

Advanced English Reading — Modern Prose

高级英语阅读——散文篇

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编 者 的 话

本教材是根据《高等学校英语专业英语教学大纲》，为英语专业高年级学生编写的高级英语阅读教材。它既可用作高级英语课程的教材，供英语专业高年级学生使用，也可作为文学课程中与小说、诗歌、戏剧对应的散文阅读、欣赏教材；还可用作相关专业研究生的高级英语阅读教材。本教材配有比较系统的英汉散文翻译和英语写作练习，所以也可用作高级英汉散文翻译和高级英语写作教材。

《高等学校英语专业英语教学大纲》指出：“高级英语是一门训练学生综合英语技能尤其是阅读理解、语法修辞与写作能力的课程。课程通过阅读和分析内容广泛的材料，包括涉及政治、经济、社会、语言、文学、教育、哲学等方面的名家作品，扩大学生知识面，加深学生对社会和人生的理解，培养学生对名篇的分析和欣赏能力、逻辑思维与独立思考的能力，巩固和提高学生的语言技能。”本教材就是根据上述原则编写的。

按照惯用的文章分类方法，本教材所选的文章包括记叙文、描写文、说明文、论说文共60篇课文，另有英汉、汉英翻译练习40篇。全书分为20个单元，每单元有A、B、C三篇课文，英汉、汉英翻译练习各一篇。为提供理解课文必要的背景知识和查找相关资料的线索，每篇课文前面都提供了作者及作品的相关介绍。同时，为了启发学生，引导学生进行高效深入的讨论，每课后面编有关于主题思想、篇章结构、文体修辞特点等方面的讨论问题。课文、单元之间既相互独立，又相互联系，加上配套的写作练习，形成了比较完整的体系。

本教材所选的作品大都出自名家之手，细细品读，时而宛若仰望重峦叠嶂、悬泉飞瀑，使人惊心动魄；时而又似夜宿山村古寺，卧听山谷中声声岩滴，撩人情思；时而又如沿溪信步，意外若误入桃源，使人不胜惊喜；时而仿佛身处冰雪莹净的世界，聆听缕缕清婉的琴音，让人心动神摇，忘我忘情；时而恰似幽居古老的深宅大院，倾听饱历沧桑的长者述说人生百味，使人兴味盎然……篇篇引人入胜，处处不乏“神来之笔”。这些文章结构严谨，措辞考究，构思精巧，各具独特的写作风格和艺术魅力，堪为细细咀嚼、品尝、赏析的范文。

本教材内容丰富，具有很大的开放性。教师在使用时应根据实际情况确定自己的教学目标、重点，调整课文的先后顺序，选择自己的教学方法，设计一些补充练习等等。下面几点，供使用时参考。

第一，以篇章结构为主线，以文体修辞为重点，加深学生对社会和人生的理解。本教材不以文字的难易、句法的繁简、篇幅的长短而选材。有的文章文字朴实无华，句子简短平淡，但韵味之悠悠令人玩味无穷；有的文章引经据典，措辞高雅，结构之精巧令人

赞叹不已 有的文章巧夺天工,或诙谐幽默,或讥诮嘲讽,或雅俗并茂,或起伏跌宕,意境之奇妙令人拍案叫绝…… 所有这些都给篇章、文体修辞和主题分析提供了丰富的素材。在教学过程中,应把讨论不同体裁、题材文章的结构特点作为贯穿始终的一条主线,着眼于让学生理解每篇课文的主旨、立意、切入、谋篇、文体、修辞等特点,重点培养学生驾驭篇章、独立思考、分析和解决问题的能力,引导学生理解社会,感悟人生,豁然抵达理想的彼岸。

第二,充分调动学生学习的主动性,强调学生对课文的针对性预习。本教材既没有编写“免查字典”式的生词表,也没有对课文进行代言性的“权威”注释,更不准备编写因“独家之言”而束缚教学的所谓“教参”。这样一方面节省篇幅,以容纳更多的大家名篇;更重要的是为师生创造接近母语读者的阅读环境,最大限度地发挥师生教学双方的创造性,培养学生勇于挑战、耐得寂寞、甘愿以苦为乐的学习精神。在教学过程中,教师应根据自己确定的教学目标,参照课文后面的讨论问题和翻译、写作练习,在课前把与课文相关的语言难点、文化背景、文体修辞知识、语言文学理论等等,有目的、有计划地指定学生进行课前预习准备。教师应鼓励学生充分利用现代媒体资源,上网查找资料,参加讨论,进行自主学习。课堂上应形成真正的师生互动互学。学生能讲的教师应放手让学生去讲,教师的讲授主要在于分析和引导,帮助学生深化对文章的理解。在适当的指导下,学生的讲解常常可以取得远比教师讲授更为理想的效果。首先,学生的课前准备需要查找资料、分析整理资料、向他人咨询等等,这一过程本身就是非常重要的学习,而且是比应付考试死记单词、背诵练习答案、做模拟试题等更为重要的学习。其次,学生在课堂讲解中,不仅锻炼了逻辑思维能力、口头表达能力,而且培养了交际能力。尤为重要的是,学生在课堂讲解时,听课同学的参与感强,积极性高,发言顾虑少,所以课堂气氛活跃,非常有利于语言习得和探究创新精神的培养。

第三,启发学生独立思考,培养学生对文章的分析 and 鉴赏能力,全面提高学生的英语水平。本教材每单元的课文有 A、B、C 三篇,体裁、题材相互对应。教师使用时应根据自己的课时、兴趣、特长等从每单元中选择一篇作为主课文,在课堂上深入分析讨论。另外两篇或作为主课文的对照比较对象,让学生按分析主课文的方法在课堂上分析讨论,或作为课后书面作业,让学生独立分析欣赏,然后写出读书报告、读后感、赏评等,或作为作业留给学生自行处理,辅以口头形式在课堂上检查督促,以培养学生独立思考、分析和解决问题的能力。每单元的英汉互译练习是和课文题材、体裁对应的书面练习,最好以学生课外完成、课堂上教师适当点评、总结归纳的方式进行,也可以作为课堂口译练习处理。每单元课文教学之后,可根据课后的写作练习让学生模仿作文,教师视具体情况进行批改和讲评。这样,整个教学过程就会形成课前以“读”为中心的预习,课上以“听、说”为主的讨论,课后以“写、译”为主的巩固和提高,从而达到学生语言综合能力的内化与思想情操的不断升华。

通过本教材的编写,编者更加深切地感到 学好、教好英语散文绝非易事,而编写一

套好的教材更需加倍付出。首先,散文的概念就不易把握。季羨林先生曾把散文比做“动物中的蝙蝠,亦兽亦鸟,非鸟非兽”。出于教学的考虑,本教材采取了广义的散文概念,所选散文体裁较为宽泛。其次,英语散文名家灿若列星,要想在浩如烟海的英语散文名篇中选取代表性的精品又谈何容易。散文的意境千差万别,日常生活中的琐碎见闻、人生的一缕感思冥想,每一幕都让人凝目遐思,每一景都使人感受到宇宙的深沉。散文的语言看似自然朴素,浑然天成,仔细品味则不难发现其中的匠心独具和苦心经营。对散文的欣赏不仅需要坚实的语言基础,良好的文学艺术修养,更需要丰富的人生体验。以一本教材让学生大体了解英语散文的概貌,学会基本的赏析方法,本教材只能算做一次大胆的尝试。由于编者水平有限,对教材中的错误和不足,殷切希望广大师生提出宝贵意见。

编 者

于天津师范大学

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but my father who was saying the words or making the gesture. It gave me a creepy sensation.

5. We went fishing the first morning. I felt the same damp moss covering the worms in the bait can, and saw the dragonfly alight on top of my rod as it hovered a few inches from the surface of the water. It was the arrival of this fly that convinced me beyond any doubt that everything was as it had always been, that the years were a mirage and there had been no years. The small waves were the same, chucking the rowboat under the chin as we fished at anchor, and the boat was the same boat, the same color green and the ribs broken in the same places, and under the floor-boards the same fresh-water leavings and debris — the same hellgrammite, the wisps of moss, the rusty discarded fishhook, and the dried blood from yesterday's catch. We stared silently at the tips of our rods, at the dragonflies that came and went. I lowered the tip of mine into the water, tentatively, pensively dislodging the fly, which darted two feet away, poised, darted two feet back, and came to rest again a little farther up the rod. There had been no years between the ducking of this dragonfly and the other one — the one that was part of my memory. I looked at the boy, who was silently watching his fly, and it was my hands that held his rod, my eyes watching. I felt dizzy and didn't know which rod I was at the end of.

6. We caught two bass, hauling them in briskly as though they were mackerel, pulling them over the side of the boat in a business-like manner without any landing net, and stunning them with a blow on the back of the head. When we got back for a swim before lunch, the lake was exactly where we had left it, the same number of inches from the dock, and there was only the merest suggestion of a breeze. This seemed an utterly enchanted sea, this lake you could leave to its own devices for a few hours and come back to, and find that it had not stirred, this constant and trust-worthy body of water. In the shallows, the dark water-soaked sticks and twigs, smooth and old, were undulating in clusters on the bottom against the clean ribbed sand, and the track of the mussel was plain. A school of minnows swam by, each minnow with its small individual shadow, doubling the attendance, so clear and sharp in the sunlight. Some of the other campers were in swimming, along the shore, one of them with a cake of soap, and the water felt thin and clear and unsubstantial. Over the years there had been this person with the cake of soap, this cultist, and here he was. There had been no years.

7. Up to the farmhouse to dinner through the teeming, dusty field, the road under our sneakers was only a two-track road. The middle track was missing, the one with the marks of the hooves and the splotches of dried, flaky manure. There had always been three tracks to choose from in choosing which track to walk in ; now the choice was nar-

rowed down to two. For a moment I missed terribly the middle alternative. But the way led past the tennis court, and something about the way it lay there in the sun reassured me ; the tape had loosened along the back-line, the alleys were green with plantains and other weeds, and the net (installed in June and removed in September) sagged in the dry noon, and the whole place steamed with midday heat and hunger and emptiness. There was a choice of pie for dessert, and one was blueberry and one was apple, and the waitresses were the same country girls, there having been no passage of time, only the illusion of it as in a dropped curtain — the waitresses were still fifteen ; their hair had been washed, that was the only difference — they had been to the movies and seen the pretty girls with the clean hair.

8. Summertime, oh summertime, pattern of life indelible, the fade-proof lake, the woods unshatterable, pasture with the sweet fern and the juniper forever and ever, summer without end ; this was the background, and the life along the shore was the design, the cottagers with their innocent and tranquil design, their tiny docks with the flagpole and the American flag floating against the white clouds in the blue sky, the little paths over the roots of the trees leading from camp to camp and the paths leading back to the outhouses and the can of lime for sprinkling, and at the souvenir counters at the store the miniature birch-bark canoes and the post cards that showed things looking a little better than they looked. This was the American family at play, escaping the city heat, wondering whether the newcomers in the camp at the head of the cove were “common” or “nice”, wondering whether it was true that the people who drove up for Sunday dinner at the farmhouse were turned away because there wasn’t enough chicken.

9. It seemed to me, as I kept remembering all this, that those times and those summers had been infinitely precious and worth saving. There had been jollity and peace and goodness. The arriving (at the beginning of August) had been so big a business in itself, at the railway station the farm wagon drawn up, the first smell of the pine-laden air, the first glimpse of the smiling farmer, and the great importance of the trunks and your father’s enormous authority in such matters, and the feel of the wagon under you for the long ten-mile haul, and at the top of the last long hill catching the first view of the lake after eleven months of not seeing this cherished body of water. The shouts and cries of the other campers when they saw you, and the trunks to be unpacked, to give up their rich burden. (Arriving was less exciting nowadays, when you sneaked up in your car and parked it under a tree near the camp and took out the bags and in five minutes it was all over, no fuss, no loud wonderful fuss about trunks.)

10. Peace and goodness and jollity. The only thing that was wrong now, really, was

the sound of the place, an unfamiliar nervous sound of the outboard motors. This was the note that jarred, the one thing that would sometimes break the illusion and set the years moving. In those other summertimes all motors were inboard ; and when they were at a little distance, the noise they made was a sedative, an ingredient of summer sleep. They were one-cylinder and two-cylinder engines, and some were make-and-break and some were jump-spark, but they all made a sleepy sound across the lake. The one-lungers throbbed and fluttered, and the twin-cylinder ones purred and purred ; and that was a quiet sound too. But now the campers all had outboards. In the daytime, in the hot mornings, these motors made a petulant, irritable sound ; at night, in the still evening when the afterglow lit the water, they whined about one's ears like mosquitoes. My boy loved our rented outboard, and his great desire was to achieve singlehanded mastery over it, and authority, and he soon learned the trick of choking it a little (but not too much), and the adjustment of the needle valve. Watching him I would remember the things you could do with the old one-cylinder engine with the heavy flywheel, how you could have it eating out of your hand if you got really close to it spiritually.

11. We had a good week at the camp. The bass were biting well and the sun shone endlessly, day after day. We would be tired at night and lie down in the accumulated heat of the little bedrooms after the long hot day and the breeze would stir almost imperceptibly outside and the smell of the swamp drift in through the rusty screens. Sleep would come easily and in the morning the red squirrel would be on the roof, tapping out his gay routine. I kept remembering everything, lying in bed in the mornings — the small steamboat that had a long rounded stern like the tip of a Ubangi, and how quietly she ran on the moonlight sails, when the older boys played their mandolins and the girls sang and we ate doughnuts dipped in sugar, and how sweet the music was on the water in the shining night, and what it had felt like to think about girls then. After breakfast we would go up to the store and the things were in the same place — the minnows in a bottle, the plugs and spinners disarranged and pawed over by the youngsters from the boys' camp. Outside, the road was tarred and cars stood in front of the store. Inside, all was just as it had always been, except there was more Coca-Cola and not so much Moxie and root beer and birch beer and sarsaparilla. We would walk out with a bottle of pop apiece and sometimes the pop would backfire up our noses and hurt. We explored the streams, quietly, where the turtles slid off the sunny logs and dug their way into the soft bottoms ; and we lay on the town wharf and fed worms to the tame bass. Everywhere we went I had trouble making out which was I, the one walking at my side or the one walking in my pants.

12. One afternoon while we were there at that lake, a thunderstorm came up. It was

like the revival of an old melodrama that I had seen long ago with childish awe. The second-act climax of the drama of the electrical disturbance over a lake in America had not changed in any important respect. This was the big scene, still the big scene. The whole thing was so familiar, the first feelings of oppression and heat and a general air around camp of not wanting to go very far away. In mid-afternoon (it was all the same) a curious darkening of the sky, and the lull in everything that had made life tick ; and then the way the boats suddenly swung the other way at their moorings with the coming of a breeze out of the new quarter, and the premonitory rumble. Then the kettle drum, then the snare, then the bass drum and cymbals, then crackling light against the dark, and the gods grinning and licking their chops in the hills. Afterward the calm, the rain steadily rustling in the calm lake, the return of light and hope and spirits, and the campers running out in joy and relief to go swimming in the rain, their bright cries perpetuating the deathless joke about how they were getting simply drenched, and the children screaming with delight at the new sensation of bathing in the rain, and the joke about getting drenched linking the generations in a strong indestructible chain. And the comedian who waded in carrying an umbrella.

13. When the others went swimming my son said he was going in too. He pulled his dripping trunks from the line where they had hung all through the shower, and wrung them out. Languidly, and with no thought of going in, I watched him, his hard little body, skinny and bare, saw him wince slightly as he pulled up around his vitals the small, soggy, icy garment. As he buckled the swollen belt suddenly my groin felt the chill of death.

Discussion Questions :

1. When did the author go to the lake in Maine for the first time ? Did his father only take him there ? Was the vacation a perfect success ?
2. Had he spent his vacations at the seaside before he returned to the lake ? Did he remember what he had experienced in the company of his father on their trips to the lake ?
3. What was the lake like when he visited the place as a child ? What sensation did he often have after he returned to the lake ? Why did he say he had a dual life ?
4. Was everything there different or nearly the same as before ? What made the author say that those times and those summers had been infinitely precious and worth saving ?
5. What happened one afternoon ? What did the campers do ? What did his son do that made his groin feel the “chill of death” ?
6. What made the author return to the lake, apart from the weather (which might be

counted as one of the reasons) ?

7. Did White cherish a nostalgic longing for the past in writing the essay ? What accounts for such a tone ?
8. Discuss the sentence variety in this essay. Why does White use the sentence fragment “Peace and goodness and jollity. ” at the beginning of a paragraph ? Are there any other sentence fragments in the essay ?
9. The word “same” is repeated for fourteen times apart from similar expressions such as “the kind of summer I had known”, “as it had always been”, “like the revival of an old melodrama”, “had not changed”, “still”, “familiar” and so on. What effects does the writer achieve by the repetition of key words and structures ? What other rhetorical devices are employed in the essay ?
10. Structurally speaking, the essay can be divided into Introduction, Body and Conclusion as is the usual case. The first paragraph serves as the introduction, providing the background for the author’s revisit to the lake. That is, a wish for the placidity of a lake in the woods hauls him back to the lake he used to visit together with his family when he was a boy. In paragraphs 12 and 13, what occurs during the familiar afternoon thunderstorm drives the author to the brutal realization that the strong generation chain of human beings is to be perpetuated though there must be an end for any individual. Therefore, the revisit to the lake becomes both a “review” of his childhood through his own little son and a “preview” of his own death by the haunting memory of his vanished father.

From paragraph 2 to paragraph 11, the writer gives a detailed account of his revisit to the lake with his little son. Try to summarize the main points in this part of the essay by filling in the following blanks.

- (1) (paras 2 — 3) Sweet memories of the lake on the journey back to the lake.
 - ① (para 2) _____.
 - ② (para 3) _____.
- (2) (paras 4—8) Being repeatedly haunted with the creepy sensation of a dual existence sharpened continuously by the sameness between the present and the past both in the natural world and in human behavior.
 - ① (para 4) _____.
 - ② (paras 5—8) _____.
- (3) (paras 9—11) _____
 - ① (para 9) _____.
 - ② (para 10) _____.
 - ③ (para 11) _____.

Text B : The Lost Childhood

By Graham Greene

Graham Greene (1904—1991) was an English novelist, short-story writer, playwright and journalist, whose novels treat moral issues in the context of political settings. Greene is one of the most widely read novelist of the 20th-century, a superb storyteller. Adventure and suspense are constant elements in his novels and many of his books have been made into successful films. Greene was a candidate for the Nobel Prize for Literature several times, but he never received the award. Greene traveled a lot all over the world and visited China in 1957. The following essay is taken from his essay collection *The Lost Childhood*, which was published in 1959.

“The main characters in a novel must necessarily have some kinship to the author, they come out of his body as a child comes from the womb, then the umbilical cord is cut, and they grow into independence. The more the author knows of his own character the more he can distance himself from his invented characters and the more room they have to grow in.” (Graham Greene, *Ways of Escape*, 1980)

1. Perhaps it is only in childhood that books have any deep influence on our lives. In later life we admire, we are entertained, we may modify some views we already hold, but we are more likely to find in books merely a confirmation of what is in our minds already : as in a love affair it is our own features that we see reflected flatteringly back.

2. But in childhood all books are books of divination, telling us about the future, and like the fortune teller who sees a long journey in the cards or death by water they influence the future. I suppose that is why books excited us so much. What do we ever get nowadays from reading to equal the excitement and the revelation in those first fourteen years ? Of course I should be interested to hear that a new novel by Mr. E. M. Forster was going to appear this spring, but I could never compare that mild expectation of civilized pleasure with the missed heartbeat, the appalled glee I felt when I found on a library shelf a novel by Rider Haggard, Percy Westerman, Captain Brereton or Stanley Weyman which I had not read before. No, it is in those early years that I would look for the crisis, the moment

when life took a new slant in its journey towards death.

3. I remember distinctly the suddenness with which a key turned in a lock and I found I could read — not just the sentences in a reading book with the syllables coupled like railway carriages, but a real book. It was paper-covered with the picture of a boy, bound and gagged, dangling at the end of a rope inside a well with the water rising above the waist — an adventure of Dixon Brett, detective. All a long summer holiday I kept my secret, as I believed : I did not want anybody to know that I could read. I suppose I half consciously realized even then that this was the dangerous moment. I was safe so long as I could not read — the wheels had not begun to turn, but now the future stood around on bookshelves everywhere waiting for the child to choose — the life of a chartered accountant perhaps, a colonial civil servant, a planter in China, a steady job in a bank, happiness and misery, eventually one particular form of death, for surely we choose our death much as we choose our job. It grows out of our acts and our evasions, out of our fears and out of our moments of courage. I suppose my mother must have discovered my secret, for on the journey home I was presented for the train with another real book, a copy of Ballantyne's *Coral Island* with only a single picture to look at, a coloured frontispiece. But I would admit nothing. All the long journey I stared at the one picture and never opened the book.

4. But there on the shelves at home (so many shelves for we were a large family) the books waited — one book in particular, but before I reach that one down let me take a few others at random from the shelf. Each was a crystal in which the child dreamed that he saw life moving. Here in a cover stamped dramatically in several colours was Captain Gilson's *The Pirate Aeroplane*. I must have read that book six times at least — the story of a lost civilization in the Sahara and of a villainous Yankee pirate with an aeroplane like a box kite and bombs the size of tennis balls who held the golden city to ransom. It was saved by the hero, a young subaltern who crept up to the pirate camp to put the aeroplane out of action. He was captured and watched his enemies dig his grave. He was to be shot at dawn, and to pass the time and keep his mind from uncomfortable thoughts the amiable Yankee pirate played cards with him — the mild nursery game of Kuhn Kan. The memory of that nocturnal game on the edge of life haunted me for years, until I set it to rest at last in one of my own novels with a game of poker played in remotely similar circumstances.

5. And here is *Sophy of Kravonia* by Anthony Hope — the story of a kitchen-maid who became a queen. One of the first films I ever saw, about 1911, was made from that book, and I can hear still the rumble of the Queen's guns crossing the high Kravonian pass beaten hollowly out of a single piano. Then there was Stanley Weyman's *The Story of*