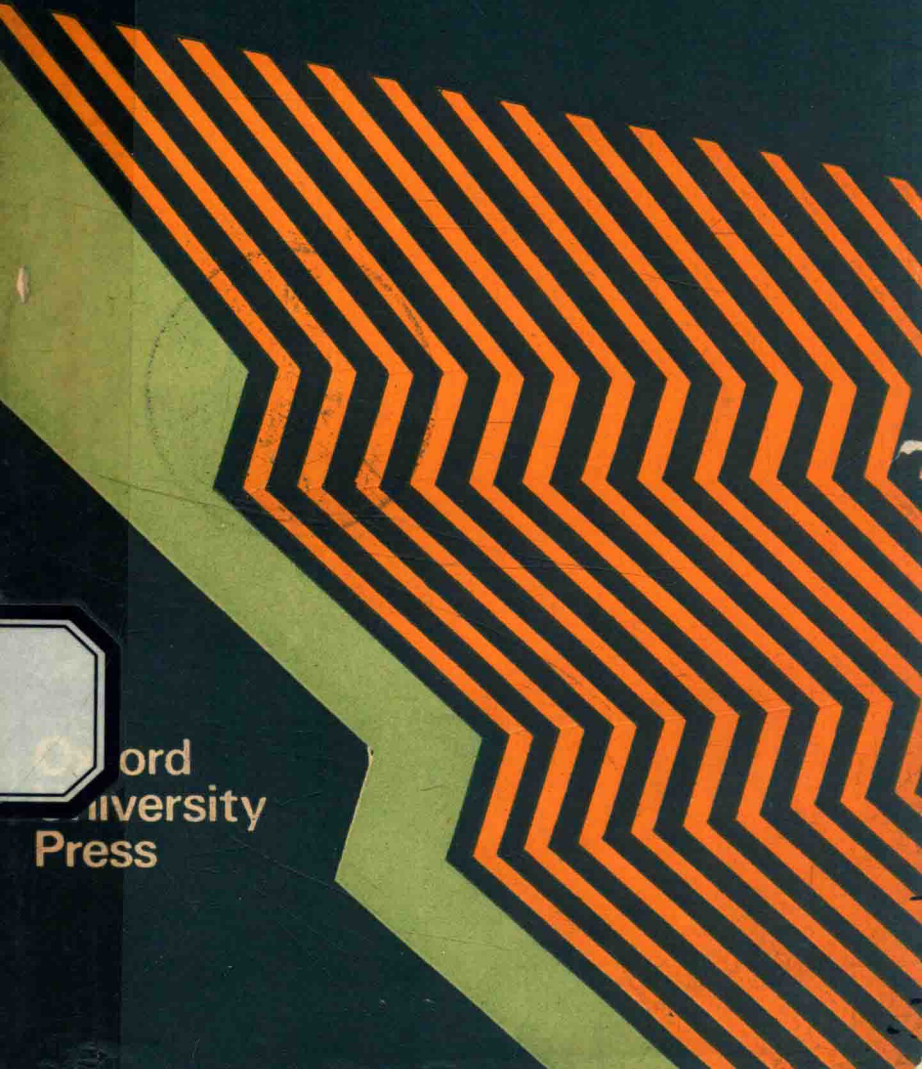


L. A. Hill

Elementary Steps to Understanding



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Introduction

In his earlier series' of practice books*, Dr. Hill has used three levels, his elementary (1 000-headword), intermediate (1 500-headword) and advanced (2 075-headword) levels. In this new series, however, there is also another level, the introductory (750-headword) level. This book is at the 1 000-headword level.

Each story is about 150 words long, and some of the stories contain one or two words outside the grading. These are listed on the pages on which they appear, and can be looked up in a dictionary before work is begun. In the instructions for the exercises, the word 'false' is also outside the grading. In the exercises, 'puzzle' is too. All the levels are very carefully graded, and this covers not only vocabulary, but also idioms and grammar.

These four books are intended chiefly to help students read English more easily and with more comprehension, but they can also be used:

(i) for practice in understanding spoken English (with the student listening to the teacher, or to the cassette);

(ii) for practice in writing English (by answering the questions in English; by writing as much of the story as the student can remember; and by doing the exercises); and

(iii) for improving the student's command of vocabulary, idioms and grammar (again by doing certain of the exercises).

If the student wishes to use the books *only* for practice in reading comprehension, he/she should read a story and then answer questions *in his/her mother-tongue*.

He/She can also try reading some (or all) of the questions *first*, and then reading the story to find the answers to the questions before answering them. To increase speed of reading, the student can time himself/herself with a watch or clock, and try to read as fast as possible, *provided that he/she can still understand*.

*Stories for Reproduction, Series 1 and 2 and Elementary and Intermediate Comprehension Pieces, all published by Oxford University Press.

If the student wants to use this book for practice in understanding spoken English, he/she can use the cassette in the following ways:

(i) He/She can listen to the cassette one or more times (with his/her book open or closed, as he/she wishes) and then read the story aloud himself/herself, at first in chorus with the voice on the cassette, and then alone. After his/her own reading alone, he/she can check his/her performance by listening to the cassette again.

(ii) He/She can listen to the cassette one or more times, with his/her book closed, and then write down as much of the story as he/she can remember, and/or answer the questions and do the exercises (all without looking at the story). If he/she writes as much of the story as he/she can remember, he/she can then look at the story in the book, or listen to it again on the cassette, to compare what he/she has written with the original.

Method (i) gives practice in speaking with a good pronunciation, including stress, rhythm and intonation.

Method (ii) gives practice in aural comprehension (listening and understanding).

Other books by Dr. L. A. Hill at his 1 000-headword level are:

Elementary Stories for Reproduction 1 and 2

A Fourth Reading Book

A Fifth Reading Book

Oxford Graded Readers, 1 000-headword level: Junior and Senior Stories

Elementary Steps to Understanding

There are many ways to understand a text. One way is to read it carefully and think about what it means. Another way is to talk about it with others and share your thoughts. A third way is to write about it and see what you can learn from your own writing.

These are just a few of the many ways to understand a text. The best way to understand a text is to use all of these ways together. This will help you to understand the text more fully and to see the connections between different parts of it.

The first step in understanding a text is to read it carefully. This means that you should read every word and sentence and think about what it means. You should also look for words and sentences that you don't understand and try to figure out what they mean.

The second step in understanding a text is to talk about it with others. This means that you should share your thoughts and ideas with others and listen to what they have to say. This will help you to see the text from different perspectives and to understand it more fully.

The third step in understanding a text is to write about it. This means that you should write down your thoughts and ideas about the text. This will help you to organize your thoughts and to see the connections between different parts of the text.



Dave worked in a factory, and he always made sandwiches in the morning, took them to work and ate them at midday.

Then he married, so he thought, 'Now my wife's going to make my sandwiches.'

On the first day, she made him some, and when he got home in the evening, she said to him, 'Were the sandwiches all right?'

'Oh, yes,' he answered, 'but you only gave me two slices of bread.'

The next day she gave him four slices, but he said again, 'Four slices aren't enough.'

The third day she gave him eight slices, but those were not enough for him either, so on the fourth day she took a loaf of bread, cut it in half and put a big piece of meat in it.

In the evening she said to him, 'Was your lunch nice?'

'Oh, yes,' he answered. 'But two slices of bread aren't enough.'

**A Which of these sentences are true (T) and which are false (F)?
Write T or F in the boxes.**

1. Dave worked in an office. ☐
2. Dave always ate sandwiches for lunch. ☐
3. Dave liked sandwiches. ☐
4. Four slices of bread were not enough for Dave. ☐
5. Dave's wife gave him only two slices of bread on the fourth day. ☐
6. Dave ate a lot of bread. ☐

B Answer these questions.

1. Who made Dave's sandwiches before he married?
2. Who made them after he married?
3. What did his wife say on the first evening?
4. What did Dave answer?
5. What did Dave tell his wife on the second evening?
6. What did she do on the fourth day?
7. What did she ask him in the evening?
8. What did Dave answer?

C Write this story, but put one of these words in each empty place.

bread butter fingers loaf meat sandwich slice slices

'I want to make some sandwiches.'

'Well, go and buy a . . . of . . . Cut in into . . . Put some . . . on one side of each . . . Then cut some . . . up, and put some of it between each two . . . of the . . .'

'Do I put the sides with . . . on them inside or outside?'

'Don't be stupid! Inside, of course, or your . . . will be covered with . . . when you pick a . . . up!'



Harry did not stop his car at some traffic-lights when they were red, and he hit another car. Harry jumped out and went to it. There was an old man in the car. He was very frightened and said to Harry, 'What are you doing? You nearly killed me!'

'Yes,' Harry answered, 'I'm very sorry.' He took a bottle out of his car and said, 'Drink some of this. Then you'll feel better.' He gave the man some whisky, and the man drank it, but then he shouted again, 'You nearly killed me!'

Harry gave him the bottle again, and the old man drank a lot of the whisky. Then he smiled and said to Harry, 'Thank you. I feel much better now. But why aren't you drinking?'

'Oh, well,' Harry answered, 'I don't want any whisky now. I'm going to sit here and wait for the police.'

A Which of these sentences are true (T) and which are false (F)? Write T or F in the boxes.

1. Harry hit an old man.
2. Harry hit another car.
3. The old man was very frightened.
4. Harry gave the old man some water.
5. The old man drank a lot of whisky.
6. Harry did not drink any whisky.

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Outside the 1 000 headwords: traffic-lights, whisky

B Answer these questions.

1. Why did Harry hit another car?
2. What did the old man say?
3. What did Harry answer, and what did he do?
4. What did the old man do?
5. What did the old man say then?
6. What did Harry do?
7. What did the old man do and say then?
8. What did Harry say?

C Which of the two sentences (a or b) describes the picture?



1. a. Two of the lights are broken.
b. One of the lights is broken.
2. a. The bottle is round.
b. The bottle is square.
3. a. The bottle is full.
b. The bottle is half full.
4. a. The sun is shining.
b. It is cloudy.
5. a. The old man is angry.
b. The old man is smiling.



John lived with his mother in a rather big house, and when she died, the house became too big for him so he bought a smaller one in the next street. There was a very nice old clock in his first house, and when the men came to take his furniture to the new house, John thought, 'I'm not going to let them carry my beautiful old clock in their truck. Perhaps they'll break it, and then mending it will be very expensive.' So he picked it up and began to carry it down the road in his arms.

It was heavy, so he stopped two or three times to have a rest.

Then suddenly a small boy came along the road. He stopped and looked at John for a few seconds. Then he said to John, 'You're a stupid man, aren't you? Why don't you buy a watch like everybody else?'

A Which of these sentences are true (T) and which are false (F)? Write T or F in the boxes.

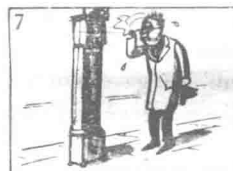
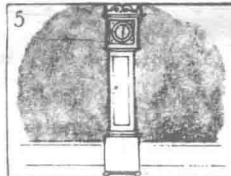
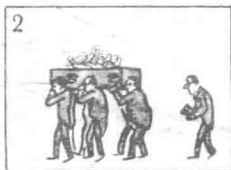
1. John and his mother lived in a big house.
2. John bought a small house in the next street.
3. John had a beautiful new clock.
4. John and his friend carried the clock to his new house.
5. The clock was heavy.
6. John was a stupid man.

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B Answer these questions.

1. Why did John buy a smaller house?
2. Was it a long way from his old house?
3. Why did he not want to let the men carry his clock in their truck?
4. How did he take it to the new house?
5. What did he do two or three times on the way?
6. Why did he do this?
7. Who arrived then?
8. What did the boy say?

C Put the right sentences under the right pictures.



1. He did not want the men to break it, so he carried it out of the house.
2. It was heavy, so he put it down in the road.
3. John and his mother lived in a big house.
4. John bought a smaller house.
5. The men came to take his furniture to it.
6. Then a small boy said, 'Why don't you buy a watch, stupid man!'
7. Then his mother died.
8. There was a beautiful clock in John's house.



Two soldiers were in camp. The first one's name was George, and the second one's name was Bill. George said, 'Have you got a piece of paper and an envelope, Bill?'

Bill said, 'Yes, I have,' and he gave them to him.

Then George said, 'Now I haven't got a pen.' Bill gave him his, and George wrote his letter. Then he put it in the envelope and said, 'Have you got a stamp, Bill?' Bill gave him one.

Then Bill got up and went to the door, so George said to him, 'Are you going out?'

Bill said, 'Yes, I am,' and he opened the door.

George said, 'Please put my letter in the box in the office, and . . .' He stopped.

'What do you want now?' Bill said to him.

George looked at the envelope of his letter and answered, 'What's your girl-friend's address?'

Outside the 1 000 headwords: envelope

**A Which of these sentences are true (T) and which are false (F)?
Write T or F in the boxes.**

1. George wanted Bill to write a letter for him.
2. George gave Bill a piece of paper and an envelope.
3. George got a stamp from Bill.
4. George wanted Bill to take his letter to the office.
5. Bill had a girl-friend.
6. George wanted to write to Bill's girl-friend.

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B Answer these questions.

1. What did George say at the beginning of this story?
2. What did Bill say, and what did he do?
3. What did George say then?
4. What did Bill give him?
5. What did George ask after that?
6. What did Bill do?
7. What did George want Bill to do when he went out?
8. What did he ask Bill for at the end of this story?

C Write this story. Put one word in each empty place. You will find all the correct words in the story on page 10.

Bill's . . . lives in London and works in an . . . Her . . . is 21, Green Street. She gave him a beautiful . . . last summer, and he writes a . . . to her with it every week. She writes to him every week too. She writes on blue . . . , and then puts it in a blue . . . Sometimes she finds a blue . . . and puts that on her letter! Then everything is blue! When her letter is ready, she puts it in a . . . in her office, and a man takes it away at 12 o'clock. It usually gets to Bill's . . . the next day.



General Pershing was a famous American officer. He was in the American army, and fought in Europe in the First World War.

After he died, some people in his home town wanted to remember him, so they put up a big statue of him on a horse.

There was a school near the statue, and some of the boys passed it every day on their way to school and again on their way home. After a few months some of them began to say, 'Good morning, Pershing', whenever they passed the statue, and soon all the boys at the school were doing this.

One Saturday one of the smallest of these boys was walking to the shops with his mother when he passed the statue. He said, 'Good morning, Pershing' to it, but then he stopped and said to his mother, 'I like Pershing very much, Ma, but who's that funny man on his back?'

A Which of these sentences are true (T) and which are false (F)? Write T or F in the boxes.

1. General Pershing was British.
2. Some people put up a statue of him in his home town.
3. The statue was in a school.

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Outside the 1 000 headwords: General, Ma, statue

4. The boys at the school always said, 'Good morning, Pershing.'
5. The little boy was walking with his mother.
6. The little boy thought, 'Pershing is the horse.'

☐
☐
☐

B Answer these questions.

1. Who was General Pershing?
2. What did he do in the First World War?
3. Why did people in his town put up a statue of him?
4. Who began to say 'Good morning, Pershing' whenever they passed the statue.
5. Who was walking past the statue one Saturday?
6. Who was with him?
7. What did he say to the statue?
8. What did he ask his mother then?

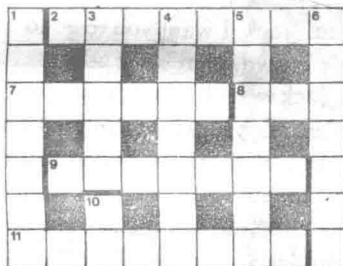
C Do this puzzle.

Across:

2. The name of the 6 down.
7. 'He will . . . in Europe next week' means 'He will get to Europe next week'.
- 8.



9. When you are . . . , you want to drink.
11. The . . . boy in the school said, 'Who's that funny man on Pershing's back?'



Down:

1. These are . . .



3. Before they put the statue up, they dug a hole in the . . . and put the bottom of the statue in it.
4. More than two.
5. 'She always says to us, "Please visit my house,"' means 'She always . . . us to her house'.
6. and 2 across: The statue on the horse was of . . . (two words).
10. Mother.



Jack worked in an office in a small town. One day his boss said to him, 'Jack, I want you to go to Manchester, to an office there, to see Mr Brown. Here's the address.'

Jack went to Manchester by train. He left the station, and thought, 'The office isn't far from the station. I'll find it easily.'

But after an hour he was still looking for it, so he stopped and asked an old lady. She said, 'Go straight along this street, turn to the left at the end, and it's the second building on the right.' Jack went and found it.

A few days later he went to the same city, but again he did not find the office, so he asked someone the way. It was the same old lady! She was very surprised and said, 'Are you *still* looking for that place?'

A Which of these sentences are true (T) and which are false (F)? Write T or F in the boxes.

1. Jack worked in an office in a large town.
2. Jack's boss wanted him to go to Manchester.
3. Jack did not have the address of the office in Manchester.
4. Jack did not find the office easily.
5. Jack went to Manchester again a few months later.
6. He asked the same old lady the way again.

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Outside the 1 000 headwords: boss