

● 李守仁 编注
● 程鹿峰 审校

中学英语速读材料

● FASTER

● READING MATERIAL

● FOR SENIOR STUDENTS

天津科技翻译出版公司

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编者的话

本书是为了培养和训练中学生的语言实践能力而编写的。

书中 62 篇短文,选自国外英语教材,适合高中学生阅读水平,内容丰富生动,语言规范凝炼。学生通过多读泛读,开阔思路和眼界,增加词汇积累,提高阅读英语的速度和理解能力,增强学英语的兴趣和信心,使学英语能力有质的飞跃。

本版《速读材料》是在 88 年初版本(乔峻,李永华,李守仁编注)的基础上改编和增订的。每篇短文后,附有测试练习题,书后附答案,并对部分单词和难句加以注译,供阅读时参考。

本书可作高中各年级英语速读训练的教材,又可作广大英语爱好者自学英语的补充读物。

书中译注有不妥之处,望各界读者在使用过程中,提出宝贵意见。在此,我们谨向为本书的出版付出辛勤劳动的同志们,表示衷心的感谢。

1992 年 7 月

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1. The Size of the United States

Visitors to the United States are often surprised to learn the distance from the east coast to the west coast. It is more than 3,500 kilometers from the Atlantic Ocean on the east coast to the Pacific Ocean on the west. A jet plane crosses the continental United States in about five hours, but a traveler in a fast railroad train needs more than forty-eight hours to cross the country.

The new state of Hawaii is very far from the states on the east coast of the continent. Hawaii is in the Pacific Ocean. It is more than 3,000 kilometers from Hawaii to the mainland of the United States.

Exercises

A. What are the distances between the important cities in your country?

Example: It is _____ kilometers from my city to the capital.

B. Are the following statements true or false according to the reading? If a statement is false, what is the correct information?

1. It is more than 5,000 kilometers from the east coast of the United States to the west coast.
2. It is more than 7,000 kilometers from Hawaii to the east coast. ✕

3. A jet plane crosses the continental United States in about three hours. ✕
4. Hawaii is in the Atlantic Ocean. ✕
5. It is more than 3,000 kilometers from the mainland of the United States to Hawaii. ✓
6. Hawaii is near the states on the east coast of the continent. ✕

2. Where did Americans Come From?

There is a great deal of land in the fifty United States, but there are also a great many people. Where did the people come from?

The first Americans were Indians. Today there are about 900,000 American Indians. There is one part of the country with an especially large Indian population. That is the southwest.

Negroes first came to America from Africa as slaves. President Lincoln freed the slaves in 1863. About eleven percent of the present population are Negroes.

The first immigrants in American history came from England and the Netherlands. Soon immigrants began to arrive from many other countries, and they are still arriving. In 1790 the new nation had fewer than four million people. Today there are more than 210 million. These include people from every

part of the world.

Exercises

- A. Tell about the population of your country. Use sentences like the ones in the reading. Example: Today there are more than _____ people in (name of country).
- B. Are the following statements true or false according to the reading? If a statement is false, what is the correct information?
- 1) In 1790, the United States had more than four million people.
 - 2) Today, about eleven percent of the population are Negroes. ✓
 - 3) The southwest of the United States has a large Indian population. ✓
 - 4) The first immigrants were from Africa. ✗
 - 5) Today there are 206 million more people in the United States than in 1790. ✓
 - 6) Indians were the first Americans.
 - 7) Immigrants from many countries are still arriving in the United States today. ✓
 - 8) There are about 900,000 Indians in the United States today. ✓

3. The Climate of the United States

The United States has many different kinds of climate. On the west coast, the temperature changes very little between summer and winter, but the north central states have a very different kind of climate. In those states people wear light clothing during the summer, and they need heavy wool or fur clothing in the winter.

In the southwest, the climate is pleasantly warm during the winter, but the summer is unpleasantly hot.

In the eastern part of the United States, summer temperatures are very different from winter temperatures. Summers are usually hot, and winters are usually cold. Spring temperatures are comfortably warm, and fall temperatures are pleasantly cool.

Years ago, people in the cold parts of the United States did not often get fresh vegetables and fresh fruits during the winter. Today, however, trucks and trains carry fruits and vegetables very quickly to all parts of the United States. In this way, Americans "send their climates" to people in other states.

Exercises

A. Find the answers to the following questions in the reading.

- 1) Is there much difference between summer and winter on the west coast? *No more so.*

- 2) What is the climate in the southwest?
- 3) How do people in the cold parts of the U. S. get fresh fruits and vegetables in the winter?
- 4) Are summer and winter temperatures the same or different in the eastern part of the United States?
- 5) Is the climate of the north central states like the climate of the eastern part of the U. S. ?

B. Fill in the blanks in the following sentences using *very*, *usually*, or *quickly*.

- 1) The temperature changes _____ little between summer and winter.
- 2) In the eastern part of the United States, summers are _____ hot, and winters are _____ cold.
- 3) The north central states have a _____ different kind of climate.
- 4) Trucks and trains carry fruits and vegetables _____ to all parts to the United States.

C. The four seasons of the United States are : spring (March April, May), summer (June, July, August), fall (September, October, November), and winter (December, January, February). Write a few sentences about the climate of your country using sentences like the ones in the reading.

4. The Four Largest Cities

New York has a larger population than any other American city. In 1970, its population was about 8,000,000.

Chicago has the second largest population. More than 3,000,000 people lived in Chicago in 1970.

The third largest city is Los Angeles, with a population of 2,810,000. Philadelphia is the fourth largest city. More than 2,000,000 people live in Philadelphia, the first capital city of the United States.

New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, and Philadelphia are all larger than the nation's capital city, Washington, D. C. The population of Washington is more than 700,000, but several cities have a larger population than that. Washington is one of the most beautiful American cities, but it is only the ninth city in size.

Exercises

A. Are the following statements true or false according to the information in the reading? If a statement is false, what is the correct information?

Example: Washington is larger than Los Angeles.

Answer: False. Washington is smaller than Los Angeles.

or

Los Angeles is larger than Washington.

1. The fourth largest city in the United States is Philadelphia.
 2. More than 4,000,000 people lived in Chicago in 1970.
 3. Los Angeles is larger than Chicago.
 4. New York is the largest American city.
- B. Mention some facts about the size of important cities in your country. Use sentences like the ones in the reading. Example: _____ is the third largest city in my country.
- C. Complete the following sentences using facts you have learned in the reading.
1. Washington is the ninth _____ city in the United States.
 2. New York and Chicago are both _____ than the capital city.
 3. Philadelphia is _____ than Los Angeles.
 4. The population of Los Angeles is _____ than 2,000,000.
 5. _____ than 2,000,000 people live in Philadelphia.
 6. One of the _____ beautiful American cities is Washington, D. C.

5. The Best American Restaurants

A visitor who arrives in the United States from another country may want to try American food. But when he asks about the best restaurants, he is surprised. He is told about a fine French restaurant, or a good Chinese restaurant, or an interesting Mexican one. He is given the name of a place with good German or Italian food. In many cities, if he asks about a restaurant where American food is served, he may be told that those are not the *best* restaurants.

Americans enjoy American food eaten in their own homes. The American food served in many restaurants is good. There are excellent restaurants on the east coast and the west coast for those who like fish and other kinds of seafood. But for an especially good dinner in most cities, an American goes where there is food from another country. The best American restaurants serve foreign food.

Exercises

- A. Which of the following sentences expresses the thought presented in this reading?
1. There are not many good restaurants in the United States.
 2. Americans like restaurants where foreign food is served.
 3. In their own homes Americans usually eat seafood.

4. Many American families have visited other countries.
- B. Write the second paragraph of the reading as your teacher dictates it.
- C. Shorten each of the following sentences, as in the example;
Example; The food which is served here is excellent.

The food served here is excellent.

1. The food which is served in the best restaurants is expensive.
2. The restaurants which are enjoyed by many Americans serve foreign food.
3. A visitor who is looking for good American food in a restaurant may be disappointed.
4. A visitor who is given the name of a fine restaurant may be surprised.

6. Hungry for Hamburgers

The younger members of most American families don't like foreign food. They like hamburgers. Their idea of a good meal is a hamburger, served with ketchup and French fried potatoes, which are called *French fries*. French fries are not considered foreign; most American children and teenagers love to eat them any time of the day or night.

Millions of hamburgers and French fries are eaten every year. Thousands of roadside restaurants prepare and sell them.