

目标英语阅读阶梯系列

# 英语扩充词汇阶梯阅读

——精通 4 000 词汇

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西安交通大学出版社

## 内 容 提 要

本书为“目标英语阅读阶梯系列”第四册,编写词汇量基于4 000词左右。全书共收集文章60篇,所选短文均出自国外最新出版各类读物,选材广泛,有人物传记、社会文化、科普知识和热门话题;体裁多样,有议论文、说明文和记叙文。本书题材新颖,容知识性、趣味性和可读性于一体,注重学生阅读能力的培养和扩大词汇量。每篇文章后均有难句分析、难点注释和关于重点词汇、词组的练习。每5篇后编有一个总结练习,以起到复习、检查之目的。

本书既可作为中级英语水平读者的阅读辅助教材,也可作为其它各类读者的英语课外读物。

(陕)新登字007号

目标英语阅读阶梯系列  
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——精通4 000词汇

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西安交通大学出版社出版发行  
(西安市咸宁西路28号 邮政编码710049)

西安交通大学印刷厂印装  
各地新华书店经销

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开本:787×1092 1/16 印张:13.5 字数:310千字

1996年5月第1版 1996年5月第1次印刷

印数:1—6 000

ISBN7-5605-0816-2/H·87 定价9.80元

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# 1 The Advantage of Disadvantage

## 弊中之利

Our society, accustomed to affluence, looks upon financial comfort as the norm and views poverty as an unacceptable option. A child of monied parents is said to be “advantaged.” Conversely, a child of poor parents is labeled “deprived.” Understandably, a great amount of well-meaning pity and concern is directed at the poor souls who “follow the crops”—the migrant workers. The children of migrant workers are uneducated, underprivileged, and disadvantaged.

My parents followed the crops, living in the car or in a tent unless housing was provided by the grower. It was unthinkable to them that I should be “farmed out (寄养)” with more stable friends or relatives and so, from infancy through my seventh year, I was a part of the migrant tide.

Those seven years are a kaleidoscope (万花筒) of memories. I haven't erased all of the bad. I remember my mother wrapping adhesive tape (胶带) around each of her fingers after the sharp stems of thousands of cherries had cut her flesh almost to the bone. I remember evenings when my father, stiff from an old back injury, could not get off his ladder without help.<sup>1</sup> I remember a Christmas when there were no presents, just a tiny, forlorn tree. But mostly, I remember the good times.

Although we lived a life devoid of material “extras,” I don't remember ever being hungry. I do remember endless pots of ham hocks and beans and thick potato soup with onions and homemade bread. I remember nights in dingy kitchens in fruit camps watching Mother can endless mason jars full of peaches. In the winters, even in the really bad times, we had juicy, golden peaches, their taste no less sweet for the cut-out sections (被切掉部分) that made them unfit for fancy pack sales.

Rather than being insulated from the differences in people by invisible boundaries, I was in the midst of a child's United Nations. When Maria

Lopez fed her family tacos , she fed me as well. I saw her working in the fields for several seasons and still think of her when I hear about “ shiftless Mexicans. ” I loved my Uncle Pete. Pete rode with us sometimes from orchard to orchard. He was a big man , broad and tall , who used to swing me up above his head and call me his “ baby girl child. ”<sup>2</sup> He was the first man up the ladder in the morning and the last one out of the row in the evening. Pete was Black.

Seven years of driving up and down the West Coast , following the cycle of apples to pears , peaches to apricots , winter apples to cherries , made me feel that the whole area was mine. My childhood territory , rather than being six blocks square , encompassed six states. My neighborhood parks were Yellowstone and Sequoia<sup>3</sup> and the Grand Canyon.

Yellowstone was as familiar to me as a backyard. I felt the sulphur spray of geysers( 间歇喷泉 ) and knew Old Faithful<sup>4</sup> when he still performed on schedule. I laughed at playful grizzly bears and never thought to fear them. I played in meadows strewn with wildflowers , lovelier than any planned suburban garden.

At Sequoia , I marveled at the oldest living things in the world. I ran on the stumps of giant redwoods that had once served as dance floors for lumber camp residents. I galloped along shaded trails and pretended that I was a forest-dwelling sprite.

The Grand Canyon was awesome in its size and frightening in its depth. I was , however , most impressed with the sturdy donkeys and horses used to ferry visitors down the steep trails.

I didn 't know why we spent so much time in the parks. What concern was it of mine that annual camping fees were only ten dollars ?

Away from the parks and their wonders , life was still full of riches. I played in the ocean , falling into waves and tasting their salt. I tormented hermit crabs( 寄居蟹 ) and was amazed at the pelicans( 鹈鹕 ). I still remember the rhyme—my introduction to “ poetry ”—“ A wonderful bird is a pelican ; his beak can hold more than his belly can. ”

Bridges had a special sound , a melody of tires on steel. We would cross the Golden Gate at night , and I was always convinced that we were entering a fairyland. Even the very name Golden Gate invoked a magical picture of an enchanted land.

One of my favorite places was the San Diego Zoo. We spent countless days wandering its pathways , leisurely , with no pressure to see everything in one day. There was time to linger by the bears ; time to wait for the lion to roar ; always “ one more minute ” to feed a demanding duck.

Life was for learning too—no fruit picking for my parents' child. I learned to read from road signs, with an assist from Burma Shave. Highway markers and speed limit signs taught me my numbers. My parents encouraged my learning and bought an endless stream of workbooks.

I learned about pride and honor when we reached a state of desperation. A poor harvest had left us stranded in a strange town. My father, hat in hand and shoulders slumped, borrowed ten dollars from the Red Cross. They made it plain that it was considered a handout. I remember the jar that my mother saved dimes and quarters and dollars in until there was ten dollars to pay back the debt. I wish I could have seen the prune-faced do-gooder<sup>5</sup> when she opened the envelope.

That part of my life ended when I started second grade. I lived in a real apartment and had a real bed, instead of the back seat of our old Studebaker. I had permanent friends instead of orchard encounters. I had stability, security, a place. For the first time in my young life, I felt deprived. The first seven years were the best. I was not underprivileged nor uneducated nor disadvantaged. I was rich, in the truest sense.

## Notes

1. I remember evenings when my father, stiff from an old back injury, could not get off his ladder without help. 我记着多少个晚上,父亲背部由于受过伤而僵硬,我们不帮他,他都下不了梯子。
2. He was a big man, broad and tall, who used to swing me up above his head and call me his "baby girl child." 他高大、魁梧,曾把我荡得比他头还高,又称我是他的“小女孩”。
3. Sequoia 美国加州中部一国家公园(以高大杉树闻名)
4. Old Faithful 美国黄石公园中的一股间歇喷泉,每隔 65 分钟喷一次,高度达 170 英尺。
5. the prune-faced do-gooder 这位紫红色脸膛做好事的人

## Exercises

1. There are five incomplete sentences in this part. For each sentence there are four choices marked A), B), C) and D). Choose the one answer that best completes the sentence.
  - 1) Mary took \_\_\_\_\_ of the fine weather to do a day's work in his garden.  
A) charge                      B) chance                      C) advantage                      D) interest
  - 2) These are the facts that are familiar \_\_\_\_\_ every schoolboy.  
A) with                      B) to                      C) for                      D) of

3) I am not really familiar \_\_\_\_\_ the taxation laws here.

- A) with                      B) to                      C) for                      D) of

4) Is this your \_\_\_\_\_ address , or are you only staying there for a short time ?

- A) temporary              B) permanent              C) temporal              D) personal

5) On television we \_\_\_\_\_ the divers work in the sea.

- A) saw                      B) noticed                      C) watched                      D) regarded

2. Choose the correct word from the following list to complete the sentences.

imagine , imaginative , imagination , imaginable , imaginary , image

1) She is the very \_\_\_\_\_ of her mother.

2) We cannot \_\_\_\_\_ life without any contradictions.

3) My little daughter has an \_\_\_\_\_ friend.

4) He is an \_\_\_\_\_ writer.

5) I 'll leave the details to your \_\_\_\_\_ .

6) We tried every \_\_\_\_\_ mean , but we couldn 't wake her up.

## 2 Increased Use of Renewable Energy 充分利用再生能源

Depletion of reserves of fossil fuels and concerns about greenhouse gases guarantee an ultimate major role for renewable energy in the United States. The rate of transition to a different energy economy will be dependent on many factors such as competitive costs, international crises, and public opinion. Crises come and go. Public opinion heats and cools. Federal appropriations (拨款) for solar energy rocketed<sup>1</sup> in about 1980, then fizzled<sup>2</sup>. The major lasting shifts in modes of energy production will occur as renewable energy becomes cost-competitive in application after application.

During the past 10 years costs of some of the devices for exploiting renewable energy have dropped substantially. Reliability has improved. This progress was made abundantly evident at a biennial meeting of the International Solar Energy Society. The meeting, held in Denver, Colorado, 19 to 23 August, was attended by more than 1400 participants including representatives from about 50 countries.

Trends in applications of photovoltaics (PV)<sup>3</sup> and wind energy are particularly interesting. Both are already cost competitive in some situations. Their technology continues to be improved at an impressive rate, and further advances seem ensured.

The cost of photovoltaic electricity is still considerably greater than that generated in coal-fired stations. However, in many circumstances PV is the practical energy source. It is of great convenience in consumer products including calculators, watches, and trickle chargers. It is increasingly being used around the world in remote locations. The PV devices are manufactured and sold at a profit without subsidy. Increasingly, major public utilities are using PV in their operations. Engineers employed by Pacific Gas and Electric of California have installed PV energy sources at 700 locations. Some of these have been on towers of high voltage transmission lines. Costs

of a step-down transformer<sup>4</sup> exceed those of a PV installation.

Kurt Yeager of the Electric Power Research Institute said that at least two dozen U.S. utilities are now using PV in their operations. He further stated that on the basis of utility surveys the PV applications by electrical utilities could amount to 40,000 installations over the next 5 years. This statement is a great testimonial (鉴定书) to the perceived reliability of PV. Electric utilities are extremely cautious about adopting unproven equipment.<sup>5</sup> Good experience with PV now and soon would make them receptive to enlarged applications later when the cost of PV electricity drops further as it likely will. It is now 25 to 30 cents per kilowatt hour (kWh). Yeager has said that once the cost falls to 10 to 20 cents/kWh a variety of grid-connected applications will become cost effective.

The day when PV can become a major quantitative contributor to the power grid is distant. Prospects for a large role for wind power are more immediate. Reliability of windmills has been substantially improved. Costs of generating power have been reduced. In the early 1980s there was excessive optimism for wind power. Performance of the early installations proved disappointing. Lifetimes of the equipment were limited. Costs of maintenance were excessive. But during the 1980s costs of wind energy decreased by a factor of 3 to 4. Now in areas where the annual average wind velocity is 13 miles per hour the cost of generating electricity is 7 to 9 cents/kWh. In locations where the velocity averages 16 mph the cost is 6 cents/kWh. The total wind-generating capacity in the United States exceeds 1600 megawatts (兆瓦). Today's turbines, which average about 100-kW capacity, can be installed for \$1000/kW. New generating units are being installed because the cost of their electric output is competitive (without subsidy) with other local generators. Today almost all the wind power is being generated in California. However, a new variable-speed turbine is being developed that will increase energy capture, lower costs to 5 cents/kWh, and introduce new flexibility in siting.<sup>6</sup> Some regions of the Great Plains could become major power producers. About 90% of U.S. wind power potential lies in 12 north central and western states.

The climate for sustained growth of renewable energy seems excellent. World-wide interest and activity are increasing. In the United States rapid improvements in cost-cutting technologies are being made. Funding for R&D is improving. Federal appropriations for renewable energy that hit a low in fiscal (财政的) 1990 are now increasing. The Electric Power Research Institute is fostering renewable energy. Some companies active in renewables are showing a profit.

## Notes

1. rocket 如火箭般迅速上升
2. fizzle 终于失败
3. photovoltaics 光电
4. a step-down transformer 降压变压器
5. Electric utilities are extremely cautious about adopting unproven equipment 电力公司在采用未经检验的设备时是非常谨慎的。
6. However, a new variable-speed turbine is being developed that will increase energy capture, lower costs to 5 cents/kWh, and introduce new flexibility in siting. 然而 现在正在研制一种新的变速透平机。这种透平机可以增加动力,把成本降低到每千瓦小时 5 分钱,还可以使其安装灵活。

## Exercises

1. Fill in the blank with word or phrase from the list :  
on the basis of, major, guarantee, substantially, considerably
  - 1) The manufacturers \_\_\_\_\_ the watch for three years.
  - 2) Shipbuilding used to be one of our \_\_\_\_\_ industries.
  - 3) Most colleges in the U. S. admit students \_\_\_\_\_ their high-school records.
  - 4) It is \_\_\_\_\_ colder today than it was yesterday.
  - 5) There are one or two minor differences, but they are \_\_\_\_\_ the same.
2. Find words in the passage with meanings similar to these :
  - 1) far away in space or time
  - 2) go up fast like a rocket
  - 3) make safe
  - 4) that can or may come into existence or action
  - 5) of public revenue

### 3 The Sense That Shapes Our Future 亲昵塑造未来

When he puts his three-year-old daughter to bed at night, psychologist Michael Meaney gives her an extra hug. His animal research suggests that caresses in early youth may lead in adulthood to healthier brain cells, clearer memories and fewer problems from aging.

Premature babies fill rows of incubators(早产婴儿保育箱) in a city hospital. All receive the same food, but those who are massaged daily show greater weight gain and mental development than preemies<sup>1</sup> who aren't.

Shoppers in a supermarket are asked to sample a new brand of pizza. Those who are touched for a fraction of a second during the sales pitch are more likely to buy the new product.

Touch is the first sense we develop, and we acquire it before birth. We could not live without it. Imagine being unable to sense the danger of scalding water or to feel our way down a dark stairway. We tend to think of sight as our most important sense, yet we close our eyes in sleep for a third of each day. Touch never blinks, never turns off its awareness of the world around us.

Scientists have now discovered that touch also shapes our minds and health. Dr. Saul Schanberg, professor of pharmacology(药理学) and biological psychiatry(精神病学) at Duke University in Durham, North Carolina, studied baby rats. He found that when separated from their mother for as little as 45 minutes they underwent major internal changes. Their levels of growth hormone(荷尔蒙) and of a key enzyme<sup>2</sup> dropped sharply, but came back to normal soon after their mother returned to the nest. The lack of touch from the mother's licking triggered these biochemical changes, but firmly stroking the newborns with a moist paintbrush restored them to normal.

In collaboration with Schanberg, researchers at the University of Mia-

mi Medical School 's Touch Research Institute , directed by psychologist Tiffany Field , began giving premature babies 45 minutes of massage each day. Common wisdom had held that these infants should be kept in an isolated , womblike environment , that touch would stress them and impair their chances for survival. Nevertheless , Field and her co-workers gave 20 stabilized preemies three 15-minute periods of slow , firm massage strokes and limb movements.

Within ten days the massaged babies showed 47-percent greater weight gain than their wardmates , as well as improved sleep , alertness and activity. Up to eight months later they displayed greater mental and physical skills. Most dramatically , the massaged preemies were able to leave the costly critical-care unit an average of six days earlier than preemies not massaged. Field explains that touch stimulates certain hormones that emerge naturally in full-term babies<sup>3</sup> , including those that facilitate food absorption.

According to Dr. Ronald Barr of Montreal 's Children 's Hospital , some infants are held only about two to three hours each day by their mothers , compared with some African tribal cultures in which babies are handled or carried by their mothers up to 90 percent of the time. Adds nursing professor Kathryn Barnard , “ About 80 percent of a baby 's communication is done through body movement , and skin-to-skin contact makes it easier for a mother to read that communication. ” The more a mother holds her baby , the more aware she is of the baby 's needs.

Touching serves purposes beyond giving comfort and security. Scientists have discovered that when babies put a rattle or toy in their mouths they are doing more than just trying to taste. They are using their lips and tongue , among the most sensitive regions of touch , to confirm and refine what their eyes see. Confirming the distance , shape and hardness of their surroundings with touch helps them to develop other senses such as sight<sup>4</sup>.

Even as adults we rarely accept the notion that “ seeing is believing. ” Instead we speak of preferring things that we can “ get a grip on , ” that are “ tangible. ” The world we perceive through touch differs from what our eyes see. Put on a blindfold and have a friend touch cookie cutters of differ-

ent shapes against your skin ; the average person will recognize the shape less than half the time. But if you are allowed to touch each cookie cutter with your finger , recognition jumps to 95-percent accuracy.

More touching may take place in preschool or kindergarten than during any other period. Touching is lowest in the early to mid teens , but , late in high school or early in college , most people begin touching members of the opposite sex , a pattern that grows more intense until marriage. “ When we ’ ve studied couples in public places , ” says University of Missouri psychology professor Frank Willis , Jr. , “ we observed that before marriage the man initiates touching with the woman. After marriage , it ’ s almost always the woman who touches the man first. ”

Generally , successful and self-confident people feel freer to touch others than shy , unsure ones. In daily life women use and accept touching far more than men do , and are more sensitive to touch everywhere from their fingertips to their toes. Men , who tend to perceive uninvited touch as a sign of dominance and of their own vulnerability , more often react to touch with tension.

Some touch messages may be easily misinterpreted. A brief touch on the shoulder , elbow or hand is usually friendly. But when someone of the opposite sex touches you , does it convey friendliness , a come-on or harassment( 骚扰 )? A lingering touch on the hand , face or neck is likely something more. A pat on the head can be patronizing , conveying “ I am the adult , you the child. ”

Even when unnoticed , touch exerts a powerful psychological impact. Willis found that when shoppers were solicited( 恳求 ) to try a sample of pizza or when passers-by were asked to sign a petition , many more complied when given a slight touch lasting a fraction of a second. Other researchers have found that a momentary touch gains bigger tips for waitresses. Says Willis , “ New research into our nonverbal behavior reflects what successful salespeople have long known : a light , inconspicuous touch can often persuade customers that you are familiar and a friend. ”

In hospitalized patients , the caring touch of nurses and loved ones can relieve anxiety and tension headaches. Touch can sometimes reduce rapid heartbeat and heart arrhythmia( 心律不齐 ). “ Human contact makes people feel better , more comfortable and secure , ” says registered nurse Rita King. “ More than that , it has a placebo effect. When patients feel they ’ re in good caring hands , they heal faster. ”

## Notes

1. preemie 早产婴儿(尤指重量在 5.5 磅以下者)
2. enzyme 酶
3. full-term babies 足月生的婴儿
4. Confirming the distance , shape and hardness of their surroundings with touch helps them to develop other senses such as sight. 此句动名词短语作主语。译为 :用触觉来确定周围东西的距离、形状和硬度可以帮助孩子发展诸如视觉等官能。

## Exercises

1. Make sentences with the following words or phrases :  
lead to , mental , tend to , physical , turn off , serve , differ from , stimulate
2. There are 5 incomplete sentences in this part. For each sentence there are four choices marked A ) , B ) , C ) and D ) . Choose the one answer that best completes the sentence.
  - 1 ) He said that the government was acutely aware \_\_\_\_\_ the problem.  
A ) with                      B ) of                      C ) at                      D ) on
  - 2 ) He 's very sensitive \_\_\_\_\_ his pupils ' need for encouragement and knows when to praise them.  
A ) to                      B ) at                      C ) on                      D ) for
  - 3 ) We are \_\_\_\_\_ that next year 's profits will be much higher.  
A ) confindent              B ) confidant              C ) confident              D ) confedent
  - 4 ) The computer has made a great impact \_\_\_\_\_ modern life.  
A ) on                      B ) with                      C ) in                      D ) at
  - 5 ) There was \_\_\_\_\_ competition between the rival companies to get the contract.  
A ) intend                      B ) intense                      C ) intensive                      D ) intentional