

# STEP準 1 級 英文讀解演習

People may decide to study foreign languages for various reasons. They may do so for the immediate purpose of satisfying the requirements of some public examination or of getting greater fun and enjoyment out of a holiday abroad. Men of business may have to deal directly or indirectly with foreign correspondence and research workers may realize the importance of being able to read the latest accounts of advances made in their subject as soon as they are published in foreign journals, without waiting for a translator, who may or may not be competent to present a precise rendering with one hundred per cent accuracy. People may be keenly interested in the activities of a foreign nation for political reasons and they may need to acquire that close knowledge of current affairs which travel abroad and the reading of foreign newspapers and journals alone can supply. Students of literature must surely be able to read the masters at first hand. Learning a new language implies approaching a new world and it inevitably leads to a widening of intellectual experience.

Learning a new language well enough to be able to understand it when heard, to speak it, read it, and write it, is such an arduous discipline that we certainly need some strong urge to drive us on. The four distinct and separable activities just mentioned — listening, speaking, reading, and writing — two receptive and two expressive call for constant, preferably daily, exercise. These activities are concerned in varying degrees with four aspects of language study — pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, and idiom. It is profitable to keep these four activities and four aspects clearly in mind rather than to dwell unduly on the relative values of the spoken and written forms of language, both of which, in broad and general terms, may be said to be equally important in the modern world.

Learning a new language calls for no great originality of mind or critical faculty, but it does demand an eager intellectual interest and a constant and lively curiosity in the endless ways by which human ideas may be expressed. It demands quick observation first of all, reasonable ability to mimic and imitate, good powers of association and generalization, and a retentive memory.

