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For Today

今日英语

Book Six LITERATURE IN ENGLISH

Second Edition

第六册

文学选读

英汉对照

台海日报出版社

Second Edition

English for Today

Book Six _ terature in English

THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH

【今日英语】

第六册：文学选读

英汉对照

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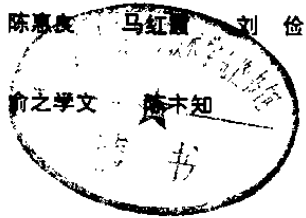

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今日英语

（第六册 文学选读）

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英汉对照《今日英语》第六册
前　言

《今日英语》第六册(English for Today Book Six)是美国全国英语教师协会的专家们针对外国学生学习英语的特点和不同层次的需要精心编写的全套六册教材中的最后一册。前五册分别概括地介绍了今日美国的经济和社会生活(农业、商业、交通、运输、电子、通讯、医药卫生、航天、文娱、教育及日常生活)。第六册则着重介绍当代主要英语国家著名作家和政治家如海明威、林肯、甘地、等人的小说、讲演、戏剧及诗歌的代表作。《今日英语》系列是我国目前使用较为广泛的英文原版教材之一，前五册已有几种受读者欢迎的教学参考用书问世，第六册英汉对照读本的出版既能使广大学习英语的人更好地自学《第六册》，还能满足他们对该教材有一套较完整的学习参考用书的需要。

《今日英语》全套六册教科书的语言由浅入深，循序渐进。前几册的单词和语法结构是经过精心选择的，而在第六册里，读者将面临形态各异，复杂多变的语言，故事中的人物来自不同的背景和社会阶层，作者的风格也各不相同，因此阅读第六册存在着一定的难度。为帮助初涉英文学作品的读者更好地理解作品的内容，将将本书的主要部分——小说、讲演、散文、戏剧——作了全文翻译，以便进行对照。

原书作者认为："对于这些作品在反复阅读、探索之后，得到的报偿是巨大的。"文学作品的报偿永远是巨大的。"我们衷心地希望这本英汉对照读物能成为广大英语爱好者的朋友。它不仅适合具有中等水平的读者自学使用，也可作为准备报考"托福"等出国考试的人员学习参考使用，还可为从事英语专业的工作人员作文学欣赏之用。

在本书的出版过程中，我们得到了国务院引进国外智力办公室教育培训司的关心和支持，在翻译和审校过程之中曾多次得到在华任教的美国专家查理·菲利浦博士的指教，在此一并表示感谢。

由于译者水平有限，书中难免有错误之处，欢迎读者批评指正。

译者　91.8

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Section One
Fiction

Joseph Conrad, a famous English novelist, said that his goal as a writer was "to make you hear, to make you feel—it is, before all, to make you *see*. That—and no more, and it is everything." A good short story tries to give the reader a sense of the actual experience. Often it leaves a single sharp impression to be turned over and over in the mind. After finishing the story, the reader should have something to think about: the pathos or humor of life, its ironies, or the unpredictability of human behavior.

In order to read a short story with full understanding, the reader must approach the content on two levels. The first and most obvious level is conveyed through the plot. *Plot* refers to the sequence of events, to the actions of the characters and the situations in which they are involved. To explain the plot, then, is to tell what happened in the story and to whom. In some short stories, plot is the dominating element. "The Open Window," the first of the selections that follow, is a good example of a short story in which plot dominates. The impact on the

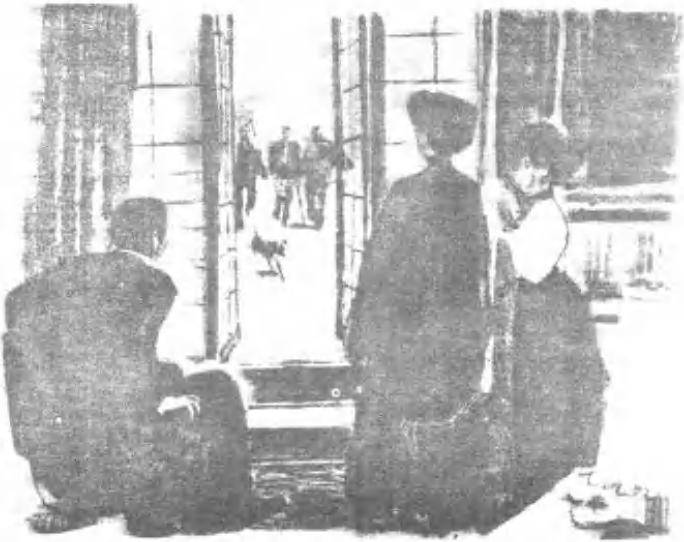
reader comes from the sudden and unexpected revelation of Vera's specialty of providing "romance at short notice." In other short stories, plot plays a very minor role. In "A Clean, Well-Lighted Place," for example, all that "happens" is that an old man sits drinking in a café while the two waiters talk about him and about themselves. When the old man leaves, we follow the older of the two waiters to an all-night bar where he thinks about the restless night he will spend in a lonely room and an empty bed.

In Hemingway's story, then, we must approach the content on another level. The impact of the story comes from the insight it gives us into the needs and desires of youth and old age. To understand and appreciate the story, the reader must be able to identify its general topic or *theme* (youth versus old age). The next step is to identify the device by which the author comments on this theme—in this case, through the dialogue of the younger and older waiters. Finally, the reader should be able to articulate the insights which the author has given into the theme—that is, to explain the meaning of the story. In complex stories such as this one, careful readers may not always agree in their interpretations. One possible interpretation might be stated in this way: "Hemingway suggests that both youth and old age can be sad and lonely. But there is a difference. Old age has fewer expectations; it can be contented with less, sometimes with little more than a quiet drink in a clean, well-lighted place."

Readers cannot appreciate a short story fully—they cannot hear and see and feel it—unless they react not only to *what* has been said but also to *how* it has been said. They must look for style and structure, as well as for content. *Style* grows out of the writer's own personality and can be seen in the choice of words and phrases, the arrangement of sentences, the rhythm and tone. *Structure* refers to the architecture of the story—the ways in which the details are selected and arranged to produce the desired effect.

As you read the stories that are presented here, you should be prepared to encounter several kinds of English. The characters in the stories are from many different backgrounds and social levels, and they will often use words and phrases that do not appear in the standard writing of newspapers and magazines and books. They may use specialized terms and slang. The stories also have wide geographical range—from Willa Cather's small town, Sand City, in the Middle West to Frank O'Connor's Ireland. Irish English and Sand City English are very different. In addition, because literature uses language in a special way to achieve part of its artistic effect, some of these stories will contain words and phrases used figuratively—that is, they may have a symbolic meaning as well as the literal meaning found in the dictionary. The footnotes will attempt to give you some help in these matters: non-standard English, dialectal forms, and figurative language.

When you began to study English, the vocabulary and structure were carefully controlled to allow you to learn the basic words and sentence patterns efficiently. Now you are going to encounter a language used with all its variety and complexity - a language used by many people in many different countries to express complex truths about human life that cannot be simply expressed. The stories you are about to read are often difficult even for people who have spoken English all their lives. They must be read and reread and talked about and thought about. So you need not despair if the going is difficult. The rewards will be great. The rewards of literature always are.



The Open Window

by Saki (H. H. Munro)

In this story a very imaginative young lady of fifteen plays an amusing trick on a chance visitor to her aunt's house. As you read, watch closely how smoothly she conducts herself. The story is told with a charm and grace that is characteristic of this English author (1870–1916), who commonly wrote under the pen name of Saki.

"My aunt will be down presently, Mr. Nuttel," said a very self-possessed young lady of fifteen; "in the meantime you must try and put up with me."[1]

[1] *put up with me* tolerate me.

Framton Nuttel endeavoured to say the correct something which should duly flatter the niece of the recipient without unduly discounting[1] the aunt that was to be. Privately he doubted more than ever whether these formal visits on a succession of total strangers would do much towards helping the nerve cure which he was supposed to be undergoing.

"I know how it will be," his sister had said when he was preparing to migrate to this rural retreat, "you will bury yourself down there and not speak to a living soul and your nerves will be worse than ever from moping. I shall just write you letters of introduction to all the people I know there. Some of them, as far as I can remember, were quite nice."

Framton wondered whether Mrs. Sappleton, the lady to whom he was presenting one of the letters of introduction, came into the nice division.

"Do you know many of the people round here?" asked the niece, when she judged that they had had sufficient silent communion.

"Hardly a soul," said Framton. "My sister was staying here, at the rectory[2] you know, some four years ago, and she gave me letters of introduction to some of the people here."

He made the last statement in a tone of distinct regret.

"Then you know practically nothing about my aunt?" pursued the self-possessed young lady.[3]

"Only her name and address," admitted the caller. He was wondering whether Mrs. Sappleton was in the married or widowed state. An undefinable something about the room seemed to suggest masculine habitation.[4]

"Her great tragedy happened just three years ago," said the child; "that would be since your sister's time."

"Her tragedy?" asked Framton; somehow in this restful country spot tragedies seemed out of place.

"You may wonder why we keep that window wide open on an October afternoon," said the niece, indicating a large French window that opened on to a lawn.

"It is quite warm for the time of the year," said Framton; "but has that window got anything to do with the tragedy?"

"Out through that window, three years ago to a day, her husband and her two young brothers went off for their day's shooting. They never came back. In crossing the moor to their favourite snipe-shooting ground they were all three engulfed in a treacherous piece of bog.[6] It had been that dreadful wet summer, you know, and places that were safe in other years gave way suddenly without warning. Their bodies were

[1] *unduly discounting*: showing too little respect for
[2] *rectory*: a house in which a minister lives
[3] Note this question well, for it looks forward to the whole point of the story.
[4] *seemed to suggest masculine habitation*: gave Framton the idea that there were men living in the house.
[6] *engulfed in a treacherous piece of bog*: swallowed up by a swamp.

never recovered. That was the dreadful part of it." Here the child's voice lost its self-possessed note and became falteringly human. "Poor aunt always thinks that they will come back some day, they and the little brown spaniel that was lost with them, and walk in at that window just as they used to do. That is why the window is kept open every evening till it is quite dusk. Poor dear aunt, she has often told me how they went out, her husband with his white waterproof coat over his arm, and Ronnie, her youngest brother, singing, 'Bertie, why do you bound?' as he always did to tease her, because she said it got on her nerves. Do you know, sometimes on still, quiet evenings like this, I almost get a creepy feeling that they will all walk in through that window—"

She broke off with a little shudder. It was a relief to Framton when the aunt bustled into the room with a whirl of apologies for being late in making her appearance.

"I hope Vera has been amusing you?" she said.

"She has been very interesting," said Framton.

"I hope you don't mind the open window," said Mrs. Sappleton briskly, "my husband and brothers will be home directly from shooting, and they always come in this way. They've been out for snipe in the marshes today, so they'll make a fine mess over my poor carpets. So like you menfolk, isn't it?"

She rattled on cheerfully about the shooting and the scarcity of birds, and the prospects for duck in the winter. To Framton it was all purely horrible. He made a desperate but only partially successful effort to turn the talk on to a less ghastly topic; he was conscious that his hostess was giving him only a fragment of her attention, and her eyes were constantly straying past him to the open window and the lawn beyond. It was certainly an unfortunate coincidence that he should have paid his visit on this tragic anniversary.

"The doctors agree in ordering me complete rest, an absence of mental excitement, and avoidance of anything in the nature of violent physical exercise," announced Framton, who laboured under the tolerably wide-spread delusion[7] that total strangers and chance acquaintances are hungry for the least details of one's ailments and infirmities, their cause and cure. "On the matter of diet they are not so much in agreement," he continued.

"No?" said Mrs. Sappleton, in a voice which only replaced a yawn at the last moment. Then she suddenly brightened into alert attention—but not to what Framton was saying.

"Here they are at last!" she cried. "Just in time for tea, and don't they look as if they were muddy up to the eyes!"

Framton shivered slightly and turned towards the niece with a look intended to convey sympathetic comprehension. The child was

[7] *laboured under the tolerably wide-spread delusion:* believed in a common, but false, idea.

staring out through the open window with dazed horror in her eyes. In a chill shock of nameless fear Framton swung round in his seat and looked in the same direction.

In the dim opening twilight three figures were walking across the lawn towards the window: they all carried guns under their arms, and one of them was accidentally burdened with a white coat hung over his shoulders. A tired brown spaniel kept close at their heels. Noiselessly they neared the house, and then, a hoarse young voice chanted out of the dusk: "I said, Bertie, why do you bound?"

Framton grabbed wildly at his stick and hat; the hall-door, the gravel-drive, and the front gate were mere names in his headlong retreat. A cyclist coming down the road had to run into the hedge to avoid imminent collision.

"Here we are, my dear," said the bearer of the white mackintosh, coming in through the window; "fairly muddy, but most of it's dry. Who was that who bolted out as we came up?"

"A most extraordinary man, a Mr. Nuttel," said Mrs. Sappleton; "could only talk about his illnesses and dashed off without a word of good-bye or apology when you arrived. One would think he had seen a ghost."

"I expect it was the spaniel," said the niece calmly; "he told me he had a horror of dogs. He was once hunted into a cemetery somewhere on the banks of the Ganges[8] by a pack of pariah dogs,[9] and had to spend the night in a newly dug grave with the creatures snarling and grinning and foaming just above him. Enough to make any one lose their nerve."

Romance at short notice was her specialty.

[8] *the Ganges*: a river in India.

[9] *pariah dogs*: A pariah was a person who belonged to one of the lower social castes. A pariah dog would be an outcast, a stray.

Why Tortoise's Shell Is Not Smooth

by Chinua Achebe

The use of English as a literary medium in Nigeria has increased at an impressive pace since the late 1950s. Today the works of Nigerian novelists, playwrights, and poets are attracting more and more attention in the English-speaking world and beyond. Among the best-known novelists is Chinua Achebe, an Ibo writer whose first novel, Things Fall Apart *(1958), has been translated into German, Italian, and Spanish.*

Achebe is deeply interested in the traditional life of the Ibo people. In Things Fall Apart, *he tells the story of a "strong man," a village leader named Okonkwo. At the beginning of the novel, Okonkwo is a successful and highly respected member of his community. But as influences from the outside world begin to affect the traditional values that he has upheld, he gradually comes to realize that the way of life he knew will never be the same: "Okonkwo was deeply grieved. And it was not just a personal grief. He mourned for the clan, which he saw breaking up and falling apart, and he*

mourned for the warlike men of [his village], who had so unaccountably become soft like women."

Achebe has appropriately chosen a phrase from Yeats's poem "The Second Coming" for his title:

> *Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;*
> *Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world,*
> *The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere*
> *The ceremony of innocence is drowned*

The excerpt that follows is from Chapter 11 of the novel. It opens with a typical evening scene in Okonkwo's compound. The day's work is done, and his three wives, each of whom occupies a separate hut in the compound, are sharing songs and stories with their children. As we read the delightful legend of the tortoise and the birds, we can only hope that all such folk stories will be preserved in the writings of regional authors like Achebe and will not be forgotten as the Ibo villages gradually become part of a new and different world.

The night was impenetrably dark. The moon had been rising later and later every night until now it was seen only at dawn. And whenever the moon forsook evening and rose at cock-crow the nights were as black as charcoal.

Ezinma and her mother sat on a mat on the floor after their supper of yam foo-foo[1] and bitter-leaf soup. A palm-oil lamp gave out yellowish light. Without it, it would have been impossible to eat, one could not have known where one's mouth was in the darkness of that night. There was an oil lamp in all the four huts on Okonkwo's compound, and each hut seen from the others looked like a soft eye of yellow half-light set in the solid massiveness of night.

The world was silent except for the shrill cry of insects, which was part of the night, and the sound of wooden mortar and pestle as Nwayieke pounded her foo-foo. Nwayieke lived four compounds away, and she was notorious for her late cooking. Every woman in the neighborhood knew the sound of Nwayieke's mortar and pestle. It was also part of the night.

Okonkwo had eaten from his wives' dishes and was now reclining with his back against the wall. He searched his bag and brought out his snuff-bottle. He turned it on to his left palm, but nothing came out. He hit the bottle against his knee to shake up the tobacco. That was always the trouble with Okeke's snuff. It very quickly went damp, and there was too much saltpeter in it. Okonkwo had not bought snuff from him for a long time. Idigo was the man who knew how to grind good snuff. But he had recently fallen ill.

[1] *yam foo-foo*: a dish made from a variety of the yam plant that is boiled and pounded into a paste.

Low voices, broken now and again by singing, reached Okonkwo from his wives' huts as each woman and her children told folk stories. Ekweti and her daughter, Ezinma, sat on a mat on the floor. It was Ekweti's turn to tell a story.

"Once upon a time," she began, "all the birds were invited to a feast in the sky. They were very happy and began to prepare themselves for the great day. They painted their bodies with red camwood and drew beautiful patterns on them with *uli*.[2]

"Tortoise saw all these preparations and soon discovered what it all meant. Nothing that happened in the world of the animals ever escaped his notice. He was full of cunning. As soon as he heard of the great feast in the sky his throat began to itch at the very thought. There was a famine in those days and Tortoise had not eaten a good meal for two moons.[3] His body rattled like a piece of dry stick in his empty shell. So he began to plan how he would go to the sky."

"But he had no wings," said Ezinma.

"Be patient," replied her mother. "That is the story. Tortoise had no wings, but he went to the birds and asked to be allowed to go with them.

'We know you too well,' said the birds when they had heard him. 'You are full of cunning and you are ungrateful. If we allow you to come with us you will soon begin your mischief.'

'You do not know me,' said Tortoise. 'I am a changed man. I have learned that a man who makes trouble for others is also making it for himself.'

"Tortoise had a sweet tongue, and within a short time all the birds agreed that he was a changed man, and they each gave him a feather with which he made two wings.

"At last the great day came and Tortoise was the first to arrive at the meeting place. When all the birds had gathered together, they set off in a body. Tortoise was very happy and voluble as he flew among the birds, and he was soon chosen as the man to speak for the party because he was a great orator.

'There is one important thing which we must not forget,' he said as they flew on their way. 'When people are invited to a great feast like this, they take new names for the occasion. Our hosts in the sky will expect us to honor this age-old custom.'

"None of the birds had heard of this custom but they knew that Tortoise, in spite of his failings in other directions, was a widely-traveled man who knew the customs of different peoples. And so they each took a new name. When they had all taken, Tortoise also took one. He was to be called *All of you*.

[2] *uli*: a liquid dye obtained from a tree and used for cosmetic purposes (or body decoration).
[3] *two moons*: two months.

"At last the party arrived in the sky and their hosts were very happy to see them. Tortoise stood up in his many-colored plumage and thanked them for their invitation. His speech was so eloquent that all the birds were glad they had brought him, and nodded their heads in approval of all he said. Their hosts took him as the king of the birds especially as he looked somewhat different from the others.

"After kola nuts had been presented and eaten, the people of the sky set before their guests the most delectable dishes Tortoise had ever seen or dreamed of. The soup was brought out hot from the fire and in the very pot in which it had been cooked. It was full of meat and fish. Tortoise began to sniff aloud. There was pounded yam and also yam pottage cooked with palm-oil and fresh fish. There were also pots of palm-wine. When everything had been set before the guests, one of the people of the sky came forward and tasted a little from each pot. He then invited the birds to eat. But Tortoise jumped to his feet and asked: 'For whom have you prepared this feast?'

'For all of you,' replied the man.

"Tortoise turned to the birds and said: 'You remember that my name is *All of you*. The custom here is to serve the spokesman first and the others later. They will serve you when I have eaten.'

"He began to eat and the birds grumbled angrily. The people of the sky thought it must be their custom to leave all the food for their king. And so Tortoise ate the best part of the food and then drank two pots of palm-wine, so that he was full of food and drink and his body filled out in his shell.

"The birds gathered round to eat what was left and to peck at the bones he had thrown all about the floor. Some of them were too angry to eat. They chose to fly home on an empty stomach. But before they left each took back the feather he had lent to Tortoise. And there he stood in his hard shell full of food and wine but without any wings to fly home. He asked the birds to take a message for his wife, but they all refused. In the end Parrot, who had felt more angry than the others, suddenly changed his mind and agreed to take the message.

"'Tell my wife,' said Tortoise, 'to bring out all the soft things in my house and cover the compound with them so that I can jump down from the sky without very great danger.'

"Parrot promised to deliver the message, and then flew away. But when he reached Tortoise's house he told his wife to bring out all the hard things in the house. And so she brought out her husband's hoes, machetes, spears, guns, and even his cannon. Tortoise looked down from the sky and saw his wife bringing things out, but it was too far to see what they were. When all seemed ready he let himself go. He fell and fell and fell until he began to fear that he would never stop falling. And then like the sound of his cannon he crashed on the compound."

"Did he die?" asked Ezinma.