

顾曰国 主编  
Gu Yueguo

Prepared for China Central  
Radio & Television University

# English in Current Affairs

中央广播电视大学“专升本”指定教材

## 高级时事英语

Help Yourself to a  
BA Course Series

“专升本”高级英语自学系列教程

(5)

外语教学与研究出版社

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(Trial Version)

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# **The First Year Pack**

## **Checklist**

### **Materials Provided:**

trial version available for Autumn Semester

- ◆ A Guide to Success 1
- ◆ English in Daily Life  
with audio cassettes:
- ◆ English at Leisure  
with audio cassettes:

trial version available for Spring Semester

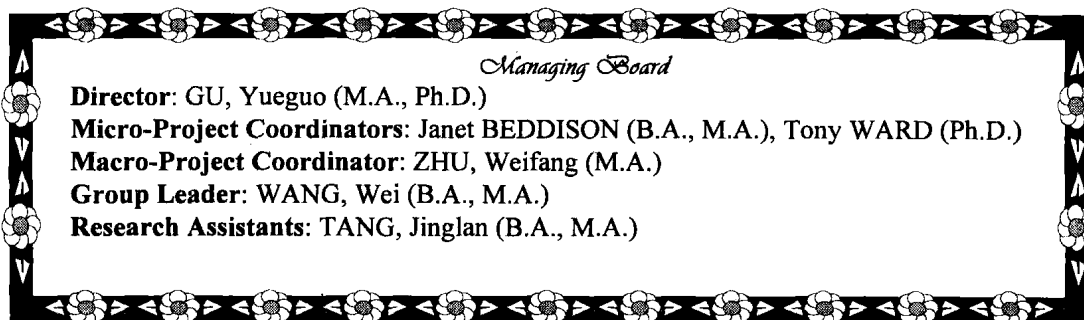
- ◆ English at Work  
with audio cassettes:
- ◆ English in Current Affairs  
with audio cassettes:

### **Materials Students Should Provide Themselves:**

- ◆ 2 assignment notebooks (standard A4 size recommended)
- ◆ 1 rough notebook
- ◆ 1 self-assessment record notebook
- ◆ 2 blank cassettes for speaking practice

## **Distance Taught In-Service Teacher Training BA (non-hons) Project Team**

**School of English Language Communication  
Beijing Foreign Studies University**



### **Materials Development Team**

#### *Editorial Board*

**Editor:** GU, Yueguo      **Co-editors:** Janet BEDDISON      Tony WARD

#### *Writing Team for the Second Semester (in alphabetic order)*

BEDDISON, Janet (B.A., M.A.)	WANG, Wei (B.A., M.A.)
CAO, Wen (B.A., M.A.)	YU, Aiju (B.A., Pgr Dip)
GU, Yueguo (M.A., Ph.D.)	ZHANG, Wen (B.A., M.A.)
QU, Yanping (M.A.)	ZHU, Meiping (M.A.)
SHEN, Yiwen (B.A., M.A.)	

#### *Layout Design (in alphabetic order)*

GU, Yueguo      LI, Ming (B.A., M.A.)      WU, Zhan (B.A.)

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*What's this book?*

It's part of *Help Yourself to a BA Course* series. It's your fourth course in your first year study.



*What's it about?*

The units in this course include more reading and writing practice than courses 1 to 3. In addition, you are exposed to still more examples of neutral and formal (especially newspaper) style so that you develop the skills necessary for understanding the sort of complex texts you may meet in international publications. Your speaking and listening skills continue to be reinforced. Since newspapers and magazines, etc., provide the main source of current affairs information for most people, the first unit acts as an introduction to various types of English Language media. The other units of the course aim to cover the major areas of topical interest so that, at the end of this course, you should be able to read about and discuss a range of current issues.



*How long does it take to finish this course?*

Eight weeks. You must work very hard, though.



*If I have to work so hard, do I earn any credits at the end?*

Yes. Your hard work will be richly rewarded. You'll earn 4.5 credits !!!



# English in Current Affairs



Units	Topics	Activities	Functions
1	The Media	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*requesting/giving info.</li> <li>*describing news events</li> <li>*commenting on news event</li> <li>*describing major sources of news in English</li> </ul>
2	The Cultural Differences and Similarities	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*describing differences</li> <li>*explaining reasons</li> <li>*comparing</li> <li>*agreeing/disagreeing</li> <li>*reporting current events</li> </ul>
3	Education	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*opening a formal conversation/interview</li> <li>*agreeing/disagreeing</li> <li>*describing problems</li> <li>*expressing concern</li> <li>*asking for/expressing opinions</li> <li>*describing a formative experience</li> </ul>
4	Development	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*arguing for/against</li> <li>*agreeing/disagreeing</li> <li>*denying/disputing</li> <li>*describing trends/patterns/tendencies</li> <li>*describing processes of change</li> <li>*expressing possibility/probability/certainty</li> </ul>



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Language Points	Performance Objectives	Page
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*past simple</li> <li>*basic Wh .Qs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*talk/ask about major sources of news</li> <li>*find their way around newspapers and mags.</li> <li>*identify newspaper sections</li> <li>*recognise/respond to major layout/style conventions</li> <li>*read/respond to/ ask about news events</li> </ul>	1-52
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*present perfect</li> <li>*present simple</li> <li>*but/while/whereas</li> <li>*tend to/are inclined to</li> <li>*cause/effect</li> <li>*text organisation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*interpret news headlines</li> <li>*identify/describe cultural characteristics/tendencies</li> <li>*identify/compare cultural characteristics/tendencies</li> <li>*suggest/explain reasons for tendencies</li> </ul>	53-105
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*present passive (for classifying)</li> <li>*topic sentences</li> <li>*past simple</li> <li>*cause/effect</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*describe education systems</li> <li>*describe a formative experience</li> <li>*discuss educational problems</li> <li>*suggest solutions</li> <li>*write a formal letter of comment to a newspaper</li> <li>*compare traditional/modern systems</li> </ul>	106-148
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*enumeration markers</li> <li>*tend to/be inclined to</li> <li>*proportion/percentage</li> <li>*present perfect</li> <li>*present continuous</li> <li>*might/may/could/should</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*describe current situations</li> <li>*describe developmental trends</li> <li>*describe changes</li> <li>*talk/ask about future patterns</li> <li>*argue a case for/against</li> <li>*summarise an article</li> </ul>	149-198

# English in Current Affairs



Units	Topics	Activities	Functions
5	Our Environment	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*describing problems</li> <li>*offering solutions</li> <li>*predicting</li> <li>*accusing/blaming</li> <li>*criticising</li> <li>*denying</li> <li>*responding to blame/criticism</li> <li>*expressing concern</li> </ul>
6	Social Problems	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*identifying problems</li> <li>*describing problems</li> <li>*predicting</li> <li>*assumption/conjecture</li> <li>*rephrasing/clarifying</li> <li>*expressing doubt</li> <li>*judging/evaluating</li> <li>*showing tolerance</li> </ul>
7	Equality	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*describing roles</li> <li>*giving examples</li> <li>*commenting on behaviour</li> <li>*explaining/justifying tendencies</li> <li>*comparing &amp; contrasting</li> <li>*highlighting injustices/inequalities</li> <li>*giving advice</li> </ul>
8	Information Highway	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* identifying functions</li> <li>* exchanging information</li> <li>* reaching conclusions</li> <li>* presenting an argument</li> <li>* organizing an argument</li> </ul>

# Contents

Language Points	Performance Objectives	Page
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*present continuous</li> <li>*exemplification</li> <li>*cause/effect</li> <li>*paragraph organisation</li> <li>*future forms</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*locate articles from list of contents</li> <li>*discuss environmental problems</li> <li>*request/explain reasons</li> <li>*suggest solutions</li> <li>*express fears/worries</li> <li>*criticise/respond to criticism/defend</li> <li>*write a letter of criticism to a newspaper</li> </ul>	199-242
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*enumeration/listing</li> <li>*concession</li> <li>*future perfect</li> <li>*qualifying adjectives</li> <li>*text organisation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*ask about/describe social problems</li> <li>*discuss the causes of problems</li> <li>*ask about/describe future scenarios</li> <li>*exchange opinions</li> <li>*assess the relative seriousness of problems</li> <li>*offer/evaluate solutions</li> <li>*write an article outlining a problem, identifying its causes and offering a possible solution.</li> </ul>	243-285
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*language of comparison/contrast</li> <li>*2nd conditional</li> <li>*should/ought to</li> <li>*adding emphasis</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*ask/describe male/female roles</li> <li>*discuss issues of equality</li> <li>*compare/contrast roles/behaviour</li> <li>*write a letter to a magazine, describing a problem &amp; re-requesting advice</li> </ul>	286-327
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*vocabulary building</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* describe the various uses of a computer</li> <li>* talk about developments in computer science</li> <li>* explain technical terms</li> <li>* paraphrase difficult language relating to computers</li> <li>* make inferences about a writer's attitude</li> <li>* put forward arguments</li> </ul>	328-365

# Unit 1 The Media



*English in  
Current Affairs*

## Guide to Unit 1

### The Media



#### Activity One : The Media

Task 1 Mass Media

Feedback

Task 2 Examples of Mass Media

Feedback

Task 3 Spreading News

Feedback

#### Activity Two: Newspapers

Task 1 A News Item

Feedback

Task 2 Identifying Personal Details

Feedback

Task 3 Distinguishing Fact from Conjecture

Feedback

Task 4 Expressing Fact and Conjecture

Feedback

Task 5 Avoiding Repetition

Feedback

Task 6 Newspaper Style

Task 7 Other Aspects of an Article

Feedback

#### Activity Three: Listening to a Conversation

Task 1 Identifying Names of Publications

Feedback

Task 2 Listening for Details

Feedback

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## Guide to Unit 1

### The Media



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**Guide to Unit 1**

**Media**



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Task 4	Asking and Answering Questions	Feedback
Task 5	What do You Think?	
Task 6	Writing a Personal News Account	
Task 7	Review	

Estimated Time	Actual Time	Page
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		50

**Appendix: Tapescripts**

***Famous Quotations on Media:*** The United States is unusual among the industrial democracies in the rigidity of the system of ideological control—"indoctrination," we might say—exercised through the mass media. — **Noam Chomsky** (b. 1928), U.S. linguist, political analyst. *Language and Responsibility*, "Politics" (1979).

# Unit One

## The Media

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- ◇ talk/ask about different media
- ◇ find your way around newspapers
- ◇ distinguish fact from conjecture
- ◇ interpret news headlines
- ◇ summarise news articles
- ◇ appreciate newspaper style
- ◇ give/ask for news



### Warm Up

### *Current Affairs*

Hello, welcome to **English in Current Affairs**. Before we move on to the work of this particular unit, we should think for a moment about the title of this course. What does the term *Current Affairs* mean to you? A list of suggestions is given below. Look at them carefully and choose the one which you think best explains *Current Affairs*. Put a tick (✓) beside your choice.

#### 1. Choose the best explanation.

- a. all the events that happen in my own life
- b. news and events that are of local interest/importance
- c. the love affairs of film stars and other famous people

- d. cultural events in the world
- e. political and social events that are of international importance/interest
- f. political and social events that are of national importance/interest
- g. the most recent world news
- h. world history

We shall discuss your choice in the feedback below. Before we do that, however, think about how you find out about *Current Affairs* (whatever you understand the term to mean). Write down three or four possible sources of *Current Affairs* on the lines below.

## 2. How do you find out about Current Affairs?

---

---



In order to understand the term *Current Affairs*, we need to understand the words *current* and *affairs*. If something is *current*, it is happening, being done or being used NOW, THESE DAYS. A very general meaning of *affairs* is the useful (but not very specific) word 'things'. More precisely, we can say that affairs are events and information. So, a rough paraphrase of *Current Affairs* is *events and information that are related to our present lives*. The term is generally used, however, in connection with issues of world importance, those issues which are of international interest. The best suggested meaning above is therefore (e). Did you get it right? Don't worry if you didn't! You know now!

Now, let's turn to Question 2. There are many ways of finding out about current affairs, aren't there? Did you write down any of the following sources?

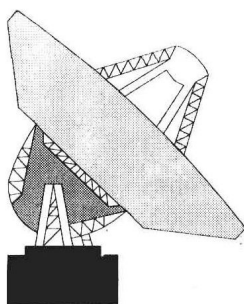
newspapers, magazines, the radio, TV

You may also have written down *friends, family members, teachers etc.* — in other words the people who tell you what is happening. All these answers are possible.

I wonder if you were inspired by the title of this unit? You could have

written down *the media*. That answer is also correct. In Activity One, we shall be considering the word *Media* and the term *Mass Media*, so be patient if you aren't sure exactly what they mean.

In this unit we shall be interpreting the term *Current Affairs* quite broadly. The topics of the whole course are, however, typical issues relating to current affairs.



## Activity 1

### The Media

#### **Task 1** *Mass Media*

People in most parts of the world today are experiencing different forms of advanced communication and are exposed to a variety of mass media which provide a large amount of information, news and opinions. To begin with, let's find out what the term *mass media* means. Don't, please, rush straight to your dictionary. Use your own ideas. Please think about what the term 'mass media' means to you. Write down whatever ideas come into your mind and some examples of what you think media may be.



**Write down your understanding of the term *mass media*.**

I think the word '**mass media**' may mean \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Some examples are \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_