



英汉对照
原汁原味

American

美国中学生

Middle School
Students'
Compositions

英语作文
精选

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Middle School
Students' Compositions

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前 言

随着国际交往的日益增多,全球化的进程进一步加速,人们对英语应用能力有了更高的要求,而阅读原汁原味的英语作品是迅速提高英语实际应用能力的重要一步。为适应广大中学生求知、求新、求变的学习欲望,我们精心编选了这本《美国中学生英语作文精选》。

本书所收录的所有文章都出自美国中学生之手,文中叙述了他们的实际生活感受,吐露了他们的真实思想和情趣,也暴露了成长中的烦恼。书中所收录的文章,均以美国的生活和历史为背景,涉及友谊、家庭及爱情、学校与社会、成长中的问题和烦恼、对异性的朦胧情感、种族问题、自然与人性、城市生活的无奈。我们阅读这些原汁原味的作品,既可以学习、提高运用英语写作、叙事的能力,又可以对美国文化及青少年的生活有所了解。每篇文章构思新颖,语言流畅,想象丰富,配以中文译文、生词表及文化背景,更使其成为中学生提高阅读、听说能力,了解异域文化风情的益友。

我们希望广大读者在使用本书的过程中,能感受到阅读英语的乐

趣,在不知不觉中提高自己的英语阅读能力,同时又扩大了自己的知识视野,真正有所得益。

编者

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Tawanda!

by Chrissie Ann Green

It was the last day. Could you believe it? No, more sunny days at the pool or going to Jeffrey's and trying on ballroom dresses. Or funny sleepovers when we would wake up at midnight with a craving for homemade brownies with chocolate chips. It was all over.

See, Kristen was my best friend. She stood by me last February when my 72-year-old grandfather died of cancer. I can remember it so clearly. I was in the funeral parlor, crying. I had to go there three days in a row. No one was there for me. On the third day, I was in the hall trying to stop whimpering when the front door opened. She was there. She held my hand and talked about more cheerful and glorious things than death.

I can remember going to see movies at Roosevelt Field. I especially remember the movie *Fried Green Tomatoes*. Our favorite word was "tawanda," and it came from that movie. We said it when we tried to eat a lemon with sugar on top without squinting. We said it when we dove off the high dive for the first time. Or even just trying blueberry ice cream, we said it. It was the word of freedom to us. As if we would always be like the Three Stooges doing stupid things.

But not anymore. She would never be there again. Because, just like my grandfather, she left too, though not in the same way.

She left in a truck with her family. She rode in a truck with furniture.

We walked into her house for the last time and saw that kitchen, with no refrigerator or microwave popping with popcorn, with no furniture in her den. We were surrounded by white walls in her room; empty, empty. I could visualize the two beds parallel to each other, one with Little Mer-

maid blankets and the other plain peach. I could see her little sister playing on the bed with the hamster and saying, "Chrissie, Chrissie, pick me up!" and hugging my legs because she was so short, and seeing that huge smile on her face when I gave her gum.

We left the house and I saw Kristen for what seemed like the last time, standing there in her black and orange Umbros, orange shirt, white Keds, and a narrow white headband. Turning her head and holding me with a grin, she said it—the one word that meant everything to us—"Tawanda!" She smiled and started to laugh. Then she climbed into the truck and said, "Connecticut or Bust!"

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Chrissie Ann Green lives in New Hyde Park, New York, and attends Herricks Middle School in Albertson, New York. She is active in sports as a member of her school's basketball and soccer teams. She also plays on a traveling soccer team, the New Hyde Park Wildcats. Other interests include music and dancing.

塔万达

克里茜·安·格林

文化背景

在这个世界上,好朋友最有价值、最珍贵。在《塔万达》中,作者描写了两个女孩之间一段特殊的友谊。这两个女孩的友谊既有共性,也有美国式思想及行为的特殊性。文中提到的电影《炒青西红柿》是以方尼·弗兰格的一部小说为蓝本改编的,可以作为这篇故事最合适的补充读物。或者,《塔万达》也是引导学生阅读小说(或电影)的一个很有趣的介绍。

《三个小丑配角》(The Three Stooges)是五六十年代播放的一部关于三个演员的黑白滑稽电视系列喜剧。而现在它又重新风靡美国。《空白磁碟》(Blank Disks)可与本篇一起学习讨论,因为它们所表达的人们对分离、友谊和家庭的情感都是共同的。

这就是最后一天了,谁能相信呢?再也没有泳池边阳光灿烂的日子,也没有在杰弗里那儿试穿各式舞会晚装的机会了。也再没有了有趣的离家在外的夜晚——我们半夜醒来,渴望能吃到家制的果仁巧克力小方块蛋糕。现在一切都结束了。

瞧,克里斯汀是我最好的朋友。去年二月,当我72岁的祖父因癌症过世时,她就站在我身边。我现在还记得清清楚楚。当时,我在灵堂里哭着,没人来陪我,而且我还得连去三天。第三天,我尽力克制,不让自己哭哭啼啼的。这时,灵堂的前门开了,是她站在门口!她握着我的手,讲着比死要快乐得多的事。

我还记得我们一起在罗斯福广场看电影的情景,尤其是那部名叫《炒青西红柿》的片子。从那部电影里,我们学来了“塔万达”这个词儿。这也是我们最爱说的一个词儿。当我们眼都不眨地试着吃正中放着糖的柠檬时,大家说这个词儿;在第一次尝试高台跳水时,我们说它;甚至仅仅是尝尝蓝浆果冰淇淋,我们也要说它。这个词儿我们想怎么用就怎么用,就好象我们可以永远像三个小丑配角一样,做各种傻事。

不过,现在再也用不着这个词了。我们不能再在一起了,就像我的祖父丢下了我,她也离开了我,只是方式不同而已。

她和家人是乘卡车走的,是一辆满载家具的卡车。

我们最后一次走进她家时,厨房里没了冰箱,也没有了微波炉爆出来的爆米花,她的小屋里家具也都搬走了,只留下四面空墙,什么也不剩,完全是空的!但我还能想象出房间的摆设——两张并排摆放的床,其中一张床铺着小美人鱼毛毯,而另一张床上的毯子是很平常的桃花图案。我好像看见她小妹妹一边坐在床上玩着那只小仓鼠,一边说:“克里茜,克里茜,来抱抱我啊!”然后她会跑过来抱住我的腿,因为她实在太矮了。当我给她糖时,她那张脸真是笑开了花。

我们走出了她家,这也许是最后一回看见克里斯汀了。她站在那儿,穿着黑黄相间的安布罗斯外套,桔黄色衬衣,白裤子,头上系着白色窄型发带。她转过头来,握着我的手,咧嘴一笑说:“塔万达!”——这个词儿对我们来说意味着一切。她先是微微而笑,然后开始放声大笑起来。然后,她钻进了卡车,说:“直抵康涅狄格!”

注:sleepovers 在朋友家过夜,在外过夜

craving 渴望

brownies 果仁巧克力小方块蛋糕

No one was there for me 没人安慰我

whimpering 抽泣

squinting 眯眼看

high dive 高台跳水

visualize 设想

Umbros 乌蒙布罗牌短裤

Keds 克迪斯运动鞋

... or Bust! (slogan used in travelling; Destination or Bust means "may we get to where we're going or die trying, or give up everything else in the attempt.") (成功)或沉没

Jase's Gift

by Ashley Bourne

The summer I turned sixteen came with balloons and roses from my friends, a beat-up black Jeep from my parents, and a half-empty pack of cigarettes from my cousin Jase.

They weren't for me to smoke; it was Jase's last pack. He gave the rest to me after he decided to quit. The Jeep has long since been scrapped, the balloons deflated, and the roses lay dead and pressed between the pages of my dictionary. But I keep that dusty pack of Camels in my dresser drawer and remember that summer.

Jase was eighteen when he came that June; his mother had just died. I never knew their family very well because they lived in Cassidy, an eight-hour drive from our house. I remember him at the funeral; he had shaggy blond hair to his shoulders and dark circles under his eyes. I was

staring at his black suit—it looked severely starched and a year's growth too small. My mother told me then that he was going to stay with us for the summer.

“Just until things get straightened out. The poor boy, with his mother dying so suddenly, your Uncle Neil just can't take care of all the kids until some, ah, arrangements are made. It's just for the summer, hon.” With that, she patted my shoulder absently and moved away to speak to my father.

I felt betrayed. I had always been an only child, and now I had to share my house—for the whole summer—with a cousin I had seen only on Christmas, and even then we spoke little.

Later, as I was leaving, I saw him in back of the funeral home, alone. I had come out before my parents, and I was heading for the car when I saw the lean figure out of the corner of my eye. I squinted at him briefly; he was right in front of the sun. He was smoking, and all of a sudden I felt sorry for him. I wasn't sure why, and it troubled me for several days.

Jase arrived the weekend after we got out of school. My mother asked me to get his bed ready after dinner, so I went upstairs and tiptoed into his room while he was watching television. He walked in as I was putting on the pillowcases. He looked startled.

“Hi. I was just, ah, changing the sheets.”

“Oh, OK.” We fell silent again. I felt like I needed to say something.

“I'm really sorry about your mom.” I regretted it the instant it was out of my mouth, and my awkward expression of sympathy made him uncomfortable.

“Yeah, well . . .” But he never finished, and his eyes never left the window.

“Goodnight,” I said and left him alone with his thoughts.

He remained sullen and quiet for the first few weeks. We barely spoke; I felt awkward because I didn't know what to say, and I thought he felt edgy anyway. He liked to be by himself, and I wasn't really surprised when I found him one day in the woods behind our house, sitting at the base of my favorite tree. It was always the place I came to be by myself and think. He was smoking, eyes half-closed and barefoot. He turned his head warily toward me.

“Hi,” I said. My smile faded as he just looked through me.

“Hey,” he answered, and turned back to whatever he had been staring at. I sat down near him. I had no idea what to say.

“So, um... how are you doing... here, I mean? What do you think of the town and all?” I was trying, but I had no clue as to what was going on in his mind.

“It's OK, I guess. Not much to do.” He took another drag on his cigarette and blew out a toxic cloud of smoke.

“Can you do rings?” I asked.

“Nope,” he answered. We sat in silence a minute before he spoke again, hesitantly. “I can blow smoke out of my nose, though.” And he did. I smiled.

The smoke was starting to drift my way. It stung my eyes a little, and I coughed when it curled up my nose. He gave me an appraising look.

“Want to try one?” he asked, holding the glowing stick out to me. Tempted, I looked at it for a second, then snatched it up and put it to my lips. I drew the smoke into my mouth and held it there, rolling my eyes toward him for directions.

“OK, inhale it now,” he said. I pulled the thickness into my lungs and I felt it burning my throat and lighting up my insides until I knew they must be glowing like the tip of his Camel. It hurt, and I parted my lips to

exhale. A tumult of angry smoke poured out of my mouth—much more than went in, I'm sure—and my tongue tasted like singed tobacco. I handed him the cigarette back.

"That's pretty good. You didn't even cough," he said. I turned away and spat to get the nasty, burnt taste out of my mouth. It didn't help.

"What?" he asked.

"That tastes awful. You should quit, you know."

"Nah. I've been smoking too long," he said in a lofty tone.

"How long?"

He didn't answer immediately; he looked away.

"Two years," he said, darting his blue eyes at me to see if I believed him.

"Oh," I said.

We sat in silence until I looked at my watch. It was almost two o'clock. I was meeting my friends at the pool, so I got up to leave. He watched me. I knew I should invite him to go, but I didn't really want him to come along. I didn't think he'd enjoy himself and I'd end up feeling guilty being with my friends, so I'd have to go and sit with him and try to be friendly while all my friends had a wonderful time. I asked anyway. I felt him studying me with those sharp eyes.

"Nah. I don't feel like it," he answered, so I turned to go, relieved, and left him with a hasty: "OK, bye."

Still, I couldn't enjoy myself at the pool for thinking about Jase alone in the woods. I ended up sitting alone at the edge of the pool anyway, wondering if he didn't like me.

And so it went for several more weeks; I would find Jase at the base of the tree, or sometimes in it, but always smoking and always staring off into the distance. I would sit down, or sometimes climb up into the giant

branches, and we would talk a little, or just sit and enjoy the quiet.

He asked me to drive him to 7-Eleven for cigarettes sometimes. I had my learner's permit, and he was eighteen, so my parents let us drive to the store alone for practice before I got my license. Little did they know...

I actually started to get to know him, my cousin who smoked, who liked to read Kerouac and Jack London, who liked dogs not cats, whose favorite color was dark green, and who knew just about all there was to know when it came to fishing. And then one day, he wasn't the stranger who had come to stay with us for the summer; he was my cousin Jase. I even let him read my stories.

"These are good," he said. Coming from him, I knew it was a compliment. He was very interested in my writing; he even helped me revise my stories. He was becoming a friend.

But I didn't like driving him to get cigarettes anymore. At first, I thought it was great that he trusted me. We had a secret, and the quick trips to 7-Eleven and going home the long way so he could finish a smoke were fun. But every night, I lay awake and heard the dry cough that plagued him. It was nothing serious, or so he claimed; it only lasted a few minutes. Still, I felt like it was partly my fault. I felt guilty. So I stopped driving him to buy cigarettes. I knew my parents wouldn't buy him his Camels, and our house was ten miles from the 7-Eleven; I didn't think he'd want to walk that far.

"C'mon. Let's go to the store real fast, OK?" he asked.

"You just bought a pack the other day. Aren't you going through them pretty fast?"

"What's it to you?" His eyes turned wary, and his voice lost the friendly edge I had become used to hearing.

"Well, it's just, you smoke a lot and I feel bad because I know..."

Jase's Gift

"You know what? That your parents wouldn't want me to have them? That my father wouldn't want me to smoke? That you might get in trouble?" He tried to sound nasty, but I think he was mostly shocked; he looked like he'd been double-crossed.

"They'll kill you," I said, feeling like a self-righteous pamphlet—or my mother. "Lung cancer—I don't feel like helping you ruin your lungs. You've been coughing more since you've been here." I tried to explain. His eyes blazed and his face wore a half-amazed, half-betrayed look. I suppose he couldn't believe that I, his only friend here, had refused to support him. He just walked off.

When I went for dinner, my parents asked where Jase was. I said I thought he was in his room, which was true. I thought he'd just gone inside after our argument.

It started to rain halfway through my second slice of pizza. By the time I finished off my Dr. Pepper, thunder crashed and lightning spliced the darkened sky outside. During dessert, the rain really began to pound. My parents had just stepped into the den when the door opened. I looked up from loading the dishwasher. Jase walked in.

He was soaking wet; his clothes were plastered to his body and his hair hung in wet strands as water rolled off his face. Darting his eyes quickly around the room to make sure my parents were not there, he pulled a wet, slightly crumpled pack of Camels triumphantly from the pocket of his jeans. Then he went up to his room. I followed the wet tracks upstairs and was about to knock on the door when I heard him cough and I lost my courage. I tiptoed down the hall to my room.

We didn't speak much for the next week. It wasn't just the smoking that bothered me, it was that he didn't fit into my carefully structured world. I had gotten to know him, but I wasn't sure if I liked everything I knew.

My birthday was a sunny day near the end of August. Jase was leaving for home in a few days. My friends had taken me out all day, first shopping, then to dinner and a late movie. When I walked into the house, it was dark and absorbed in sleep and silence. I crept up to my room. I noticed a small, wrapped package on my dresser. I picked it up gently and peeled off the crumpled wrapping paper. It was a half-empty pack of Camels. The wrapper was water-stained, and there was a note folded between the cigarettes.

Sorry, no money.

Happy Birthday.

These were more trouble than they're worth.

I quit. J.

I felt the smile bursting out on my face. The next morning, Jase had packed his things. I didn't get a chance to talk to him alone, but I hugged him as we walked out to the car. While my parents were talking to Uncle Neil, Jase asked me quietly if I had gotten his present. I smiled, and said I liked that one the best of all.

"You know," he started, "I'd only smoked for a few months. Not really that long," he confessed.

"I knew it all along."

"Yeah, I'll bet!" he laughed as he got into the car.

"Come see us at Christmas!" I called just before they pulled away. Jase waved, and I watched their car as it turned out of our driveway and rolled out of sight.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Ashley Bourne lives in Fredericksburg, Virginia, and wrote this story as a student at Stafford Senior High School in Stafford. Editor of her school newspaper, the Stafford Indian Smokesignal, she has won several awards for

her fiction and poetry. Her other interests include horseback riding, filmmaking, and history.

泽西的礼物

阿士来·波尔尼

文化背景

和许多国家的情形一样,美国北部的许多人家往往同属一个大家庭,住在同一个州或同一地区,但却不住在同一个镇上。泽西的母亲去世了,他父亲把他打发到相距 200 英里的表弟家,度过夏季时光。尽管兄弟俩并不熟识(只在圣诞节期间见过面),这两个孩子终于在夏天结束的时候成了好朋友。作者把他们之间发生的那场小小的言语淡淡叙来,平实、亲切、可信。文章也反映出美国家族中间那种困厄时节乐于鼎力支持的民风民貌。

友谊不会是一波不兴的一泓碧波。经过那场纠葛,他俩长大后必定是莫逆之交。

那年夏天,我满十六岁的时候,收到了朋友们送的气球和玫瑰花,我父母送的蓬头垢面的黑色吉普车,还有我表兄泽西送的半盒香烟。

香烟当然不是给我抽的,那是泽西最后的半盒香烟,他在决定戒烟之后,就把剩下的给了我。那吉普车早已成了碎铁片,玫瑰早已变得枯萎,被压进字典里去了。但我仍然在梳妆台的抽斗里保管着那个灰蒙蒙的骆驼牌香烟盒,因为它使我记起那个难忘的夏天。

那年七月,泽西来到我们家的时候他十八岁。他的母亲刚刚去世,我对他的家庭从来就不大了解,因为他们住在卡西茜,开车到那儿要八个钟头。我还记得他在葬礼上的模样:他蓬松的褐发一直披到了肩膀上,眼睛下有黑眼圈。我望着他那黑色的外套——也许是一年前买的,穿在他身上紧绷绷的,比他的身子小多了。当时母亲告诉我说,他将和我们呆在一起,度过整个夏天。

“他要呆到事情都办妥了的时候才离去,这可怜的孩子,他娘死得太突然了,你姑父照看不了那么多孩子,唉,除非有什么好办法,他跟我们就只过个夏天,宝贝。”母亲说完,心神不定地拍拍我的肩,走过去跟爸爸说话去了。我感到自己受

冷落了。我是家里的独生子，而我现在非得与他同住一屋不可——而且是整个的夏天。要知道是和—一个只在圣诞节见过—面的表兄同住呀，而且就是那次见面，我几乎也没有和他说过什么话。

后来我要离开时，我看见他在灵堂的里间，孤单单的。我在父母之前走出他家的屋子，正当我走向汽车的时候，我从眼角里瞥见一个瘦弱的身影。我瞟了他一眼。他正好站在向阳处，吸着烟。猛的一下，我为他难受起来。我说不出为什么会这样，而且好几天心里都不是滋味儿。

我们暑假离校后的一个周末，泽西来到了我们家。吃过晚饭，母亲让我给他铺好床铺。所以他在看电视的时候，我就走上楼，踮起脚尖儿过了他的房间。我正在上枕套的时候，他走了进来，满脸惊讶的神情。

“嗨，我正在换被单呀！”

“噢，那好，那好。”我们又无话可说了。我感到应该打破僵局。

“你妈去世，我真是感到难过。”话一出口，我就后悔了，也许都是由于我不善于表达对他的同情，这倒使他感到浑身不自在起来。

“唔，是的，不过……”他从来就没讲过一句完整的话，而且眼睛一直望着窗外。

“晚安。”说完，我就离开了，让他独自呆在房间去想他的心事儿。

最初的几个星期，他一直郁郁寡欢。我们很少说话，我心里也闷，因为我不知道该说什么。我想，他心里多少有些紧张、烦躁。他喜欢独处，所以当有一天，我发现他一个人呆在我家屋后的林子里，坐在那棵我最喜欢的树底下的时候，我也没有感到多少惊讶。那树下是我常去独自思考的地方。他吸着香烟，半闭着眼睛，赤着脚。他存有戒心地把头转向我。

“你好。”我开口了，他的目光扫遍了我的全身，我脸上的微笑消逝了。

“你好。”他应答了一声，扭过头去，继续看他在看的东—西。我在他的身旁坐了下来，可实在不知道到底该说点什么。

“这么说吧，嗯……我是说，你在这里过得惯吗？我们这镇子，你觉得怎么样？”我搜肠刮肚想找些话题，可我压根儿不知道此刻他心里在想些什么。

“可以说很好吧。过得不是太坏。”他这样说道，接着又从盒子里抽出一支香烟来点上，还吐出一股难闻的烟雾。

“你会吹烟圈儿吗？”我问他。

“不会。”他说。我们相对无言，坐了一阵子。接着他犹豫地说：“不过，我能把烟从鼻孔里吹出去。”他说完鼻孔里就冒出浓浓的烟雾来。我笑了起来。