

English Progressive Reading

# 英语升级阅读

( 供初中学生使用 )

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## 编 者 的 话

数年前,曾因工作需要旅美,在旅途中收集到许多英语短文。这些短文浅显易懂,反映了英语国家的风土人情,涉及天文、地理、历史、动物、植物等内容,知识面广。现将其中的80篇汇编成4级,并配上生动的插图。为了检测使用者的阅读水平,每篇短文后都有自测练习和答案。

A、B级适合初二、初三学生;C、D级适合高中各年级和其他英语爱好者、自学者。这些英语短文也可供英语教师作挑选课内、外阅读材料之用。

编 者

2000.7

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A 级

# 1. Please Pass the Grass<sup>1</sup>



Did you know there are many kinds of grasses? Some grasses are short. Some are tall. The kind that grows around your house is a short grass. But field<sup>2</sup> grasses often grow as tall as a man.

Some foods that we eat come from plants<sup>3</sup> of the grass family. Wheat and rice are two of them. We use wheat to make bread. We use both wheat<sup>4</sup> and rice to make breakfast foods. In some lands, people eat more rice than any other food.

Animals<sup>5</sup> as well as people get food from the grass family. Cows<sup>6</sup> eat hay<sup>7</sup>. Do you know the

kind of grass that horses<sup>8</sup> like to eat ?

## Notes

- |                            |                           |
|----------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. grass ( <i>n.</i> ) 青草  | 2. field ( <i>n.</i> ) 旷野 |
| 3. plant ( <i>n.</i> ) 植物  | 4. wheat ( <i>n.</i> ) 麦子 |
| 5. animal ( <i>n.</i> ) 动物 | 6. cow ( <i>n.</i> ) 牛    |
| 7. hay ( <i>n.</i> ) 干草    | 8. horse ( <i>n.</i> ) 马  |

## Testing Yourself

- Some field grasses grow as tall as a \_\_\_\_\_.
- What are the two foods that come from plants of the grass family ?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- The story as a whole is about \_\_\_\_\_.
  - how grass grows
  - the uses we have for grass
  - how to eat grass
  - how green grass is
- The grass that grows around your house is good to eat.
  - Yes
  - No
  - Does not say
- Some kinds of grass are good to eat.
  - Yes
  - No
  - Does not say
- Which word in this passage means “ not long ” ?  
\_\_\_\_\_

Key

1. man  
2. Wheat and rice.  
3. b  
4. c  
5. a  
6. "Short".

## 2. Smarter Than Most



Dogs are smarter<sup>1</sup> than most other animals. Here is how a man showed that a dog is smarter than a chicken<sup>2</sup>.

He made a long wire<sup>3</sup> cage<sup>4</sup>. He left one end open. He put some food outside the closed end.

Inside the cage , the man placed a chicken. The chicken saw the food. It ran to get some. But the wire was in the way. The chicken just stayed there , trying to get the food.

Then , the man put in a dog. It sniffed<sup>5</sup> the food through the wire. It ran back to the open

end. It went around the cage and ate the food.

Which was smarter , the chicken or the dog ?

## Notes

1. smart ( *adj.* ) 有头脑的 , 聪明的    smarter than  
比 ..... 聪明    2. chicken ( *n.* ) 小鸡    3. wire  
( *n.* ) 金属丝    4. cage ( *n.* ) 畜养禽兽的笼子  
5. sniff ( *v.* ) 吸气而闻 , 嗅

## Testing Yourself

- Which is smarter , a chicken or a dog ?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- What was the cage made of ?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- The story as a whole is about \_\_\_\_\_.  
a. feeding chicken  
b. how a dog is smarter than a chicken  
c. making a cage  
d. smart dogs
- The chicken thought of a way to get the food.  
a. Yes            b. No            c. Does not say
- Some animals are smarter than others.  
a. Yes            b. No            c. Does not say
- Which word in the passage means “ not closed ” ?  
\_\_\_\_\_

Key

- 1. A dog.
- 2. Wire.
- 3. b
- 4. b
- 5. a
- 6. "Open".

### 3. Not a Minute Lost



Ants<sup>1</sup> live and work together the way people do. They live in ant cities , which they work hard to build. Every ant has his own work to do.

The queen<sup>2</sup> ant lays<sup>3</sup> eggs. Some ants help by caring for her and bringing her food. Other ants take care of the babies.

Worker ants dig tunnels<sup>4</sup> and build store-rooms<sup>5</sup>. They carry seeds<sup>6</sup> and sand. Other ants work as soldiers. They stand watch , ready to fight.

Ants build their cities in many places. Some

build in tree tops. Some build in the ground. Some ants even build their cities in pieces of old wood. An ant city is always a busy place.

## Notes

1. ant ( *n.* ) 蚂蚁    2. queen ( *n.* ) 女王 , 太后 ;  
queen ant    蚁后    3. lay ( *v.* ) ( 指鸟与昆虫 ) 产  
( 卵 )    4. tunnel ( *n.* ) 洞穴通道    5. storeroom  
( *n.* ) 储藏室    6. seed ( *n.* ) 种子

## Testing Yourself

- The work of the queen ant is to \_\_\_\_\_.
- Where do ants store their food underground ?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- The story as a whole is about \_\_\_\_\_.
  - builders
  - queens
  - how ants live
  - eggs
- Ants are good workers.
  - Yes
  - No
  - Does not say
- Each ant has his own work to do.
  - Yes
  - No
  - Does not say
- In this passage , which word means “ large towns ” ?

---

## Key

1. lay eggs
2. In the storerooms.
3. c
4. a
5. a
6. "Cities".

## 4. Underground Fairyland<sup>1</sup>



Most of the salt<sup>2</sup> we use comes from salt mines<sup>3</sup> under the ground. Sometimes men must dig very deep to find it. Salt is white and clean and beautiful. A salt mine looks like a fairyland.

We get salt from salt wells , too. A salt well is much like a deep water well. The salt is brought to the top in pipes<sup>4</sup>.

In some countries , people get salt from the sea. They dig great bowls and fill them with seawater. When the sun dries up the water , the salt is left on the ground.

People need salt. Animals need salt, too. We could not live without it.

## Notes

1. fairyland ( *n.* ) 仙境 , 仙国    2. salt ( *n.* ) 盐  
3. mine ( *n.* ) 矿坑 , 矿    4. pipe ( *n.* ) 管

## Testing Yourself

1. Most of the salt we use comes from salt \_\_\_\_\_.
2. In what is salt brought up from a salt well ?  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. The story as a whole is about \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. living in fairyland
  - b. wells and water
  - c. where people get salt
  - d. how people use salt
4. Animals need salt.
  - a. Yes            b. No            c. Does not say
5. Some salt comes from the sea.
  - a. Yes            b. No            c. Does not say
6. Which word in the passage means “ make a hole ” ?  
\_\_\_\_\_