



L.A. Hill

**ADVANCED
STORIES
FOR
REPRODUCTION**



1-2

Oxford University Press

Advanced Stories for Reproduction

L. A. HILL



LONDON

OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS

KUALA LUMPUR SINGAPORE HONG KONG TOKYO

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OXFORD LONDON GLASGOW

NEW YORK TORONTO MELBOURNE WELLINGTON

IBADAN NAIROBI DAR ES SALAAM CAPE TOWN

KUALA LUMPUR SINGAPORE JAKARTA HONG KONG TOKYO

DELHI BOMBAY CALCUTTA MADRAS KARACHI

© *Oxford University Press* 1965

First Japanese Impression 1973

Eighth Japanese Impression 1978

Illustrated by DENNIS MALLET, MSIA

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Introduction

This is the third in a series of stories for reproduction which begins with *Elementary Stories for Reproduction* and continues with *Intermediate Stories for Reproduction*. A fourth book, *Note-taking Practice*, provides students with training in note-taking at lectures.

This book contains 60 stories, each between 225 and 350 words long, and all written within the 2,075-word vocabulary given in the Appendix. The grammatical patterns are limited to those in A. S. Hornby's *A Guide to Patterns and Usage in English*.

Here are some ways in which the stories in this book can be used:

1. *Listening and Speaking*

Only the teacher has the book. He reads one of the stories aloud to the students two or three times, and they then have to retell the story orally, or to answer oral questions about it. This is best done in very small classes, of course.

2. *Listening and Writing*

Only the teacher has the book. He reads one of the stories to the students two or three times, and they then write down as much of it as they can remember, or answer questions about it in writing (the questions can be written on the blackboard, or dictated by the teacher). This can be done in a large class.

3. *Reading and Writing*

Each student has a copy of the book. He reads one of the stories for a certain number of minutes, then shuts the book and writes down as much of the story as he can remember, or answers questions about it in writing. The questions can be written on the blackboard, or dictated by the teacher.

With 1, 2, and 3, there can be an interval of time—even of several days—between the telling of the story and the reproduction.

3 can be done by students who have no teacher. They can read a story, close their books and then write down as much of the story as they can remember. When they have finished, they can open their books again and check what they have written by referring to the story in the book.

Introduction

There is a great deal of interest in the study of the history of the English language, and it is not surprising that many of the best books on the subject have been written in the last few years. This book is one of the best of these, and it is a book that every student of the English language should read.

The book is written by a man who is one of the best authorities on the subject, and it is a book that is both interesting and instructive. It is a book that is written in a clear and simple style, and it is a book that is easy to read. It is a book that is written for the student, and it is a book that is written for the teacher.

There are many ways in which the student can use this book, and it is a book that can be used in many different ways.

1. As a text-book.

2. As a reference work.

3. As a source of information.

4. As a source of inspiration.

5. As a source of amusement.

6. As a source of knowledge.

7. As a source of entertainment.

8. As a source of information.

9. As a source of inspiration.



1

As one approaches *some* crossroads, one comes to a sign which says that drivers have to stop when they come to the main road ahead. At other crossroads, drivers have to go slow, but they do not actually have to stop (unless, of course, there is something coming along the main road); and at still others, they do not have either to stop or to go slow, because they are themselves on the main road.

Mr Williams, who was always a very careful driver, was driving home from work one evening when he came to a crossroads. It had a 'Slow' sign, so he slowed down when he came to the main road, looked both ways to see that nothing was coming, and then drove across without stopping completely.

At once he heard a police whistle, so he pulled in to the side of the road and stopped. A policeman walked over to him with a notebook and pencil in his hand and said, 'You didn't stop at that crossing.'

'But the sign there doesn't say "Stop",' answered Mr Williams. 'It just says "Slow", and I *did* go slow.'

The policeman looked around him, and a look of surprise came over his face. Then he put his notebook and pencil away, scratched his head and said, 'Well, I'll be blown! I am in the wrong street!'

2

Before the last war, officers in the navy had a lot more freedom when their ship was in port than they have nowadays. They were expected to lead a busy social life, and to take an active part in sport ashore. It was therefore rather difficult for them to find time to do all their other duties.

Usually, all the officers in a ship used to have a regular meeting together once a week to receive orders from their captain, make reports and discuss any business that had to be discussed, such as who should represent the ship in the next football match.

One such meeting was being held on board a ship one day, and after the regular business had been completed, the time came to discuss the date of the next meeting. Friday of the next week was suggested, and so was Monday of the week after, but both of them interfered with somebody's arrangements for the weekend, and in the end it was generally agreed that the meeting

should be held on Wednesday, as this would be the least likely day to interfere with anybody's convenience, since it was right in the middle of the week.

As the officers were leaving, however, one of them was heard to say, 'Wednesday is the *worst* day, because it interferes with *two* weekends!'

3

Mr and Mrs Williams had always spent their summer holidays in England in the past, in a small boarding-house at the seaside. One year, however, Mr Williams made a lot of money in his business, so they decided to go to Rome and stay at a really good hotel while they went around and saw the sights of that famous city.

They flew to Rome, and arrived at their hotel late one evening. They expected that they would have to go to bed hungry, because in the boarding-houses they had been used to in the past, no meals were served after seven o'clock in the evening. They were therefore surprised when the clerk who received them in the hall of the hotel asked them whether they would be taking dinner there that night.

'Are you still serving dinner then?' asked Mrs Williams.

'Yes, certainly, madam,' answered the clerk. 'We serve it until half-past nine.'

'What are the times of meals then?' asked Mr Williams.

'Well, sir,' answered the clerk, 'we serve breakfast from seven to half-past eleven in the morning, lunch from twelve to three in the afternoon, tea from four to five, and dinner from six to half-past nine.'

'But that hardly leaves any time for us to see the sights of Rome!' said Mrs Williams in a disappointed voice.



4

Mrs Black was having a lot of trouble with her skin, so she went to her doctor about it. He could not find anything wrong with her, however, so he sent her to the local hospital for some tests. The hospital, of course, sent the results of the tests direct to Mrs Black's doctor, and the next morning he telephoned her to give her a list of the things that he thought she should not eat, as any of them might be the cause of her skin trouble.

Mrs Black carefully wrote all the things down on a piece of paper, which she then left beside the telephone while she went out to a ladies' meeting.

When she got back home two hours later, she found her husband waiting for her. He had a big basket full of packages beside him, and when he saw her, he said, 'Hullo, dear. I have done all your shopping for you.'

'Done all my shopping?' she asked in surprise. 'But how did you know what I wanted?'

'Well, when I got home, I found your shopping list beside the telephone,' answered her husband, 'so I went down to the shops and bought everything you had written down.'

Of course, Mrs Black had to tell him that he had bought all the things the doctor did not allow her to eat!



5

Some young soldiers who had recently joined the army were being trained in modern ways of fighting, and one of the things they were shown was how an unarmed man could trick an armed enemy and take his weapon away from him. First one of their two instructors took a knife away from the other, using only his bare hands; and then he took a rifle away from him in the same way.

After the lesson, and before they went on to train the young soldiers to do these things themselves, the two instructors asked them a number of questions to see how well they had understood what they had been shown. One of the questions was this: 'Well, you now know what an unarmed man can do against a man with a rifle. Imagine that you are guarding a bridge at night, and that you have a rifle. Suddenly you see an unarmed enemy soldier coming towards you. What will you do?'

The young soldier who had to answer this question thought carefully for a few seconds before he answered, and then said, 'Well, after what I have just seen, I think that the first thing I would do would be to get rid of my rifle as quickly as I could so that the unarmed enemy soldier couldn't take it from me and kill me with it!'

6



A certain poet had written a play, and arrangements were being made to perform it. Of course, the poet was asked to give his advice on the scenery, the lighting, and all the other things that help to make a play successful, and he proved to be a very difficult man to please, as he had his own very definite ideas of how each scene should look.

In one of the scenes in the play, it was necessary to produce the effect of a wonderful sunset, which the young lovers watched together before singing one of their great love songs.

The theatre electricians worked very hard to produce this sunset effect. They tried out all kinds of arrangements and combinations of lights—red lights, orange lights, yellow lights, blue lights, lights from above, lights from behind, lights from the front, lights from the sides—but nothing satisfied the poet, until suddenly he saw exactly the effect that he had been dreaming of producing ever since he had written his play.

‘That’s it!’ he shouted excitedly to the electricians behind the stage. ‘That’s just right! Keep it exactly like that!’

‘I’m sorry, sir,’ answered the chief electrician, ‘but we can’t keep it like this.’

‘Why ever not?’ asked the poet angrily.

‘Because the theatre is on fire, sir,’ answered the chief electrician. ‘That’s what’s producing the effect you can see now!’

7

Nasreddin never seemed to have enough money to pay his bills, so he always owed money to the shopkeepers in his town. Most of them were patient, understanding men and did not speak to him very often about the money that he owed them, but there was one who was not at all patient, and who was also very fond of money. Whenever this man saw Nasreddin, he reminded him of the money that he had not yet paid him, and he very often did this in front of Nasreddin’s best friends, which made Nasreddin feel very uncomfortable, as he did not want his friends to know that he was so poor.

One day, therefore, Nasreddin decided to teach the shopkeeper a lesson.

The next time that the man stopped him in the street and began to shame him publicly about his debt to him, Nasreddin said, 'Wait a minute. How much money do I in fact owe you?'

'You owe me exactly one hundred and twenty-two liras,' answered the shopkeeper.

'Well,' said Nasreddin, 'if I paid you forty liras this month, another forty next month, and forty more the month after that, how much would I still owe you?'

'You would then owe me two liras, of course,' answered the shopkeeper.

'Well, aren't you ashamed of yourself,' Nasreddin said, 'giving me all this trouble for only two liras?'



8

Mrs Baker's sister was ill. She had someone to look after her from Monday to Friday, but not at the weekend, so every Friday evening Mrs Baker used to go off to spend the weekend with her at her home in a neighbouring town. But as Mr Baker could not cook, she had arranged for *his* sister to come over and spend the weekend looking after him at their home.

This meant that Mr Baker had quite a busy time when he came home from work on Friday evenings. First he had to drive home from the railway station. Then he had to drive his wife to the station to catch her train. And then he had to wait until his sister's train arrived, so as to take her to his house.

Of course, on Sunday evening he had to drive his sister to the station to catch her train back home, and then wait for his wife's train, so as to bring *her* home.

One Sunday evening he had seen his sister off on her train and was waiting for his wife's arrival when a porter, who had often seen him at the station, came over and spoke to him.

'You are having a lot of fun,' he said. 'But one day one of those women is going to catch you with the other, and then you will be in real trouble!'



A gay young man, who earned his living as a drummer in a band, had just married, and he and his wife were looking for somewhere to live. They saw a lot of places, but there was always something that one of them did not like about them. At last, however, they found a block of new flats which both of them really liked. However, there was still the problem of whether they should take one of the ground-floor flats, which had a small garden, or one of the upstairs ones.

At last they decided on a first-floor flat—not too low down and not too high up—and moved in. After they had bought furniture, carpets, curtains, and all the rest, they gave a big party to celebrate the setting up of their first home together.

It was a gay and noisy party, as all the host's friends from the band came and played their instruments. The guests danced, sang and practised on their host's drums.

Soon after one a.m. the telephone rang. The hostess went to answer it in the hall, and after she had finished, came back with a happy smile on her face and said to her husband, 'That was the man who has just moved into the flat downstairs telephoning, dear. I am so glad we decided not to choose it. He says it is terribly noisy down there.'

10

Just after the last war, people were very willing to give money to help those who had suffered from it. But not everyone who collected money was honest. The newspapers were full of stories of people who had been cheated by men who went from house to house saying that they were collecting for soldiers who had been seriously wounded in the war, or for people who had lost their homes, or for some other noble cause, while all the time they were putting the money they collected into their own pockets instead of using it for the purposes they claimed to be collecting it for.

One day Mr Smith came back with another story of this kind. He told his wife that a group of people had collected thousands of dollars for the widow of the Unknown Soldier. Then someone had written to the papers about it, and they had written articles to warn other people. Mr Smith

said that he and his friends at the office had had a good laugh about the story when they had read it in the newspaper.

'Can you imagine anyone being so stupid as to believe that story and give money for the widow of the Unknown Soldier?' he asked his wife.

She looked puzzled at first, but then her face brightened. 'Oh, yes! I see now!' she answered. 'Of course, the *government* pays the widow of the Unknown Soldier!'



11

Mr and Mrs Davies had left their Christmas shopping very late. There were only a few days more before Christmas, and of course the shops and streets were terribly crowded, but they had to get presents for their family and friends, so they started out early one morning for the big city, and spent several tiring hours buying the things they wanted in the big shops.

By lunch-time, Mr Davies was loaded down with parcels of all shapes and sizes. He could hardly see where he was going as he and his wife left the last shop on their way to the railway station and home. Outside the shop they had to cross a busy street, made even busier than usual by the thousands of people who had come by car to do their last-minute Christmas shopping.

Mr and Mrs Davies had to wait for the traffic lights to change, but as Mr Davies could not see in front of him properly, he gradually moved forward into the road without realizing it. Mrs Davies saw this and became worried. Several times she urged her husband to come back off the road, but without success. He could not hear her because of the noise of the traffic.

Finally she shouted in a voice that could be heard clearly above all the noise, 'Henry! If you intend to stand in that dangerous position a moment longer, give *me* the parcels!'



Most of Nasreddin's neighbours were pleasant people, who were always ready to help each other when they were in trouble; but there was one woman who lived in his street who was disliked by everybody because she was always interfering in other people's business, and because she was always borrowing things from people and then forgetting to give them back.

Early one morning, Nasreddin heard a knock at his front door, and, when he opened it, found this woman outside.

'Good morning, Nasreddin,' she said. 'I have to take some things to my sister's house in the town today, and I have not got a donkey, as you know. Will you lend me yours? I will bring it back this evening.'

'I am sorry,' answered Nasreddin. 'If my donkey was here, I would of course lend it to you very willingly, but it is not.'

'Oh?' said the woman. 'It was here last night, because I saw it behind your house. Where is it now?'

'My wife took it into town early this morning,' answered Nasreddin. Just then the donkey brayed loudly.

'You are not telling the truth, Nasreddin!' the woman said angrily. 'I can hear your donkey. You should be ashamed of yourself, telling lies to a neighbour!'

'You are the one who should be ashamed, not me!' shouted Nasreddin. 'Is it good manners to believe a donkey's word rather than that of one of one's neighbours?'



Nasreddin had to preach in the mosque every Friday, but he did not like this duty at all, and was always looking for ways to avoid it. One Friday he had a good idea. When he went up to begin to preach to the people in the

mosque, he said to them, 'Do you know what I am going to talk to you about?'

They were surprised and answered, 'No, we do not.'

Then Nasreddin said, 'Well, if you do not know anything about such an important matter, it is a waste of time for me to talk to you about it.' And he went down again without preaching to the people.

The next Friday, he again asked the question, 'Do you know what I am going to talk to you about today?'

This time the people thought that they had learnt their lesson, so they all said, 'Yes, we do.'

Then Nasreddin said to them, 'Well, it is a waste of time to tell people things that they already know.' And again he went down without preaching to the people.

The third Friday, Nasreddin again said, 'Do you know what I am going to preach to you about today?', but this time some people answered, 'Yes,' and some answered, 'No.'

'Well,' said Nasreddin, 'if some of you know, and some of you do not, those that *do* can tell those that do not,' and again he went down without saying another word.

14

Late one night, Nasreddin was woken up by a terrible noise in the street outside his house. It sounded as if a terrible fight was going on, and as Nasreddin loved nothing better than to watch a fight in the street, he opened his window and looked out. He saw two young men fighting just outside his front door, but when they saw him watching them, they went round the corner of the house and continued to shout at each other and to hit each other there.

Nasreddin did not want to miss anything, so he ran down and opened his front door, but, as it was a cold night, he wrapped himself in a blanket before he went out.

He walked to the corner of his house and looked round it. The two men were still shouting and struggling. Nasreddin went closer to them, both to see the fight better and to try to find out what the men were fighting about. But as soon as he was within easy reach of the men, they stopped fighting, attacked him, seized his blanket and ran away into the darkness with it.

Nasreddin was too old to run after them, so he could do nothing but go sadly back to bed without his blanket.

'Well,' said his wife. 'What were they fighting about?'

'It seems that they were fighting about my blanket,' answered Nasreddin, 'because as soon as they got it, their quarrel ended.'



Mr and Mrs Jones's flat was full of suitcases, trunks and packed-up furniture. The two of them were busy with pencils and paper, checking their lists of luggage, when there was a ring at the door. Mrs Jones went to open it, and saw a well-dressed middle-aged lady outside. The lady said that she lived in the flat beside theirs, and that she had come to welcome them to their new home.

The Joneses invited her in, after apologizing for the state of the flat.

'Oh, please don't stand on ceremony with me,' she answered. 'Do you know, in some parts of this town neighbours are not at all friendly. There are some streets—and even some blocks of flats—where people don't know their neighbours—not even their next-door ones. But in this block of flats, everybody is friends with everybody else. We are one big, happy family. I am sure that you will be very happy here.'

The well-dressed lady got a shock when she came to visit the flat the next time, because she found a quite different man and woman in it. Mr and Mrs Jones had not had the courage to tell her that they were not the *new* owners of the flat, who were due to move in the next day, but the *old* owners, who had lived beside her for two years without her ever having visited them or even noticed their existence.

Mr Brown was at the theatre. He had got his ticket at the last moment, so he had not been able to choose his seat. He now found that he was in the middle of a group of American ladies, some of them middle-aged and some quite old. They obviously all knew each other well, as, before the curtain went up on the play they had come to see, they all talked and joked a lot together.

The lady sitting on Mr Brown's left, who was about sixty years old, seemed to be the happiest and the most amusing of the American group, and after the first act of the play, she apologized to him for the noisiness of her friends. He answered that he was very glad to see American ladies so obviously enjoying their visit to England, and so they got into conversation. Mr Brown's neighbour explained what they were doing there.