



普通高等教育“十五”国家级规划教材



北京市高等教育精品教材立项项目

CONTEMPORARY COLLEGE ENGLISH

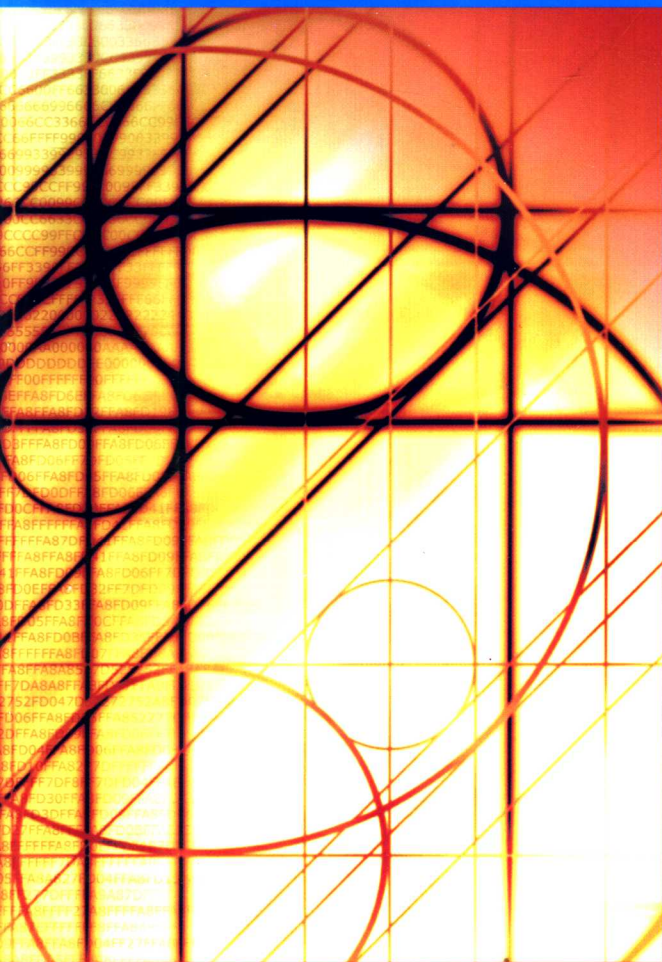
现代大学英语

● 精读 **4**

● 教师用书

● 主 编：杨立民 徐克容

● 编 者：林克美 易 焱 李莉文
郭亚玲 魏 明 邱 枫
宋 颖



外语教学与研究出版社
FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING AND RESEARCH PRESS



普通高等教育“十五”国家级规划教材



北京市高等教育精品教材立项项目

Contemporary College English

现代大学英语

教师用书

主编：杨立民 徐克容

精 读

4

编者：林克美 易 焱 李莉文 郭亚玲
魏 明 邱 枫 宋 颖

外语教学与研究出版社

FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING AND RESEARCH PRESS

(京)新登字 155 号

图书在版编目(CIP)数据

现代大学英语精读 4 教师用书/杨立民,徐克容主编.—北京:外语教学与研究出版社,2003

ISBN 7-5600-3414-4

I. 现… II. ①杨… ②徐… III. 英语—高等学校—教学参考资料 IV. H31

中国版本图书馆 CIP 数据核字(2003)第 030119 号

现代大学英语

精读 4 教师用书

主 编: 杨立民 徐克容

* * *

责任编辑: 朱云奇

出版发行: 外语教学与研究出版社

社 址: 北京市西三环北路 19 号 (100089)

网 址: <http://www.fltrp.com>

印 刷: 北京外国语大学印刷厂

开 本: 787×1092 1/16

印 张: 18.75

版 次: 2003 年 5 月第 1 版 2004 年 2 月第 2 次印刷

书 号: ISBN 7-5600-3414-4/G·1681

定 价: 24.90 元

* * *

如有印刷、装订质量问题出版社负责调换

制售盗版必究 举报查实奖励 (010)68917826

版权保护办公室举报电话: (010)68917519

编者说明

一、本书为《现代大学英语》精读教材第四册的教师用书,每课仍只包括“课文简介”、“课文分析”及“练习答案”三个部分,供使用本书的教师参考。我们不反对学员利用本书作为复习学生用书的参考,但我们不希望把本书当作上山缆车,“终南捷径”,养成以抄录现成答案代替独立思考和苦练基本功的坏习惯。这一点务必请使用本书的教师对学生反复讲明。

二、基础阶段各项基本功训练将于本学期内结束。师生对这一阶段训练的重要性必须反复加强共识,力求取得最佳效果。

三、对学生的独立工作能力将提出更高要求。更多的工作要求学生在课前或课后完成,因此学生学习的自觉性与计划性均需进一步加以强调。

四、本书除主编以外,还有七位同志参与教案撰写:李莉文(第一课),林克美(第二课),郭亚玲(第四课),邱枫(第五课),宋颖(第七课),魏明(第八课),易焱(第十二、十三课)。对这些同志的出色贡献,特表感谢。定稿时,曾有过一些更动,也请谅解。

编者

2003年3月

Contents

Lesson One	Thinking as a Hobby	(1)
Lesson Two	Waiting for the Police	(20)
Lesson Three	Why Historians Disagree	(36)
Lesson Four	A Drink in the Passage	(54)
Lesson Five	Man of the Moment	(72)
Lesson Six	Groundless Beliefs	(93)
Lesson Seven	Spring Sowing	(112)
Lesson Eight	Globalization's Dual Power	(129)
Lesson Nine	The Most Dangerous Game	(147)
Lesson Ten	The Telephone	(168)
Lesson Eleven	The Pen of My Aunt	(186)
Lesson Twelve	Lions and Tigers and Bears	(217)
Lesson Thirteen	Soldier's Heart	(239)
Lesson Fourteen	How Do We Deal with the Drug Problem?	(256)
Lesson Fifteen	The Damned Human Race	(280)

LESSON ONE

Thinking as a Hobby

III► Introduction to the Text

Students who have been using this textbook must have noticed that each book begins with an essay about studies or education, and this one is no exception. The present text is about thinking, and thinking is important. Intelligent young students do not need to be told this. They know that linguistic competence is not just grammar and vocabulary. They know that they have to learn to deal with more serious subjects and discuss more complex problems. They know a good liberal arts education must include good training in logical and critical thinking.

The author's use of the word "hobby" is interesting. By using this word he means that thinking is not just for professional thinkers like philosophers. It is something all educated people should enjoy doing. This special interest is often referred to as "idle curiosity", and it is considered one of the most precious qualities in young scholars. Students should play with ideas the way they play with balls. Both are important for their healthy development, one mental, and the other physical.

The essay can be neatly divided into three parts. The first part tells us how the subject of thinking was first brought up to the author and how he came to understand the nature of what he calls "grade-three thinking", which, he discovered, was no thinking at all, but a combination of ignorance, prejudice and hypocrisy. Unfortunately, according to the author, most people belong to this category. The second part deals with "grade-two thinking". People who belong to this category can detect the contradictions of grade-three thinkers' beliefs. They can see their ignorance, prejudice, hypocrisy and lack of logic, which gives them great delight and satisfies their ego. However, grade-two thinking has nothing constructive to offer. It destroys without the power to create. Therefore the satisfaction it brings the thinker is limited and does not last. The answer to this lies in the third part in which the author discusses the definition of "grade-one thinkers"—people who set out to find the truth and get it.

It would be interesting to ask ourselves which of the three categories we belong to, and if, for some reason, we are not yet grade-one thinkers, whether we have any need or wish to move up to the next grade.

The author does not say explicitly what coherent system of thought he has fi-

nally developed which makes him a grade-one thinker. But he has given us very broad hints. Obviously his thinking is based on high moral standards and is opposed to such things as big business, centralized government, wars, armies, heady patriotism, dishonest politicians, etc which he regards as mere trifles or pointless actions. We can also infer from his sarcastic description of those historical events and political figures where he stands in religion and politics.

William Golding does not seem to have much confidence in mass wisdom. In fact he pities the nine tenths of the people who enjoy agreement “as cows will graze all the same way on the side of a hill”. He is particularly critical about young people who seem to him “particularly contented with the world”. Is he justified in taking this attitude toward people in general and young people in particular?

Despite the serious nature of the subject, the essay is written with a great sense of humor. We know that the author’s purpose is to tell people how important it is to be able to think. But he does not adopt the approach of a straight lecture. Instead, he tries to achieve this aim by making the unthinking people appear ignorant, illogical, self-contradictory and, generally, silly and ridiculous. In other words, laughter is his chief weapon. Through those hilarious anecdotes, he laughs at the headmaster and Mr. Houghton, ridicules British and American politicians and teases his girlfriend Ruth. But he also laughs at himself as the disintegrated boy in school, and for this he uses the first person in his narration. It should be noted that self-mockery is a very important kind of humor and can have an unusually powerful effect.

IIII► Detailed Discussion of the Text

1. I came to the conclusion that there were three grades of thinking... (←7)

Draw students’ attention to the collocations of “conclusion”: to come to a ~; to reach a ~; to arrive at a ~; to draw a ~; to jump to a ~, etc

grade: degree; level; stage in a process, e. g.

low-grade steel; high-grade alloy; grade-one pupils; well-graded teaching material;
to upgrade products

2. grammar school (←2)

In Britain, it refers to a school for children over 11 who are academically bright. Today, there are few grammar schools. Most secondary schools are called “comprehensive” and take in all children over 11 whatever their abilities. In the United States, a grammar school used to mean an elementary school, but it is now considered old-fashioned.

3. One was a lady wearing nothing but a bath towel. (←2)

nothing but: nothing except; only, e. g.

The doctor told her that it was nothing but a cold.

He cared for nothing but his name and position.

He was nothing but a coward.

4. She seemed frozen in an eternal panic lest the bath towel slip down any farther... (←2)

lest: (*fml*) for fear that; to make sure that sth would not happen, e. g.

We ran as fast as we could lest we miss the train.

He did not tell his father about the exam lest he get mad at him.

Note: The subjunctive mood is used in the clause *lest* introduces.

Do not mix up “farther” with “further”. The former refers to physical distance whereas the latter to degree, time and all other figurative uses, e. g.

The next village turned out to be much farther than we had thought.

We will discuss it further tomorrow.

Further development of our economy will strain our resources too.

Often “further” is used too often in translation from the Chinese and is not needed. See *The Translator's Guide to Chinglish* (《中式英语之鉴》, 外语教学与研究出版社, 2000年5月) by Joan Pinkham, pages 47, 53, 54.

5. ...she was in an unfortunate position to pull the towel up again. (←2)

(not) to be in a position to do sth: (not) to be able to do sth because you (do not) have the ability, money or power to do it, e. g.

I'm sorry, but I am not in a position to answer that question.

For the first time in history, man is now in a position to destroy the whole world.

We are now in a better financial position to deal with our social problems.

6. Next to her, crouched the statuette of a leopard, ready to spring down at the top drawer of a filing cabinet. (←2)

next to: situated very close to sb/sth with nobody/nothing in between, e. g.

Do you know the girl standing next to the teacher?

The two tall buildings used to stand right next to each other here.

7. Beyond the leopard was a naked, muscular gentleman. (←2)

Pay attention to the following words in which “-ed” is pronounced as /-id/:

a **naked** man; a **learned** professor; that **blessed** morning; a **wicked** boy; the **wretched** life; our **beloved** country; **ragged** pants; my **aged** parents (But not in “a man aged 45”); **rugged** individualism; **dogged** efforts

8. delinquent children (←3)

delinquent: failing to do what is required by law or obligation, e. g.

delinquent behavior; delinquent students; young delinquents; juvenile delinquency

In the original text (The present text is an abridged version.), the author mentioned some of his “delinquent” behavior for which he was punished: breaking a window, failing to remember Boyle’s Law and being late for school. But he said, “I had broken the window because I had tried to hit Jack Arney with a cricket ball and missed him; I could not remember Boyle’s Law because I had never bothered to learn it; and I was late for school because I preferred looking over the bridge into the river.”

9. ... because they symbolized to him the whole of life. (←3)

... because they represented/stood for the whole of life to him. (The leopard stood for all animal needs or desires; Venus stood for love and the Thinker stood for thinking as a uniquely human feature.)

10. The naked lady was Venus. (←3)

Venus: (Roman mythology) the goddess of love and beauty, identified with the Greek goddess Aphrodite

11. She was just busy being beautiful. (←3)

to be busy doing sth: In this pattern, what follows the word “busy” is usually an action verb. This sentence means that from the boy’s point of view, the Goddess of Love was simply trying to remain beautiful.

12. Rodin’s Thinker (←3)

This is the most famous piece of art by the French sculptor August Rodin. It is said to be the statue that most clearly shows the abstract idea of thinking. The thinker is pondering so intensely that his toes are tightly clutching the ground.

13. I was not integrated. I was, if anything, disintegrated. (←4)

integrated: forming a part of a harmonious group

disintegrated: Here, it is used by the author to mean the direct opposite of “integrated”, and therefore means some kind of a trouble-maker.

Note: This is not the way the word is normally used.

if anything: on the contrary, e. g.

He is not known for his generosity. He is, if anything, quite miserly.

The weather forecast says that it will not be warmer this winter. It will, if anything, even colder than last year.

14. “What are we going to do with you?” (←6)

Well, what were they going to do with me? (←7)

When the school headmaster asked, “What are we going to do with you?” he meant “How can we make you mend your ways and become a nice boy?” But when the boy mused, “Well, what were they going to do with me?” he was wondering how the school authorities were going to punish him this time.

15. the muscular gentleman contemplated the hindquarters of the leopard in endless gloom (←9)

to contemplate: to think for a long time in order to understand better

the hindquarters: the rump; the back part of an animal

Note the humorous way the boy viewed the image of The Thinker—looking at and contemplating the rump of an animal in this gloomy manner. It didn’t make any sense to him.

16. His spectacles caught the light so that you could see nothing human behind them. There was no possibility of communication. (←9)

to catch the light: to have the light shine on it brightly and suddenly

The teacher’s glasses caught the light and therefore the boy could not see the teacher’s eyes. He could not have any eye contact. He could not have any communication with him. Readers know of course that they could not communicate, not because of this but because of the teacher’s lack of understanding of the boy.

17. On one occasion the headmaster leaped to his feet, reached up and put Rodin’s masterpiece on the desk before me. (←13)

to leap to one’s feet: to jump up

Refresh students’ memory of: to rise to one’s feet; to struggle to one’s feet; to stagger to one’s feet; to help sb to his feet; to pull sb to his feet

to reach up: to move a hand or arm upward in order to touch, hold, or pick up sth.

Also: to reach sth down; to reach out (for); to reach into

18. Nature had endowed the rest of the human race with a sixth sense and left me out. (←15)

a sixth sense: a keen intuitive power. Here, the author means the ability to think.

to endow sb with sth: to provide sb with a natural quality or talent

She is one of those lucky women who are endowed with both a sharp brain and great beauty.

God has not endowed him with much humor.

The whole sentence means: Everybody, except me, are born with the ability to think.

19. But like someone born deaf, but bitterly determined to find out about sound

(←15)

bitterly determined: extremely determined because of the resentfulness of being born deaf

20. Or was there more sense in drinking than there appeared to be? But if not, and if drinking were in fact ruinous to health—and Mr. Houghton was ruined, there was no doubt about that—why was he always talking about the clean life and the virtues of fresh air? (←16)

Remind students of some variations of the “There + be” pattern such as:

There seems to be. . . ; There appeared to be. . . ; There are supposed to be. . . ; There was said to be. . . ; There were believed to be. . . ; There are likely to be. . . ; There are bound to be. . .

the clean life: It normally refers to a life without vices or moral sins.

the virtues of fresh air: the advantages of fresh air

Mr. Houghton obviously did not practice what he preached. He was a hopeless alcoholic which had ruined his health, and he obviously did not like outdoor life. Yet he kept talking about a clean life and the virtues of fresh air.

21. Sometimes, exalted by his own oratory, he would leap from his desk and hustle us outside into a hideous wind. (←17)

Sometimes he got carried away and would leap from his desk and hurry us outside into a cold and unpleasant wind.

exalted: filled with a great feeling of joy

oratory: art of public speaking

to hustle: (*infml*) to hurry along

22. You could hear the wind, trapped in his chest and struggling with all the unnatural impediments. His body would reel with shock and his face go white at the unaccustomed visitation. He would stagger back to his desk and collapse there, useless for the rest of the morning. (←19)

struggling with all the unnatural impediments: The fresh air had to struggle with difficulty to find its way to his chest because he was unaccustomed to this.

His body would reel and his face go white: He would stagger or be thrown off balance, and his face would go white.

useless for the rest of the morning: unable to do anything for the rest of the morning

Note the humorous effect achieved through the use of exaggeration and formal style.

23. Mr. Houghton was given to high-minded monologues about the good life, sexless and full of duty. (←20)

to be given to: to be habitually inclined to do (sth), e. g.

He is much given to blowing his own trumpet.

She was given to hasty decisions.

They were much given to senseless gossip.

high-minded monologue: a highly moral speech

Obviously in Mr. Houghton's clean life, there is no place for alcoholic drink, sex, and other worldly pleasures. This is, of course, ironical. The use of the word "sexless" is particularly funny in view of the fact that his eyes are always riveted on the pretty young girls passing by.

- 24. Yet in the middle of these monologues, if a girl passed the window, his neck would turn of itself and he would watch her out of sight. In this instance, he seemed to me ruled not by thought but by an invisible and irresistible spring in his neck. (←20)**

to turn of itself: to turn by itself; to turn on its own (Note: "by itself" is the usual expression.)

to watch sb out of sight: to watch sb until he/she is out of sight (can be seen no more)

Note that the author here is not laughing at the teacher's interest in young girls. Rather, he is ridiculing the contradiction between his high moral tone and the working of his genes which compels him to turn his head toward young girls.

- 25. But Mr. Houghton had fought in the First World War alongside Americans and French, and had come to a settled detestation of both countries. (←21)**

We can infer from this that Mr. Houghton is British and fought "alongside Americans and French in the First World War".

had come to a settled detestation of both countries: had developed a fixed dislike of both the United States and France

- 26. If either happened to be prominent in current affairs, no argument could make Mr. Houghton think well of it. (←21)**

If either country became the center of attention, nobody could talk him into liking that country. It implies that Mr. Houghton's attitude was based on nothing but prejudice.

to think well of sb: to have a good opinion of sb; to think favorably of sb; to like sb (opposite: to think ill of sb)

- 27. Through him I discovered that thought is often full of unconscious prejudice, ignorance and hypocrisy. It will lecture on disinterested purity while its neck is being remorselessly twisted toward a skirt. (←23)**

Through him I discovered that what people call thought is often full of prejudice, ignorance and hypocrisy.

Note here that the pronoun "it" stands for "thought" in grammar, but actually refers to Mr. Houghton. The word "skirt" stands for girls in general. It is a common figure of speech

called metonymy in which an idea is evoked or named by means of a term designating some associated notion. It is vulgar to refer to a girl as a skirt. More examples:

The world is watching closely what the White House will do next. (The White House stands for the American government.)

Democracy favors the vote rather than the bullet. (Vote stands for elections, and bullet stands for military solutions.)

They have no intention of turning their swords into ploughs. (Sword stands for war and plough stands for peace.)

Political power grows out of the barrel of a gun. (Mao Zedong)

28. Technically, it is about as proficient as most businessmen's golf, as honest as most politicians' intentions, or as coherent as most books that get written. (←23)

This ironical sentence shows that the author not only considers those people incompetent, dishonest and incoherent, but also despises most businessmen, distrusts most politicians and dislikes most publications.

29. I delighted to confront a pious lady who hated the Germans with the proposition that we should love our enemies. (←24)

I was happy to point out the inconsistency of a pious lady who hated the Germans by quoting the Bible which says that Christians should love their enemies.

to confront sb with sth: to oppose sb defiantly

pious: having strong religious beliefs

30. I no longer dismiss lightly a mental process (←24)

I no longer consider the way grade-three thinkers think unimportant because they account for nine-tenths of the people and therefore have great power. Now I know that ignorance, prejudice and hypocrisy are very powerful enemies.

31. They have immense solidarity. (←24)

They usually represent the great majority.

Note that the author does not have any romantic idea about mass wisdom. In fact, he believes that most people are parrots. They like to follow the crowd or jump on the bandwagon (= to opportunistically join the majority).

32. A crowd of grade-three thinkers, all shouting the same thing, all warming their hands at the fire of their own prejudices, will not thank you for pointing out the contradictions in their beliefs. Man enjoys agreement as cows will graze all the same way on the side of a hill. (←24)

all warming their hands at the fire of their own prejudices: all feeling very content and happy because they share the same prejudices

Man enjoys agreement: The author thinks that it is probably human nature to enjoy agreement because it seems to bring peace, security, comfort, and harmony.

33. Grade-two thinkers do not stampede easily, though often they fall into the other fault and lag behind. Grade-two thinking is a withdrawal, with eyes and ears open. It destroys without having the power to create. (←25)

to stampede: to get easily frightened and run with the crowd

to fall into the other fault: to go to the other extreme, that is, to act too slowly and lag behind

withdrawal: detachment from some emotional involvement; refusing to be part of the crowd

34. It set me watching the crowds cheering His Majesty the King and asking myself what all the fuss was about, without giving me anything positive to put in the place of that heady patriotism. But there were compensations. (←25)

It made me watch people shouting in joy and support of the King and wonder what this senseless excitement was all about although I did not have anything good to replace this exciting or intoxicating patriotism. But I had my reward (I did get something out of it.).

to cheer: to shout in praise, approval and support

His Majesty the King: It is used as a title in speaking of a sovereign monarch.

Also: Your Majesty (when speaking to a sovereign monarch); Her Majesty the Queen

fuss: too much attention to or uncalled-for excitement over things that are unnecessary and unimportant

to put in the place of: to replace

heady: inclined to go to your head and make you intoxicated (i.e. a heady trend; heady days; heady success)

compensation: pay, reward, sth that compensates for your loss, service or effort

35. To hear our Prime Minister talk about the great benefit we conferred on India by jailing people like Nehru and Gandhi. (←25)

Nehru and Gandhi: Nehru was jailed many times (between 1930 and 1936), and so was Gandhi. For more information about these two Indian leaders, see the Notes to the Text.

to confer sth on sb: (*fml*) to offer or give sth to sb

The author is pointing to the political hypocrisy of the British government.

36. To hear American politicians talk about peace and refuse to join the League of Nations. (←25)

See the Notes to the Text.

37. But I was growing toward adolescence and had to admit that Mr. Houghton was not the only one with an irresistible spring in his neck. I, too, felt the compulsive hand of nature (←26)

Obviously this “irresistible spring in the neck” is a humorous reference to the awakening sexual impulse, “the compulsive hand of nature”, the overwhelming interest in the other sex.

38. She claimed that the Bible was literally inspired. I countered by saying that the Catholics believed in the literal inspiration of Saint Jerome’s Vulgate, and the two books were different. Argument flagged. (←26)

literally inspired: a true historical record; a factual account of God’s divine plan and prophecies. This is the belief of fundamentalists.

Saint Jerome’s Vulgate: See the Notes to the Text.

to flag: to decline in interest; to become dull

Argument flagged because Ruth did not know how to respond to this.

39. That was too easy, said I restively (for the nearer you were to Ruth, the nicer she was to be near to) since there were more Roman Catholics than Methodists anyway; and they couldn’t be wrong, could they—not all those hundreds of millions? (←27)

The author was pointing to Ruth’s logical error. The number of people who hold a view is no proof of its validity.

restive: restless; difficult to control

40. I slid my arm around her waist and murmured that if we were counting heads, the Buddhists were the boys for my money. She fled. The combination of my arm and those countless Buddhists was too much for her. (←27)

if we were counting heads: if we were talking about the number of people who believe in this

the Buddhists were the boys for my money: I would bet on the Buddhists; I believe the Buddhists are greater in number

for my money: in my opinion; I bet; I’m sure

too much for her: more than she could accept or bear

41. I was given the third degree to find out what had happened. I lost Ruth and gained an undeserved reputation as a potential libertine. (←28)

to be given the third degree: to be severely questioned or interrogated (It could sometimes mean “to be beaten up by the police”.)

libertine: one who acts without moral restraint; one who is morally loose

42. Grade-two thinking ... did not make for content. (←29)

to make for: to be likely to have a certain result; to make sth possible

content: ease of mind

More examples:

I think this book will make for very interesting reading.

This widening gap between the rich and poor will not make for social stability.

43. To find out the deficiencies of our elders satisfies the young ego but does not make for personal security. It took the swimmer some distance from the shore and left him there, out of his depth. (←29)

to satisfy one's ego: to make one feel proud of one's ability and cleverness

to be out of one's depth: to be in the water that is too deep for you to stand in and breathe
The author uses this metaphor to express the idea that grade-two thinking has its limitations. It does not have anything positive to offer.

44. But these grade-one thinkers were few and far between. They did not visit my grammar school in the flesh. (←30)

few and far between: very few (used as a predicative)

More idiomatic pairs of adjectives like this:

safe and sound; dead and gone; cut and dried; hale and hearty; short and sweet; null and void; meek and mild; free and easy; fair and square; black and blue

They did not visit my grammar school in the flesh: No grade-one thinkers could be found in my school although I had read or heard about such people.

in the flesh: as actual people

45. I aspired to them, because I now saw my hobby as an unsatisfactory thing if it went no further. (←30)

to aspire to sth: to have a strong desire to be or to achieve

More examples on the use of "aspire":

She aspires to a good command of the English language.

Marilyn Monroe always aspired to be an actress.

I can fully understand young people's aspirations today.

He is one of the most aspiring students in our class.

46. I was irreverent at the best of times. Political and religious systems, social customs, loyalties and traditions, they all came tumbling down like so many rotten apples off a tree. (←31)

irreverent: lacking proper respect for official, important or holy things at the best of times; used when you imply that it could be a lot worse

Note how the author compares political and religious systems, social customs, loyalties and traditions with rotten apples which stink and are completely useless. In view of the background against which this essay is written, it is not too difficult to guess what specific systems, customs, loyalties and traditions he is referring to.

47. I came up in the end with what must always remain the justification for grade-one thinking. I devised a coherent system for living. It was a moral system, which was wholly logical. (←31)

According to the author, grade-one thinking must be based on a coherent and logical system

for living, in other words, a moral system, without which you cannot prove yourself to be a grade-one thinker. Judging by the context, this system probably refers to one's world outlook and basic political beliefs and moral principles.

48. Of course, as I readily admitted, conversion of the world to my way of thinking might be difficult, since my system did away with a number of trifles, such as big business, centralized government, armies, marriage ... (←31)

Of course I knew very well that it might be difficult to change the world to my way of thinking.

to do away with a number of trifles, to get rid of a number of unimportant things such as big business ... : It shows that the author is against big business, centralized government, armies, etc.

49. It was Ruth all over again. I had some very good friends who stood by me, and still do. But my acquaintances vanished, taking the girls with them. (←32)

all over again: repeated

What had happened to Ruth and me now happened again. My grade-two thinking frightened away many of my acquaintances.

50. Had the game gone too far? In those prewar days, I stood to lose a great deal, for the sake of a hobby. (←33)

to go too far: to go beyond what is reasonable and acceptable

game: It refers to his grade-two thinking because he takes this as a hobby.

to stand to lose: to be likely to lose

In those prewar days when many people were fully worked up to a political frenzy, it was very dangerous to voice different opinions. You might lose friends or your job.

51. Now you are expecting me to describe how I saw the folly of my ways and came back to the warm nest ... (←34)

Now you think I will tell you how I gradually saw my stupidity in being a grade-two thinker and therefore decided to give it up and return to the majority ...

52. But you would be wrong. I dropped my hobby and turned professional. (←35)

But you guessed wrong. I did not drop my hobby and give up thinking. Instead I went further and became a professional thinker.