

*A Collection of
English Readings*

英语故事会

Walking into the English Circle

走入英语圈

贾桂立

主编

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天津大学出版社

Going into the English Circle 系列丛书
走入英语圈

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英语故事会

③

贾桂强 主编

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内 容 提 要

《走入英语圈》系列丛书中的《英语故事会》收录汇编了古今中外各种趣味性读物数百篇。本书的体裁和内容包括:速读篇段、通俗短文、童话寓言、幽默小品、民间传说、神话故事、人文民俗、名篇简写、佳作采编、作家生平、故事梗概、名人轶事、小说散文、名胜史地等。文字浅显、题材广泛。每篇读物后均有注释,适用于英语初学者和具有中级英语水平的读者。

英语故事会③

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编者的话

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本书系《英语故事会》第三辑,该书英语单词的再现率较高。对于一些相对再现频率较低的词汇和短语,我们在另篇读物中适当做了重复注释,以便初学者提高阅读效率。

由于编者水平有限,加之编写时间仓促,书中一定有一些不当之处,恳请读者批评指正。参加本书部分工作的人员有:毓昕晨、常书兴、魏仁、张章、闵思一、吴闾献、墨海。

编 者

1998年2月20日

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1. The Most Useful Thing and *Useless*¹ Thing in the World

Jim was sitting with some of his old friends. They were drinking coffee and talking about the worth of things in the world.

After a few minutes, one of Jim's friends said to him, "Well, Jim, you are a *bright man*², but you have said nothing on this *matter*³ yet. Jim, I wonder, what is the most useful thing in the world?"

"I think Advice is the most useful thing in the world," Jim replied immediately.

Jim's friends thought about it for a few minutes, and then one of them asked him, "And what is the most useless thing in the world?" "I think it is also Advice," the same answer was immediately given by Jim again.

"Really?" said one of Jim's friends, "are you all right? A moment ago you said that Advice is the most useful thing in the world, and now you say it is the most useless thing in the world? *How can it be both*⁴?"

"Well," answered Jim, "if you think about the matter carefully, you'll see that I am quite right. You see, when you give someone good advice, and he takes it, now Advice is the most useful thing in the world. However, when you give a person advice, and he doesn't take it, then it is the most useless thing in the world."

Notes:

1. useless [ju'slɪs] a. 没用的, 无效的

2. a bright man 一个聪明的人
3. matter ['mætə] n. 事情
4. How can it be both? 这怎么可以是两者的答案呢?

2. The Fox and the Crane¹

The crane is a large bird. It has a long *slim*² neck and long legs. Its body is not very big, but it is as tall as a seven-year-old boy. It lives near *ponds*³. and eats frogs and small fish. Its legs are so long that it can easily *wade*⁴ in a pond. It goes into the pond and stands still for a long time. It stands and waits till a fish comes near it. When the crane sees a fish or a frog, it picks it up with its long *bill*⁵.

One day a fox met a crane. "It will be fun to *play a joke on the crane*⁶," thought the fox. So he asked the crane to come to his house for supper. The bird thanked the fox and they went together.

Now the fox had only thin soup to eat, and he put the soup in a plate. The crane was a tall bird. She had a long neck and a long bill, so she could not eat from a soup plate. She tried again and again to eat the soup, but she could not get any. The *tricky*⁷ fox watched the crane and laughed. It was easy for the fox to lick up the thin soup from the plate. He ate all the soup and the crane went home hungrily.

A few days later the crane met the fox. This time she asked him to come to her house for supper. So the fox went to the crane's house. The crane had soup for supper too, but the soup was in a tall *jar*⁸ with a long neck. It was easy for the crane to put her bill into the jar, but the fox could not get at the soup. So the crane ate all her soup while the fox did not get a drop of it, and the crane ate the fox's soup, too.

The fox learned a good lesson and he ran home to find something to eat.

Notes:

1. crane [kreɪn] n. 仙鹤
2. slim [slɪm] a. 细长的
3. pond [pɒnd] n. 池塘
4. wade [weɪd] vi, vt. 趟, 趟过
5. bill [bɪl] n. (水禽等细长而扁平的) 嘴
6. play a joke on sb. 开某人的玩笑
7. tricky ['trɪki] a. 狡猾的
8. jar [dʒɑː] n. (圆柱形、大口的) 罐子

3. It Should Be as Dirty as Before

Once a man named *Clean*¹ found a box of old papers in a room at the top of his house. He burnt most of them, for he did not like old things very much. But one of these papers was an old letter. At the bottom of the letter was the name of a well-known *author*²

“When was this letter written?” thought Clean, “at that time no one knew about the author. But today everybody knows him. Some people must like to buy letters like this. I may be able to get a lot of money for the letter *if I happen to sell it to the right buyer*³.”

However there were many dirty marks all over the letter. “It doesn’t look nice,” he thought, “no one wants to buy a letter if it’s dirty. I’ll have to clean it first.”

So he took a piece of cloth and some water, and began to clean the

letter. He worked hard and took a lot of care. At last, the letter looked new and he *was very satisfied with*⁴ what he had done about it.

"Now it looks very nice," he said to himself, "I'll be able to sell it for a lot of money. Then he took the letter to a shop in London where old papers of this kind were bought and sold.

"I want to sell this letter," Clean said to the man in the shop. "It was written by a well-known author. You know about these things. How much will you give me for it?"

The man looked at the letter for a long time. Finally he said to Clean, "I'll give you two pounds for it."

"Only two pounds!" said Clean, "but people pay at least ten pounds for a letter like this. And just look! I've even cleaned it to make it look nice."

"Yes, sir, I can see that," said the man, "That's the trouble. People who buy old papers like them to be dirty."

Notes:

1. Clean [klin] n. 克林(人名)
2. author ['ɔ:θə] n. 作家, 作者
3. ...if I happen to sell it to the right buyer. ...如果我碰巧把它卖给真正的买主
4. be satisfied with 对...感到满意

4. Friends May Do More Harm¹ than Enemies

In one of Aesop's² fables³, there was an old man who owned a

monkey. The man was very fond of the monkey, who was very clever.

The old man liked to sit in his garden and sleep in the afternoon. When birds came into the garden and made noises, the monkey *chased*⁴ them away. He also chased away the flies which landed on the man's face while he was sleeping.

One hot summer afternoon, the old man was asleep in his chair. A fly came and sat on the end of his nose. The monkey was sitting at the old man's side. He saw the fly and chased it away from his owner's nose. Soon the fly *returned*⁵, and the monkey chased it away again. The fly came back and the monkey chased it and this happened five or six times.

Now the monkey was angry. He stood up and said, "you won't do that again!" He jumped up, ran into the garden, and picked up a large stone. He ran back to his owner and saw the fly once again *landing*⁶ on his nose. This time, the monkey didn't chase the fly away as he did the first several times, he hit it with the stone. He killed the fly this time, but also broke the man's nose with the stone! Aesop wanted to tell a simple truth: many of us act sometimes like the monkey. Sometimes we do things quickly without thinking. We act this way because we're angry, and instead of doing good, we hurt people. This story *infers*⁷ that sometimes friends may do more harm than enemies.

Notes:

1. harm [hɑ:m] n. 伤害
2. Aesop ['i:sop] n. 伊索(史前希腊著名寓言作家)
3. fable ['feibl] n. 寓言
4. chase [tʃeis] vi. vt. 追赶, 追击
chase away 赶走、赶跑
5. return [ri'tɜ:n] vi. 返回

6. land [lənd] vi. 着落
7. infer [in'fɜ:] vt. 推论, 含有……的意思
inferred [in'fɜ:d] infer 的过去式
inferred [in'fɜ:d] infer 的过去分词

5. The Foolish Squirrel¹

Once there was a little squirrel who would not listen to the things his father and mother told him.

One day the little squirrel ran away from his parents. He said he was very clever and had learned everything.

When winter came, he felt very cold and very hungry.

At last he went back to his parents. They were eating *nuts*² and *acorns*³ from a hole in the ground.

"I am very hungry," he said. "Please let me come back."

His parents *forgave*⁴ him and let him eat with them.

"How did you find all these nuts and acorns to eat?" he asked.

His father said, "We stored them away for the winter. All wise squirrels do it. *That is what we were trying to teach you when you ran away.*"⁵

Then the little squirrel knew how *silly*⁶ he had been. So he *made up his mind*⁷ that he would listen very carefully to everything his father and mother told him.

Notes:

1. Squirrel ['skwɪrəl] n. 松鼠
2. nut [nʌt] n. 坚果(松子、榛子、核桃等)

3. acorn [ˈeɪkən] n. 橡子
4. forgive [fəˈɡɪv] vt. 原谅, 饶恕
 forgave [fəˈgeɪv] forgive 的过去式
 forgiven [fəˈɡɪvn] forgive 的过去分词
5. That is what we were trying to teach you when you ran away. 我们正要教你这样做, 这时你却跑走了。
6. silly [ˈsɪli] a. 愚蠢的, 傻的
7. make up one's mind 决心

6. How *Absentminded*¹ of Me

The day before yesterday my wife sent me to a market to buy something. I walked to the market, and I bought a pound of sugar. Then I returned home. *Handing*² the paper bag containing the sugar to my wife, I said, "Here is the sugar you want."

My wife looked in the bag, then looked at me. "I told you," she said slowly, "to get me a bottle of milk."

*Frightened over*³ my *absentmindedness*⁴, I had to pay a call on my family doctor. He was very kind.

"Your problem is a simple one," said the doctor, "and you should not *concern about*⁵ it very much." he added, "If you know you're absentminded, you are *okay*. It's nothing to worry about. But if you *are so far gone*⁶ you don't know you're absentminded, you may be *in trouble*⁷."

"Many famous people have been absentminded," the doctor told me. "Thomas Edison was standing *in line*⁸ one day to pay his taxes. When he arrived at the window, he found that he had forgotten his own name. He turned to the next man in line and asked, "Can you tell me what is my name?" The man told him."

Now I felt much better and get up to leave. "Thank you very much, doctor." I said, "How much should I pay you?"

"Ten dollars for the check-up," replied the doctor.

"But, doctor, I didn't have a check-up." I said.

The doctor looked *puzzled* "Oh, yes," he said, "It was the patient before you. How absentminded of me!"

Notes:

1. absentminded ['æbsənt'maindid] a. 心不在焉的, 心神恍惚的
2. hand [hænd] vt. 交给, 递给
3. (be) frightened over = (be) frightened of 对……感到恐惧
4. absentmindedness ['æbsənt'maindidnis] 心不在焉的, 心神恍惚
5. concern about 担心
6. be so far gone 发展到如此程度, 甚至到了这种程度
7. in trouble 处于不幸中
8. in line 站排, 排成一行, 排队
9. puzzle ['pʌzl] vt. 使迷惑, 使为难 (经常以被动语态的形式使用, The doctor looked puzzled. 这个句子与 The doctor was puzzled 和 The doctor seemed to be puzzled 这两个句子意思很接近。)

7. Maybe You Had the Same Doctor

A man was sitting by the road eating a *sandwich*¹, at this moment a policeman appeared. The man immediately got up and ran down the road. The policeman saw the man and ran after him. The man ran very fast, but the policeman ran faster, in a moment the policeman caught him.

"Where are you going?" asked the policeman, "you must be a