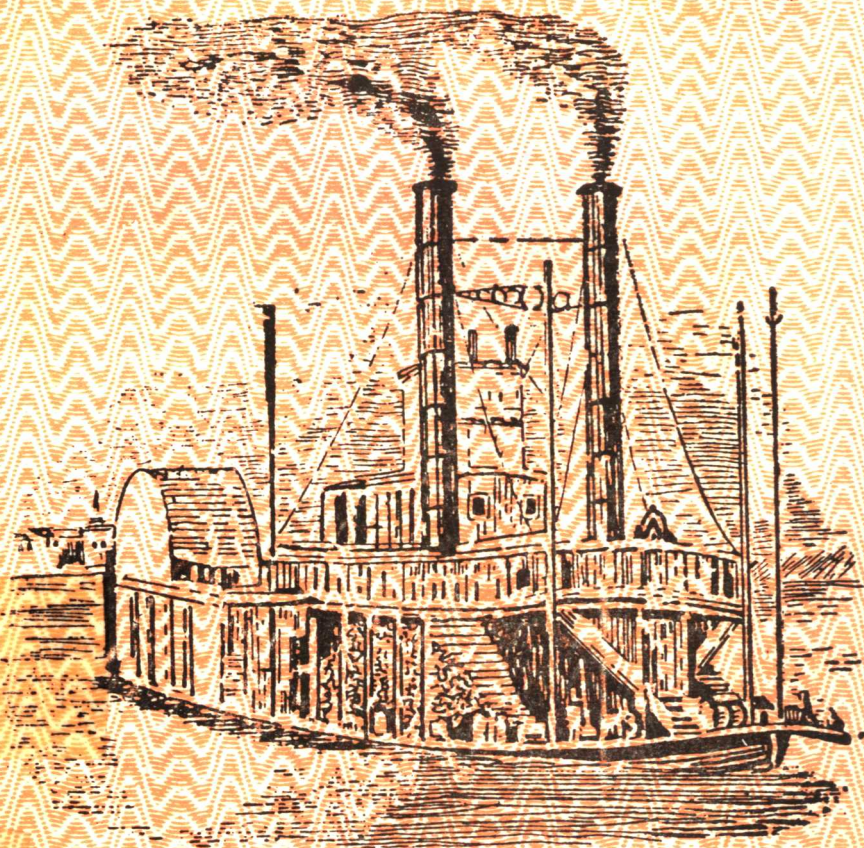


AMERICAN READINGS

GRINDELL ★ MARELLI ★ NADLER



SAXON SERIES IN ENGLISH
AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

AMERICAN READING

Selections and Exercises for Vocabulary Development

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AMERICAN READINGS

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Robert M. Grindell
Leonard R. Marelli
Harvey Nadler

Introduction

American Readings: Selections and Exercises for Vocabulary Development is a textbook of English as a second language for adult students who are at or above the intermediate stage in language proficiency. All the essays in the book are the work of well-known American authors, and the themes range from the humorous to the philosophical to the factual.

The chief intent of *American Readings* is to provide for intensive practice in American English. Intensive reading calls for close attention to vocabulary and the structure within which this vocabulary occurs; it also calls for thorough study and careful home preparation. There is strong emphasis on practice with a great number of exercises to develop the student's active rather than passive command of the language. Gaining active control of English vocabulary and structure first requires intensive study, to be followed later by extensive, uninterrupted reading to develop further familiarity with the lexicon and to develop speed and ease in silent reading for communication.

While the range of vocabulary in *American Readings* has not been restricted, careful consideration has been given to the context within which words occur in the practice materials. The majority of exercises in *American Readings* still control to some extent the student's response or language activity. Teachers who have used Taylor's *American English Reader* will find that *American Readings* follows the general format of the *Reader* and therefore provides for easy transition to more difficult materials. The large number of exercises following each essay provides for frequent recurrence of vocabulary items to expedite the permanent addition of the items to the student's total active and passive vocabulary. The exercises and study materials following each essay have generally been presented uniformly throughout the text as follows: (1) comprehension questions, (2) prepositions, (3) common phrases, (4) synonyms, (5) vocabulary,

(6) articles or other parts of speech, (7) word-form chart, (8) word-form examples, (9) use of word forms, (10) questions for vocabulary practice, (11) composition topics, (12) sentences for dictation.

From the foregoing, it will be apparent that the textbook was developed with the principle in mind that the student should not only see and hear but also speak and write new words or the alternative forms of known words in the course of going through each essay. Further, the text was developed with consideration of the need for frequent repetition of vocabulary and for making the student "word- and structure-conscious." The student at or above the intermediate stage of development will also find the range of vocabulary great enough to require that he make frequent use of an "English-English" dictionary.

The three teachers who produced this textbook, all experienced in second language instruction, had as their objective providing a text to bridge the stage in a student's language development between the fairly rigidly controlled situation where vocabulary and structure are restricted and the completely "free" situation where the ability to reproduce vocabulary and structure with exactness (no matter how complex) is assumed. In this connection, the text was extensively tested with many groups of students both abroad and in the United States over the course of several years. Having seen the results of these studies and having advised the authors at many stages in the creation and revision of the text, I have no hesitation in recommending *American Readings* for use with students who are at or above the intermediate level and particularly for use with those students who intend to study in an English-speaking college or university in the near future.

Grant Taylor

To the Teacher:

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

1. *General Remarks*

In the course of using these selections at the American Language Institute, we have evolved a method, culled from the many different approaches used by various teachers at New York University. The suggestions which follow are not, of course, the only possible ways in which the various exercises may be used. The experienced classroom teacher will want to adapt his use of the material to suit his own techniques, the needs of his students, the teaching situations, and whatever other variables exist. For the teacher for whom the format may be unfamiliar, the following suggestions may be useful as a starting point toward developing one's own techniques for teaching, reading and vocabulary development.

2. *Word Forms*

An introduction to word forms precedes the first selection in the book. It has been included because the concept of word forms will be new to many students, and our experience has taught that the non-native speaker of English cannot always use the native speaker's knowledge of the meaning of a sentence to aid him in selecting the correct form of a word from several possible ones. Therefore, he must be supplied with other aids; in this case, the positional variants of the word forms in the English sentence.

The short introduction to word forms is intended as a guide for the classroom teacher. In its unaltered form, it would probably consume no more than one academic hour, including the exercises for practice in recognizing forms. If the teacher cares to expand on the material presented here, he might profitably spend some time on English prefixes

and suffixes. In any case, the authors feel that at least one class meeting, preferably the first of the course, should be devoted to an analysis of the recognition and function of word forms.

3. *The Nature of the Exercises*

At the American Language Institute, the material in this book has been used primarily in an intensive program in which the reading and vocabulary section meets four hours a week for fifteen weeks, but it has also been used in courses meeting for one or two hours a week. Any or all of the exercises may be written, with the exception of the Questions for Vocabulary Practice which is designed to be used orally. The authors have designed these exercises to be written:

1. The Synonym, Common Phrase and Preposition Exercises, because they are in the context of the reading selection and the student must continually refer back to the text to find the correct answer. They are, then, much more suitable for written work at home. Constant referral back to the text would consume too much time in the classroom.

2. The Vocabulary Exercise, because it is closely related to the Synonym Exercise.

3. The Word Form Exercise, because it is intended primarily as an at-home test for the student's mastery of the Word Form Chart and Examples.

The remaining exercises may be done either orally or in writing, depending on the number of class hours available for each selection. In general, we feel that the less often a class meets, the larger the amount of homework that the student should do. We will have more time to spend on the exercises and there will be more carry-over from class to class.

At first glance, the presence of exercises to teach the use of prepositions, "common phrases" (which include verbs with allied prepositions, adjectives with allied prepositions, idioms, etc.), participles and articles may seem to be out of place in a vocabulary book. We have included such items because we feel that, while they may properly be a part of the structure of English, the rules for their use are in many cases vague, complex or simply non-existent. Under such circumstances, they are best treated as vocabulary items.

4. *Suggested Methodology*

After the students have read the selection (and/or heard it read in the language laboratory, see Section VII) they should be asked the Comprehension Questions. The Questions are designed so that the student must summarize one or two sentences, more in some cases, into one sentence. Many teachers may find it desirable to ask more

detailed questions, in which case the ones given can serve as a guide. The technique which is generally thought most successful is this: the teacher asks the question; the student refers to the appropriate section of the selection and then answers, without looking at the text. The teacher repeats the answer and goes on to the next question.

In general, we have found that little purpose is served by oral discussion of the written assignments whether before or after they are done, unless there are questions from the students. Once the assignment is corrected and returned, the student has permanent evidence of a correct pattern.

The Synonym Exercise, however, may be done orally after it has been written, in the form of a pattern drill:

TEACHER: *Enduring*. There was *one* enduring ambition among my comrades.

MR. HERRERA: There was one permanent ambition among my comrades.

TEACHER: There was one permanent ambition among my comrades. Everyone.

THE CLASS: There was one permanent ambition among my comrades.

TEACHER: There was one permanent ambition among my comrades. *Temporary*. We had other temporary ambitions. Miss Chow.

The teacher may want to vary the patterning, calling on two students before getting a choral response, or three, then going back to one, just to keep the class alert and attentive. If the time available is short, the whole class may do the entire exercise just once in choral response to the teacher's cue.

The teacher may also drill the Programmed Word Form Examples orally, by asking a question that would elicit the word in the context of the example

TEACHER: Is this our temporary home? Mr. Kurosawa.

MR. KUROSAWA: No, it isn't. It's our permanent home.

If the teacher wishes to drill the Word Forms even more thoroughly, he can reproduce a section of the Chart on the blackboard, listing, for example, a noun form and asking the student to supply and spell the adjective or verb form. When the chart is complete, or as each set of forms is complete, it can be drilled orally. It should be pointed out, however, that this is primarily intended as a spelling drill.

Following the students' filling in of the Word Form Examples, they should do the Word Form Exercise as a home assignment.

The various supplementary exercises in vocabulary which appear in most units may be done orally or in writing. That they can be done orally, however, does not mean that they can be done without some kind of

prior preparation on the student's part. The Article Exercises are in the context of the selection. The Verb Exercises need very careful preparation. Early in a verb exercise, any one of several verbs may give the sentence apparent meaning. As the exercise progresses, however, the student will find that a verb which he arbitrarily selected for an earlier sentence is definitely needed in a later one. Over the range of the fifteen sentences, only one verb from all those possible can be selected for a given sentence.

The Antonym and Participle Exercises can conceivably be done without preparation, but the pace of the class would be disturbed by the students' long pauses, searching for the correct response before answering.

In short, the only difference between written and oral exercises should be that the students hand in the written exercises to the teacher and retain the ones to be done orally.

The Questions for Vocabulary Practice are designed to reach the ultimate goal of any reading class: the use of new vocabulary in relatively unstructured situations, drawing upon the student's own resources to express himself clearly and effectively. The questions in each set of exercises are intended as springboards for additional practice. Depending on the time available, the discussions may be as long or short as the teacher desires. A few or all of the questions may be used, or the teacher may ask additional questions to give practice with other new vocabulary items. It is suggested that the teacher make sure that the student prepares his answers in advance, in order to prevent the more proficient students from monopolizing the entire discussion, as would most surely happen if the discussion were sprung on the student without their having had an opportunity to prepare.

If the teacher wishes to test for mastery of the vocabulary items which have not been included in the exercises, one method which may be useful is merely to ask for a synonym or antonym for the word in question. Since much of the vocabulary is repetitive, one or both should be readily available. Trying to elicit a measure of comprehension of new vocabulary by asking, "What does _____ mean?" is usually a frustrating experience for both student and teacher. "Defining" a word is extremely difficult even for native speakers, who may nevertheless be using the word correctly.

Another technique which might prove useful with highly proficient classes is to assign certain words to be used in original sentences which clearly illustrate the meaning of the word. This can be a very useful technique, except for the fact that most of the students for whom this book was intended do not yet have the freedom of expression in English that would permit this teaching tool to be used effectively. The typical

sentences that the teacher gets are far too often of the "My friend is envious," "My friend is inconsolable" type. There are, we feel, enough exercises in the book to avoid the danger of assigning meaningless homework. The compositions will give sufficient practice in original writing.

Naturally, the creative teacher will seize every opportunity to use the text vocabulary in whatever situations arise for teaching related vocabulary. When the students learn the collective noun *flock*, what better chance to introduce *herd*, *swarm* and *school*? If the student learns *farm*, he can also learn *ranch*, *dairy* and *plantation*. One cannot, of course, overload the student, but such excursion away from the text can sometimes be a welcome break for both student and teacher. Such opportunities will arise from time to time, and the alert teacher will try to take advantage of as many as he can.

5. The Word Form Examples

These are meant to be done at home, or in the language laboratory following drill and study of the Word Form Chart. The general method we advise is to have the student cover the list of words with an index card, or something similar, and write in the correct form of the word. Then he can move the index card down to the next sentence, at the same time checking to see if he has made the correct response to the previous sentence. This device is meant to be self-teaching, since the answer is immediately available. The teacher can drill the Examples orally, for reinforcement (see Sec. 4).

6. Compositions and Dictations

The Composition Topics and the Sentences for Dictation are designed for coordination in courses where students have grammar and pronunciation sections in addition to a reading and vocabulary class. If the reading class is a discrete unit, either or both can be used by the teacher in addition to the other exercises.

The Composition Topics are intended to give the student practice in using the vocabulary in the context of the selection and then to provide him with the opportunity to express himself meaningfully, using the new vocabulary in a new or related context. If the teacher wishes, he may assign certain key words to be used in the composition. Additional topics, perhaps related to the structures being considered in a grammar class, may also be suggested.

Since the book is intended for high intermediate students, the dictation sentences are constructed to give the students practice in hearing weak

(unstressed) forms, which seem to give them a good deal of difficulty, and which are so much a part of the rhythm of the language.

The goal to be reached with dictations is not only to test for spelling but to provide a tri-sensory correlation: aural, kinesthetic, and visual. The student studies the sentences; he hears them spoken; he writes them, and he sees what he has written. He has thus received triple reinforcement of the sounds of one sentence, and whatever grammar and vocabulary the sentence contains.

The method which most teachers at the American Language Institute use is this: the teacher assigns a specific number of sentences to be studied (for example, 1 through 8 or 8 through 15); he reads them aloud to the class and then the class repeats them after him individually or in chorus. At the next meeting, he reads the sentences for dictation, at a normal rate, not more than four times each. This gives the students practice in hearing what they often "don't hear"—the weak forms. As the students gain proficiency in dictation, the number of repetitions may be cut down. After an initial slow period this will usually happen quite rapidly.

7. *The Language Laboratory*

At New York University, the book is used in conjunction with the language laboratory for one hour each week. The tapes which the students listen to consist of a reading of the selection, the Word Form Examples, and the Word Form Chart.

The first contact the student has with the selection is when he hears it on the tape. This is in keeping with the primarily aural function of the laboratory. Following the reading, the student repeats the Word Form Examples after the speaker; the student records the three segments with time in between for a listen-back period. It is usually preferable for the student to repeat without using the textbook for reference, since, when he does, his attention is devoted to the spoken word. The sentences in the Word Form Examples are short enough and structured simply enough that the average high intermediate student should have little difficulty in repeating them sight unseen.

The Word Form Chart is included on the tape primarily for the purpose of pronunciation practice.

8. *Use of Dictionaries*

At this level of the student's proficiency, he should feel little or no real need to use anything other than an all-English dictionary. We feel that the teacher can reasonably insist that the student buy and use any

one of the standard dictionaries on the market. Several are available in paperback editions well within the price range of most students. If the teacher has a preference as to which one the students should buy, he should by all means indicate it, since many of the students are often in need of advice in such a matter. A paperback thesaurus, also reasonably priced, may also prove to be a useful investment, especially for the university-bound student.

To the Student:

AN INTRODUCTION TO WORD FORMS

Introduction

The words *beautiful*, *beauty*, *beautify*, and *beautifully* are similar. They have something in common. They are different forms of the same word. These word forms are an important part of your vocabulary development. Not every word has four forms. Some words have more than four forms, and some words have only one or two.

What are the differences between the various forms of a word? Why is it necessary to learn them?

The differences between the forms of a word depend on their positions in a sentence and their relationships with the other words in the sentence. A student learning a new language must know more than just the meaning of a new word. He must know how the new word is related to the rest of the sentence. Once he knows how the forms act in a sentence, the student can make them act for him.

Word relationships are important in English because English word order is relatively unchangeable. Since English word order is very important in giving the meaning of the sentence, the student who is mastering the language must be aware of the basic word relationships in English sentences.

English Sentences

There are many patterns for English sentences. Some of the basic English sentence patterns are shown below. Most complicated sentence patterns are merely variations or combinations of the basic patterns.

PATTERN 1: Action Verbs

<i>Noun</i>	<i>Verb (A)</i>	<i>Noun</i>	<i>Adverb</i>
Birds	sing.		
Birds	sing		beautifully.
Birds	sing	songs.	
Birds	sing	songs	beautifully.

This can be expanded into a more complex type:

The rather brightly colored birds/sing/various songs/very beautifully/.

PATTERN 2: *In addition to the type of action verbs shown above, there are also two special types of verbs.*

TYPE a: Sense Verbs

<i>Noun</i>	<i>Verb (S)</i>	<i>Adjective</i>
Milk	tastes	sour.
Flowers	smell	sweet.*

* This can be expanded to:
Those rather incredibly shaped flowers/smell/ quite sweet.

TYPE b: Linking Verbs: two basic sentence patterns:

<i>Noun</i>	<i>Verb (L)</i>	<i>Noun</i>	<i>Noun</i>	<i>Verb (L)</i>	<i>Adjective</i>
Teachers	are	people.	Tom	seems	old.
John	became	a lawyer.	John	became	tired.

Note: Some verbs may sometimes be active and at other times linking.

The train appeared rapid.

The train appeared rapidly.

In which of these examples is there an active verb? How do you know?
The answer is the second example and the reason is that it is followed by an adverb.

Individual Word Forms

The Noun: Whenever we see *a*, *an* or *the* in an English sentence, we

know that a noun will soon follow. As a result *a*, *an* and *the* are called **NOUN MARKERS**. There are other words in English which usually function as noun markers.

<i>Noun Markers</i>	<i>Noun</i>
<i>Articles:</i> a, an, the	a story, an orange, the books
<i>Demonstratives:</i> this, that, these, those	this story, that orange, those books
<i>Possessives:</i> my, his, her, its, your, our, their, John's, the captain's	my story, his orange, the captain's books
<i>Numericals:</i> One, two, three . . .	one story
First, second, third . . .	
<i>Quantity Words:</i> much, many, some, any, each, every, no	many stories, each orange, no books

However, between the noun marker and the noun, other words may appear. The noun marker simply tells us that a noun is going to follow soon. It does not have to follow immediately.

The Adjective: One of the classes of words that may appear between the noun marker and the noun is the adjective.

<i>Marker</i>	<i>Adjective</i>	<i>Noun</i>
many	new	books
these	tall	buildings
an	interesting *	story

* a special adjective form: see below

New, *tall*, and *interesting* are three members of the class of adjectives representing quality, age, and size. Can you think of any other words that fit this position?

SPECIAL ADJECTIVES: Sometimes the present or past participle form of a verb is used as an adjective.

the *interested* students

the *interesting* book

The book interests the students: the interesting book

The students are interested by the book: the interested students

It is possible to place still other words between the noun marker and the adjective.

The Adverb: The adverb may appear in *many* places in an English sentence. One of these positions is before an adjective.

Marker	Adverb	Adjective	Noun
an	unusually	interesting	book
an	incredibly	tall	building

A special class of adverb called an *intensifier* may also appear before an adjective, or even another adverb.

Marker	Intensifier	Adjective	Noun
a	very	good	story
a	rather	tall	building

Marker	Intensifier	Adverb	Adjective	Noun
a	very	well	written	book
the	most	rapidly	moving	train

Why are these special adverbs called intensifiers?

Summary

			Noun:	Books
		Adjective	Noun:	Good books
	Intensifier	Adjective	Noun:	Very good books
Marker	Intensifier	Adjective	Noun:	The very good books
Marker		Adjective	Noun:	The good books
Marker			Noun:	The books
		Adverb	Adjective	Noun: Surprisingly good books
	Intensifier	Adverb	Adjective	Noun: Rather surprisingly good ...
Marker	Intensifier	Adverb	Adjective	Noun: The rather surprisingly good
Marker		Adverb	Adjective	Noun: The surprisingly good books

Positions of Word Forms

NOUNS

1. TYPE ONE: as the subject