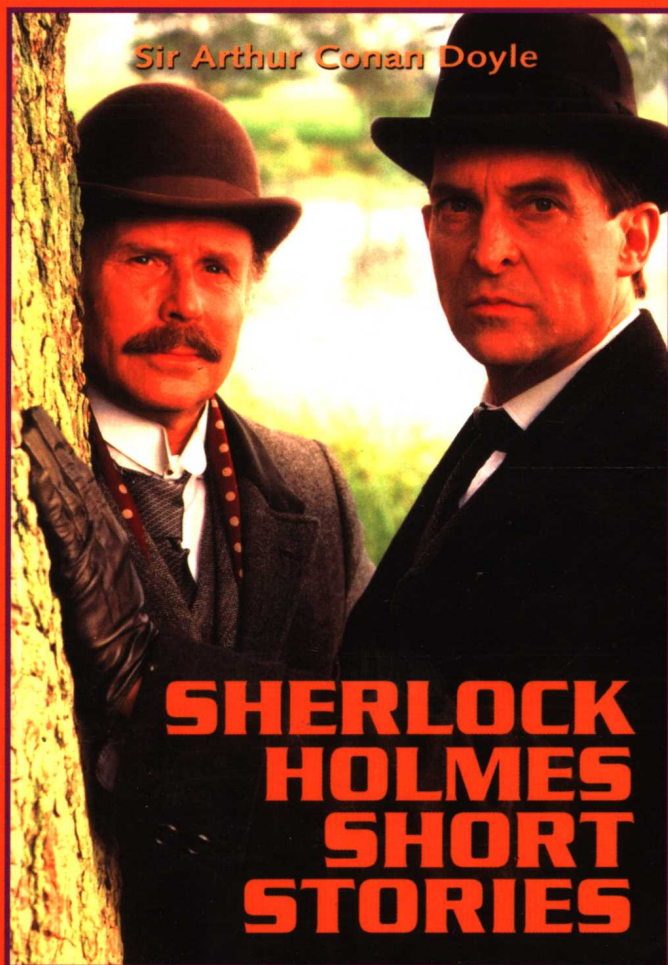




企鹅英语简易读物精选

福尔摩斯短篇故事集



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企鹅英语简易读物精选 (大二学生)

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福尔摩斯短篇故事集

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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。解决这个问题的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，阅读时可以做一些笔记，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

Arthur Conan Doyle was born in Edinburgh, Scotland, in 1859. He was the oldest child of poor parents. His family was not wealthy, but his parents still managed to send him to a good school, which he attended from the age of nine until he was sixteen. Later, he studied medicine at Edinburgh University. After receiving his degree, he spent almost a year as a ship's doctor, travelling all over the world.

On his return to Britain, Conan Doyle went into medical practice at Southsea on the south coast of England. Life was difficult at first as he had very few patients and he struggled hard to earn a living. Although this was a problem as far as his medical practice was concerned, it was a great help to his writing, to which he was able to give a lot of time. He moved to London, where he continued to work as a doctor, but by 1891 he felt confident enough to give up medicine and become a full-time writer.

During the Boer War (1899–1902) he spent time as an army doctor in South Africa and was officially recognized for his work there, receiving the title 'Sir'. Sir Arthur Conan Doyle died in Sussex in 1930.

Conan Doyle was a hard-working writer, and during his lifetime he produced a great variety of books and articles. Although he also wrote on a range of serious subjects, he became famous for his books and stories featuring the detective Sherlock Holmes, and it is for these that he is remembered today. The first Holmes mystery, *A Study in Scarlet*, appeared in 1887, but the character achieved wide popularity with a series of short stories in the *Strand Magazine* in 1891, later collected together as *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*. During his life, Conan Doyle

wrote five collections of Holmes short stories as well as four full-length books.

Conan Doyle was a man of many interests, and he soon tired of being known simply for his Sherlock Holmes stories. He valued his other writings much more highly, and wrote historical books, including *The Exploits of Brigadier Gerard* (1896), a science fiction series featuring Professor Challenger, and reports based on his own experiences in the Boer War and World War I. In his later years, particularly after the death of his son, he developed a deep interest in spiritual matters; his last important work was *A History of Spiritualism* (1926).

No matter how hard he tried, Conan Doyle was unable to escape from the Sherlock Holmes character. He actually killed off the famous detective in a story that appeared in 1893, but the popularity of Holmes was so great that the public forced him to bring the character back to life. Many of the best Sherlock Holmes stories were written after that time.

The short stories in this collection all originally appeared in the *Strand Magazine* between 1891 and 1927. As they were written over such a long period, the relationship between Holmes and Watson changes over the years. In the early stories, which are not included in this collection, Holmes and Watson are both single men sharing rooms at 221B Baker Street in London. Later, as is the case in some of these stories, Watson is not living with Holmes because he has married and has his own medical practice near Paddington Station. When Watson's wife dies he returns to Baker Street, and in the later stories he is the detective's close companion. From this famous address the two set out to solve crimes. The crimes usually take place in various parts of England, although in 'The Disappearance of Lady Frances Carfax' Watson travels to Switzerland and France in search of clues. But wherever Holmes and Watson go, they take with them their strange turn-

of-the-century Englishness and their rather dark suspicions of all things 'foreign'.

Join Sherlock Holmes and Dr Watson in a variety of adventures that include a number of suspicious deaths; the disappearance of a London businessman and an English lady; the mystery of the engineer with the missing thumb, and the strange case of two men who share a very unusual name.

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The Man with the Twisted Lip

Mr Isa Whitney was, and had been for many years, an opium addict. He could not get rid of the habit. He had once been a fine man, but now people only pitied this bent, unfortunate person with the yellow, unhealthy face. Opium was both his ruin and his only pleasure.

One night in June, when it was almost time to go to bed, I heard the doorbell ring. I sat up in my chair, and Mary, my wife; put her sewing down in annoyance.

‘A patient!’ she said. ‘At this hour!’

We heard the servant open the front door and speak to someone. A moment later the door of our sitting room was thrown open and a lady came in. She wore a black veil over her face.

‘Please forgive me for calling on you so late,’ she began. But then she could no longer control her feelings. She ran forward, threw her arms round Mary’s neck, and cried bitterly on her shoulder. ‘Oh, I’m in such trouble!’ she said. ‘I need help so much!’

‘Well!’ said my wife, pulling up the visitor’s veil. ‘It’s Kate Whitney. This is a surprise, Kate! I had no idea who you were when you came in.’

‘I didn’t know what to do, and so I came straight to you.’

That was how it always happened. People who were in trouble came to my wife like birds to a lighthouse.

‘We are very glad to see you,’ Mary said. ‘Now you must have some wine and water, and sit here comfortably and tell us all about it. Or would you like me to send John off to bed?’

‘Oh, no, no! I want the doctor’s advice and help too. It’s about

Isa. He hasn't been home for two days. I'm so worried about him!

This was not the first time that Mrs Whitney had spoken to us of her husband's bad ways: she and Mary had been at school together. We did our best to calm her down and comfort her.

'Have you any idea where he has gone?' I asked.

'Yes,' Mrs Whitney replied. 'He's probably at a place called the Bar of Gold, in East London, down by the river. It's in Upper Swandam Street. It's a place where opium addicts go. This is the first time that Isa has spent more than a day there.'

I was Isa Whitney's doctor and had a certain influence with him.

'I will go to this place,' I said. 'If he is there, I will send him home in a carriage within two hours.'

Five minutes later I had left my comfortable chair and sitting room and was in a fast carriage on my way east.

Upper Swandam Street was on the north side of the river, to the east of London Bridge. The Bar of Gold was below the level of the street. Some steep steps led down to the entrance, which was little more than a hole in the wall. There was an oil lamp hanging above the door. I ordered the driver to wait, and went down the steps.

Inside, it was difficult to see very much through the thick brown opium smoke. Wooden beds lined the walls of a long, low room. In the shadows I could just see bodies lying in strange positions on the beds; and little red circles of light burning in the bowls of metal pipes. Most of the smokers lay silently, but some talked softly to themselves. Near one end of the room was a fireplace, in which a small fire was burning. A tall, thin old man sat there, his elbows on his knees, looking into the fire.

A Malayan servant who belonged to the place came up to me with some opium and a pipe. He pointed to an empty bed.

'No, thank you,' I said. 'I haven't come to stay. There is a friend

of mine here, Mr Isa Whitney, and I want to speak to him.'

A man on one of the beds suddenly sat up, and I recognized Whitney. He was pale, untidy, and wild-looking.

'Watson!' he cried. 'Tell me, Watson, what time is it?'

'Nearly eleven o'clock.'

'On what day?'

'Friday, June the 19th.'

'Good heavens! I thought it was Wednesday.'

'No, it's Friday. And your wife has been waiting two days for you. You ought to be ashamed of yourself!'

He began to cry. 'I was sure I had been here only a few hours! But I'll go home with you. I don't want to worry Kate – poor little Kate! Give me your hand: I can't do anything for myself. Have you come in a carriage?'

'Yes, I have one waiting.'

'Good. But I must owe something here. Find out what I owe them, Watson.'

As I walked along the narrow passage between the beds, looking for the manager, I felt someone touch my arm. It was the tall man by the fire. 'Walk past me, and then look back at me,' he said. When I looked again he was still leaning over the fire – a bent, tired old man. Suddenly he looked up and smiled at me. I recognized Sherlock Holmes.

'Holmes!' I whispered. 'What on earth are you doing in this terrible place?'

'Speak more quietly! I have excellent ears. Please get rid of that friend of yours. I want to talk to you.'

'I have a carriage waiting outside.'

'Then send him home in it. And I suggest that you give the driver a note for your wife. Tell her you are with me. And wait outside for me: I'll be with you in five minutes.'

In a few minutes I had written my note, paid Whitney's bill, led him out to the carriage, and said good night to him. Then

Holmes came out of the Bar of Gold, and we walked along together. At first he walked unsteadily, with a bent back, but after the first few streets he straightened up and laughed loudly.

'I suppose you think I have become an opium addict, Watson!' he said.

'I was certainly surprised to find you in that place,' I replied.

'And I was surprised to see you there!'

'I came to find a friend.'

'And I came to find an enemy!'

'An enemy?'

'Yes, Watson, one of my natural enemies – a criminal! I am working on one of my cases. I fear that Mr Neville Saint Clair entered the Bar of Gold and that he will never come out of the place alive. There is a door at the back of the building that opens onto the river. I believe that many men have been murdered there, and that their bodies have been thrown out through that door. If I had been recognized, the evil Indian sailor who owns the place would have murdered me too! I have used the Bar of Gold before for my own purposes, and have often found useful clues there in the conversation of the opium addicts. The owner has sworn to have his revenge on me for it.' Suddenly Holmes whistled loudly. 'The carriage should be here by now!' he said.

We heard an answering whistle in the distance. Then we saw the yellow lamps of the carriage as it came near.

'Now, Watson, you will come with me, won't you?' said Holmes, as he climbed in.

'If I can be of any use.'

'Oh, a friend is always useful. And my room at the Saint Clairs' has two beds.'

'At the Saint Clairs?'

'Yes. I am staying there while I work on the case.'

'Where is it, then?'

'Near Lee, in Kent. It's a seven-mile drive. Come on!'

'But I don't know anything about your case!'

'Of course you don't. But you soon will! Jump up here. All right, Harold,' he said to the driver, 'we shan't need you.' He handed the man a coin. 'Look out for me tomorrow at about eleven o'clock. Good night!'

For the first part of our drive Holmes was silent and I waited patiently for him to begin.

'I have been wondering what I can say to that dear little woman tonight when she meets me at the door,' he said at last. 'I am talking about Mrs Saint Clair, of course.'

'Neville Saint Clair came to live near Lee five years ago. He took a large house and lived like a rich man. He gradually made friends in the neighbourhood, and two years ago he married the daughter of a local farmer, by whom he now has two children. Neville Saint Clair was a businessman in London. He used to leave home every morning and then catch the 5.14 train back from Cannon Street Station each evening. If he is still alive he is now thirty-seven years old. He has no bad habits; he is a good husband and father, and everybody likes him. He has debts of £88 at present, but his bank account contains £220. There is no reason, therefore, to think that he has any money troubles.'

'Last Monday he went into London rather earlier than usual. He said that he had two important pieces of business to do that day. He also promised to buy his little boy a box of toy bricks. Now, that same day his wife happened to receive a telegram from the Aberdeen Shipping Company. This informed her that a valuable package which she was expecting had arrived at the Company's offices in London. These offices are in Fresno Street, which is off Upper Swandam Street, where you found me tonight. Mrs Saint Clair had her lunch, caught a train to London, did some shopping, and then went to the shipping company's offices. When she came out it was 4.35. She walked slowly along Upper Swandam Street, hoping to find a carriage. It was a very

hot day, and she did not like the neighbourhood at all. Suddenly she heard a cry, and saw her husband looking down at her from a window on the first floor of one of the houses. He seemed to be waving to her, as if he wanted her to come up. The window was open, and she had a clear view of his face. He looked very worried and nervous. She noticed that he had no collar or tie on; but he was wearing a dark coat like the one he had put on that morning. Then, very suddenly, somebody seemed to pull him back from the window.

'Mrs Saint Clair felt sure that something was seriously wrong. She saw that the entrance to the house was below ground level: this was the door of the Bar of Gold. She rushed down the steps and through the front room, and tried to go up the stairs which led to the upper part of the house. But the owner – the Indian sailor I spoke of – ran downstairs and pushed her back. The Malayan servant helped him to push her out into the street. She rushed along Upper Swandam Street and into Fresno Street, where she fortunately found several policemen. They forced their way into the Bar of Gold and went upstairs to the room in which Mr Saint Clair had last been seen. There was no sign of him there. In fact the only person in the upper part of the house was an ugly cripple who lived there. Both the Indian and this cripple swore that no one else had been in the first-floor front room that afternoon. The policemen were beginning to believe that Mrs Saint Clair had been mistaken when suddenly she noticed a small wooden box on the table. Realizing what it contained, she tore the lid off and emptied out children's bricks. It was the toy that her husband had promised to bring home for his little boy.

'Of course the rooms were now examined very carefully, and the police found signs of a terrible crime. The front room was an ordinary room with plain furniture, and led into a small bedroom, from which the river could be seen. Along the edge of the river there is a narrow piece of ground which is dry at low tide, but

which is covered at high tide by at least four and a half feet of water. At that time of day the river is at its highest point. There were drops of blood on the window, and a few drops on the bedroom floor too. Behind a curtain in the front room the police found all Neville Saint Clair's clothes except his coat. His shoes, his socks, his hat and his watch – everything was there. There were no signs of violence on any of the clothes, and Mr Saint Clair, alive or dead, was certainly not there. He seemed to have gone out of the window – there was no other possibility.

'The Indian had often been in trouble with the police before. But as Mrs Saint Clair had seen him at the foot of the stairs only a few seconds after her husband's appearance at the window, he could not have been responsible for the murder. He said that he knew nothing about the clothes which had been found in the cripple's rooms. The cripple himself, whose name is Hugh Boone, must have been the last person to see Neville Saint Clair.

'Boone is a well-known London beggar who always sits in Threadneedle Street, near the Bank of England. He pretends to be a match seller, but there is always a dirty leather cap by his side into which people throw coins. I have watched him more than once, and I have been surprised at the very large amount of money that he receives in this way. His appearance, you see, is so unusual that no one can go past without noticing him. He has a pale face and long red hair, and bright brown eyes. His upper lip is twisted as the result of an old accident. And he is famous for his clever answers to the jokes of all the businessmen who go past.'

'Is it possible that a cripple could have murdered a healthy young man like Neville Saint Clair?' I asked.

'Hugh Boone's body is bent and his face is ugly,' Holmes replied, 'but there is great strength in him. Cripples are often very strong, you know. When the police were searching him, they noticed some spots of blood on one of the arms of his shirt. But he showed them a cut on his finger, and explained that the blood

had come from there. He also said that he had been at the window not long before, and that the blood on the floor and window probably came from his finger too. He refused to admit that he had ever seen Mr Saint Clair, and swore that the presence of the clothes in the room was as much a mystery to him as it was to the police. If Mrs Saint Clair said she had seen her husband at the window she must have been dreaming – or else she was crazy! Boone was taken to the police station, still complaining loudly.

‘When the water level in the river had gone down, the police looked for the body of Mr Saint Clair in the mud. But they only found his coat. And every pocket was full of pennies and halfpennies – 421 pennies, and 270 halfpennies. It was not surprising that the coat had not been carried away by the tide. But possibly the body itself had been swept away. Perhaps Boone pushed Saint Clair through the window, and then decided to get rid of the clothing, which might give clues to the police. But he needed to be sure that the clothes would sink. So he went to the hiding place where he kept the money he earned in Threadneedle Street, and began by filling the pockets of the coat and throwing it out. He would have done the same with the rest of the clothing, but just then he heard the police coming up the stairs, and quickly closed the window.

‘Boone has been a professional beggar for many years, but he has never been in any serious trouble with the police. He seems to live very quietly and harmlessly. I have to find out what Neville Saint Clair was doing in that house, what happened to him while he was there, where he is now, and what Hugh Boone’s involvement was in his disappearance. The problem seemed to be an easy one at first, but now I don’t think it is so easy.

‘Do you see that light among the trees? That is the Saint Clairs’ house. Beside that lamp an anxious woman is sitting listening, probably, for the sound of our horse.’

We drove through some private grounds, and stopped in front

of a large house. A servant ran out to take charge of our horse. The front door opened before we had reached it, and a small fair woman in a pink silk dress hurried out to meet us.

‘Well?’ she cried eagerly. ‘Well?’

Perhaps she thought for a moment that Holmes’s friend was her lost husband.

Holmes shook his head.

‘No good news?’ she asked.

‘None.’

‘But no bad news either?’

‘No.’

‘Well, come in. You must be very tired. You have had a long day’s work.’

‘This is my friend Dr Watson. He has been of great use to me in several of my cases. By a lucky chance he has been able to come with me this evening.’

‘I am pleased to meet you,’ said Mrs Saint Clair, pressing my hand warmly. She led us into a pleasant dining room, where there was a cold supper laid out on the table. ‘Now, Mr Sherlock Holmes, I have one or two questions to ask you, and I should like you to answer them truthfully.’

‘Certainly, Mrs Saint Clair.’

‘It is your real opinion that I want to know.’

‘About what?’ Holmes asked.

‘Do you truly believe that Neville is still alive?’

Holmes did not seem to like this question. ‘Truly, now!’ she repeated, looking at him as he leaned back in his chair.

‘Truly, then, I do not,’ he answered at last.

‘You think he is dead?’

‘Yes.’

‘And that he was murdered?’

‘I don’t know. Perhaps.’

‘And on what day did he die?’