
 ⑫⑰ hit the nail on the head
 ⑫⑱ nail someone down
 ⑫⑲ take the edge off
 ⑬① by hook or by crook
 ⑬② know the ropes ⑬③ without a hitch



- ⑮ pull strings/wires
- ⑯ at the end of one's tether
- ⑰ call a spade a spade
- ⑱ square peg in a round hole
- ㉑ get the sack
- ㉒ turn the scale
- ㉓ sponge on
- ㉔ slip of the pen/tongue
- ㉕ mind one's p's and q's
- ㉖ break one's word
- ㉗ have words with someone
- ㉘ mince one's words
- ㉙ weigh one's words
- ㉚ read between the lines



- ㉛ turn over a new leaf ㉜ compare notes
- ㉝ in one's good/bad books
- ㉞ an open/a closed book
- ㉟ teach someone a lesson



- ㊱ with flying colours
- ㊲ show one's colours
- ㊳ black and blue ㊴ be green with envy
- ㊵ green/red light ㊶ red tape
- ㊷ a red letter day
- ㊸ roll out the red carpet ㊹ white lie



⑪ put two and two together

⑫ at sixes and sevens

⑬ a nine-day wonder

⑭ at the eleventh hour

⑮ against time/the clock

⑯ round/around the clock

⑰ call it a day ⑱ carry/win the day



⑲ face the music ⑳ (as) fit as a fiddle

㉑ play second fiddle

㉒ blow one's own trumpet ㉓ out of step



㉔ put one in the picture ㉕ draw a blank

㉖ draw a line ㉗ finishing touches

㉘ play the game ㉙ play (it) safe

㉚ below the belt ㉛ pull one's punches

㉜ throw up the sponge/towel

㉝ come to grips with

㉞ keep the ball rolling ㉟ jump the gun

㊱ by leaps and bounds

㊲ pull one's weight

㊳ go down like ninepins

㊴ ace in the hole

㊵ a card up one's sleeve ㊶ follow suit

㊷ The die is cast.

②13 cross swords with



②14 lock, stock and barrel ②15 the all-clear

②16 bear the brunt ②17 gain ground

②18 half the battle



②19 meet one's Waterloo

②20 Dutch treat ②21 take French leave

②22 be Greek to ②23 on the Greek calends

②24 carry coals to Newcastle

②25 call someone names

②26 Hobson's choice

②27 Jack of all trades

②28 before one can say Jack Robinson

②29 keep up with the Joneses

②30 Judas kiss ②31 rob Peter to pay Paul

②32 Gordian knot ②33 Pandora's Box



②34 the seventh heaven ②35 ask for the moon

②36 once in a blue moon

②37 a bolt from the blue ②38 out of the blue

②39 steal one's thunder

②40 a storm in a tea-cup

②41 air one's knowledge ②42 beat the air

②43 clear the air ②44 in the air

②45 put on airs

②46 tread/walk on air/clouds

- ②47 a stone's throw
 ②48 leave no stone unturned
 ②49 a blot on the landscape
 ②50 sit on a volcano ②51 break the ice
 ②52 hold water ②53 throw cold water on
 ②54 add fuel to the flame
 ②55 burn the midnight oil
 ②56 go up in smoke
 ②57 see the light ②58 throw light on
 ②59 beat about the bush ②60 gild the lily
 ②61 rest on one's laurels ②62 a bed of roses
 ②63 can't see the wood for the trees
 ②64 bee in one's bonnet
 ②65 butterflies in one's stomach
 ②66 play ducks and drakes with
 ②67 kill the goose that lays the golden eggs
 ②68 talk turkey ②69 a feather in one's cap
 ②70 crocodile tears ②71 fish out of water
 ②72 a pretty kettle of fish
 ②73 a bull in a china shop
 ②74 a red rag to a bull
 ②75 take the bull by the horns
 ②76 green horn
 ②77 last straw that breaks the camel's back



- 278 bell the cat
 279 let the cat out of the bag
 280 rub up the wrong way
 281 count one's chickens before they are hatched
 282 dog in the manger
 283 go to the dogs
 284 Let sleeping dog lie. 285 top dog
 286 bark up the wrong tree 287 pass the buck
 288 white elephant 289 dark horse
 290 ride one's high horse
 291 straight from the horse's mouth
 292 a mare's nest 293 lion's share
 294 buy a pig in a poke 295 play possum
 296 smell a rat 297 black sheep
 298 cry wolf
 299 be neither here nor there
 300 beg the question
 301 come thick and fast
 302 far cry 303 cut a good/poor figure
 304 cut it/things fine
 305 cut a long story short
 306 cut someone/something short
 307 cut both/two ways 308 cut to the quick
 309 cut and run 310 die hard



- ③11 be dying for/to ③12 fall flat
 ③13 find fault with
 ③14 get out of bed from the wrong side
 ③15 get to the bottom of ③16 go far
 ③17 have it out with
 ③18 can't have it both ways
 ③19 jump the queue ③20 keep company
 ③21 keep up appearances
 ③22 leave in the lurch ③23 lord it over
 ③24 make do ③25 make it
 ③26 make a point of ③27 make shift with
 ③28 make short work of ③29 pass muster
 ③30 play fast and loose ③31 play havoc with
 ③32 play truant/hooky ③33 ring a bell
 ③34 rub it in ③35 serve one right
 ③36 start from scratch ③37 up to scratch
 ③38 stay put ③39 stretch a point
 ③40 talk big ③41 take a back seat
 ③42 take for granted ③43 take shape
 ③44 take something lying down
 ③45 take things/it easy ③46 give-and-take
 ③47 spick-and-span ③48 touch-and-go
 ③49 at large ③50 at a losse end
 ③51 behind the scenes ③52 beside oneself