

# АНГЛИЙСКИЙ ЯЗЫК

## Стратегии понимания текста

*Допущено  
Министерством образования Республики Беларусь  
в качестве учебного пособия  
для студентов учреждений высшего образования  
по специальности “Современные иностранные языки”*

Под общей редакцией проф. Е.Б. Карневской

**В 2 частях**

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МИНСК  
“ВЫШЭЙШАЯ ШКОЛА”

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## INTRODUCTION

This book is intended for Upper-Intermediate University and College students majoring in English. It is aimed at developing the students' reading skills and improving their ability to understand written English texts of different stylistic varieties and genres.

Reading in this book is viewed as a self-contained course and as such has a logic of its own both in the overall structure and composition of each individual unit. At the same time Reading Comprehension is an integral component of the general course of Speech Practice, and this factor predetermines the lexical-semantic contents of the book and the choice of reading materials. These particularly relate to the following broad domains, or topics: **People and Families; Houses and Flats; Eating and Cooking; Shops and Shopping; College Life; Weather and Holidaymaking; Ethical Teaching of Christianity.**

According to the number of topics covered, the book contains 7 sections consisting of 2–4 units each. The units are further subdivided into 2 kinds of lessons: A and B. Lesson A is aimed at developing skills of text analysis covering both the form and the contents of the text. Special emphasis is laid on specific text features such as the structure and composition of the text, its cohesion, expressiveness and modal-stylistic features. In the focus of attention are comprehension skills such as synthesizing, summing up and comparing information, extracting main ideas, identifying topic (key) sentences, etc.

Lesson A as an in-class activity is clearly based on an out-of-class preparation stage and is in this sense **prepared reading**. Lesson B, on the other hand, does not assume out-of-class preparation. It is intended for in-class teacher-guided work and is focused primarily on testing the skills of 'quick' reading, skimming for the gist and scanning for specific details.

Each lesson within type A has an identical structure and includes three main stages: **Reading and Comprehension Tasks, Text Features and Language Focus and Follow-Up Activities**. Each stage provides a variety of different exercises and activities which will, hopefully, be interesting and stimulating for students.

Special attention in this book is paid to vocabulary development and reinforcement. Apart from pre-reading vocabulary lists intended as an aid for comprehension, there are vocabulary tasks in **Language Focus** too. These include multiple choice and matching exercises, word-meaning definitions and word-building practice, as well as Russian-English translation exercises, aimed at implementing new vocabulary in speech.

The purpose of the **Follow-Up** stage is to encourage students to use the acquired linguistic skills and knowledge of the subject in communicative activities.

# SECTION I

## PEOPLE AND FAMILIES

A well-written life is almost as rare as a well-spent one.

*Thomas Carlyle (1795–1881)*

### UNIT 1. Biographies and Autobiographies

#### PART I

#### LESSON A. INTENSIVE READING

##### Text 1

#### I. Pre-reading, Reading and Comprehension Tasks

- 1. The following words are essential for understanding the text and discussing its contents. Learn their meaning and pronunciation.**

accept [ək'sept] (v) принимать  
afford [ə'fɔ:d] (v) позволять себе  
bother ['bɒðə] (n) хлопоты, заботы  
care (for) [keə] (v) заботиться  
charity ['tʃærɪti] (n) благотворительность  
council ['kaʊnsəl] (n) совет  
distasteful [dɪs'teɪstfəl] (a) неприятный  
notice ['nəʊtɪs] (n) объявление  
particular [pə'tɪkjələ] (a) особенный, исключительный  
plain [pleɪn] (a) черно-белый  
recollection [,rekə'leɪʃn] (n) воспоминание  
treasure ['treɪzə] (n) сокровище  
odd-job ['ɒd,dʒɒb] man разнорабочий

- 2. The vocabulary notes below will help you understand some details of the text.**

basin ['beɪsən] a bowl for liquids or food  
char [tʃɑ:] to work as a cleaner in a house, office  
comic ['kɒmɪk] a magazine for children containing comic strips



dripping [ˈdrɪpɪŋ] the fat that has come from meat during cooking  
plaster [ˈplɑːstə] to put a substance on a wall or ceiling and give it  
a smooth surface

### 3. Read the text carefully and do the tasks that follow.

## *My Life*

*by Margaret Powell*

Margaret Powell (1907–1984) – the author of such books as *Below Stairs*, *Climbing the Stairs*, *The Treasure Upstairs*, *Servant's Hall*, *The Butler's Revenge*, *My Mother and U*, *The Housekeeper* and others.

I was born fifty-eight years ago in Hove, the second child of a family of seven. My earliest recollection is that other children seemed to be better off than we were. But our parents cared so much for us. One particular thing that I always remember was that every Sunday morning my father used to bring us a comic for a half-penny plain and a penny coloured. Sometimes now when I look back at it, I wonder how he managed to do it when he was out of work and there was no money at all coming in.

My father was a painter and decorator. Sort of general odd-job man. He could do almost anything: repair roofs, or do a bit of plastering; but painting and paper-hanging were his main work. Yet in the neighbourhood where we lived, there was hardly any work in the winter. People didn't want their houses done up then; they couldn't be painted outside and they didn't want the bother of having it done up inside. So winters were the hardest times.

My mother used to go out charring from about eight in the morning to six in the evening for two shillings a day. Sometimes she used to bring home little treasures: a basin of dripping, half a loaf of bread, a little bit of butter or a bowl of soup. She used to hate accepting anything. She hated charity. But we were so glad of them that, when she came home and we saw that she was carrying something, we used to make a dive to see what she'd got.

It seems funny today, I suppose, that there was this hatred of charity, but when my parents brought us up there was no unemployment money. Anything you got was charity.

I remember my mother, when we only had one pair of shoes and they all needed mending, she went down to the council to try and get more for us. She had to answer every question



under the sun and she was made to feel that there was something distasteful about her because she hadn't got enough money to live on.

It was very different getting somewhere to live in those days. You just walked through the streets, and there were notices up, "Rooms to let".

When we were extra hard up, we only had one room or two rooms in somebody else's house. But when Dad was working, we would go around looking for half a house. We never had a house to ourselves. Not many people could afford a house in those days, not to themselves. As for buying a house, why, such things were never even dreamed of!

*(From "Below Stairs")*

#### **4. Check your understanding of the gist by answering these questions about the text.**

1. What kind of text is it: a newspaper article about the author or an autobiography supplied to a job application (CV)? 2. When was the text written? 3. What were the author's parents' jobs? 4. What are the author's earliest recollections of her family? 5. Did the family get any unemployment money? 6. What kind of houses did the family use to live in?

## **II. Text Features and Language Focus**

### ***A. Text Organisation. Paragraphs***

*A paragraph is a section of a piece of writing. An essential feature of a paragraph is **unity**. This means that the collection of sentences in any paragraph should be related to each other in some way. There must be a **common subject-matter** holding the paragraphs together.*

*According to the way they are marked in a written text paragraphs can be **indented** or **blocked**.*

*In an **indented paragraph** there is a space on the first line of each paragraph except the one beginning the text. Within a paragraph all the sentences follow on from each other without any spaces left.*

*e.g. It seems funny today, I suppose, that there was this hatred of charity, but when my parents brought us up there was no unemployment money. Anything you got was charity.*

I remember my mother, when we only had one pair of shoes and they all needed mending, she went down to the council to try and get more for us. She had to answer every question under the sun and she was made to feel that there was something distasteful about her because she hadn't got enough money to live on.

It was very different getting somewhere to live in those days. You just walked through the streets, and there were notices up, "Rooms to let".

*In a **blocked paragraph** there is no space either on the first line or at the beginning of the rest of the lines. However, one line is left between each paragraph to show where it begins and ends.*

e.g. Mention the word dolphin and most people think of the bottlenose dolphin. It is well known for its habit of cruising in the bow wave of ships.

It grows up to 3.6 m (12ft) in length and is named after its bottle-shaped snout. Its friendly, curious and intellectual nature has made it the star of films, television shows and dolphinariums. Its speed and new tricks continue to astonish trainers.

- **State how many paragraphs the text “My Life” is divided into.**
- **Say how the paragraphs are marked in the text.**
- **Identify the subject-matter of each paragraph.**

## ***B. Reinforcing Vocabulary***

### **1. Go over the text and find the words which correspond to the definitions below:**

- something you remember;
- a person doing many kinds of manual work;
- local government administration;
- with very little money;
- black and white;
- trouble or inconvenience caused by small matters;
- a very valuable thing;
- a group of people and their homes forming a small area in a town;
- unpleasant, disagreeable;
- to repair something that is torn;
- to do work on something damaged;
- to repair an old building.

### **2. Go over the text again and pick out the words and phrases denoting:**

- a) jobs about the house; b) quantities of food; c) attitudes and relations.

### **3. Check your understanding of the following expressions from the text choosing the right or the more suitable alternative. Account for your choice.**

*were better off*

a) were recovering

b) had more money

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