

L.A. Hill

# Introductory Steps to understanding

Oxford  
University  
Press



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# Elementary Steps to understanding

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# Advanced Steps to understanding

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## Introduction

In this series of practice books, Dr. Hill uses four levels, his introductory (750-headword), elementary (1,000-headword), intermediate (1,500-headword) and advanced (2,075-headword) levels. This book is at the 750-headword level.

Each story is about 150 words long, and some of the stories contain one or two words outside the grading. These are listed on the pages on which they appear, and can be looked up in a dictionary before work is begun. In the instructions for the exercises, the words 'place', 'sentence', 'true', and 'false' are also outside the grading. All the levels are very carefully graded, and this covers not only vocabulary, but also idioms and grammar.

These four books are intended chiefly to help students read English more easily and with more comprehension, but they can also be used:

(i) for practice in understanding spoken English (with the student listening to the teacher, or to the cassette);

(ii) for practice in writing English (by answering the questions in English; by writing as much of the story as the student can remember; and by doing the exercises); and

(iii) for improving the student's command of vocabulary, idioms and grammar (again by doing certain of the exercises).

If the student wishes to use the books *only* for practice in reading comprehension, he/she should read a story and then answer questions *in his/her mother-tongue*.

He/She can also try reading some (or all) of the questions *first*, and then reading the story to find the answers to the questions before answering them. To increase speed of reading, the student can time himself/herself with a watch or clock, and try to read as fast as possible, *provided that he/she can still understand*.

If the student wants to use this book for practice in understanding spoken English, he/she can use the cassette in the following ways:

(i) He/She can listen to the cassette one or more times (with his/her book open or closed, as he/she wishes) and then read the story aloud

himself/herself, at first in chorus with the voice on the cassette then alone. After his/her own reading alone, he/she can check his performance by listening to the cassette again.

(ii) He/She can listen to the cassette one or more times, with his/her book closed, and then write down as much of the story as he/she can remember, and/or answer the questions and do the exercises (all without looking at the story). If he/she writes as much of the story as he/she can remember, he/she can then look at the story in the book, or listen to it again on the cassette, to compare what he/she has written with the original.

Method (i) gives practice in speaking with a good pronunciation, including stress, rhythm and intonation.

Method (ii) gives practice in aural comprehension (listening and understanding).

Other books by Dr. L. A. Hill are:

*Stories for Reproduction, First series*

4 levels (introductory/elementary/intermediate/advanced)

*Stories for Reproduction, Second series*

4 levels (introductory/elementary/intermediate/advanced)

*Anecdotes in American English*

3 levels (elementary/intermediate/advanced)

*Word Power*

3 levels (Word Power 1500, 3000, 4500)



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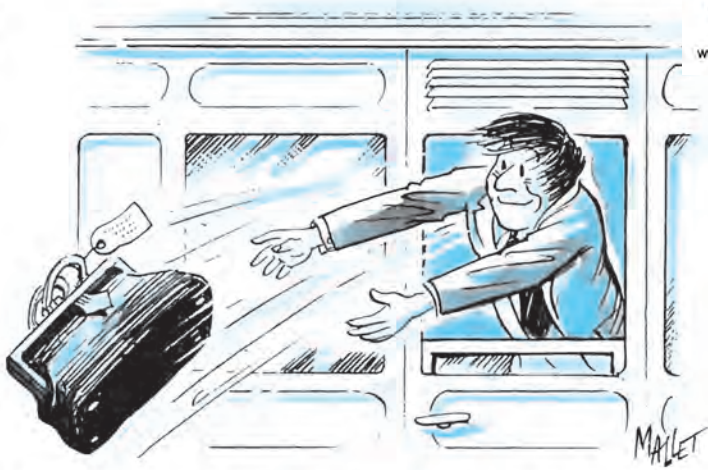
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# Introductory Steps to Understanding

Introductory Steps to Understanding

1



Mr Jones had a few days' **holiday**, so he said, 'I'm going to go to the **mountains** by **train**.' He **put on** his **best clothes**, took a small bag, went to the **station** and got into the train. He had a beautiful **hat**, and he often **put** his head out of the window **during** the trip and looked at the mountains. But the **wind** pulled his hat off.

Mr Jones **quickly** took his old bag and threw that out of the window too.

The other people in the **carriage laughed**. 'Is your bag going to bring your beautiful hat back?' they asked.

'No,' Mr Jones **answered**, 'but there's no name and no address in my hat, and there's a name and an address on the bag. Someone's going to find **both** of them near **each other**, and he's going to **send** me the bag *and* the hat.'

**A Which of these sentences are true (T) and which are false (F)? Write T or F in the boxes.**

1. Mr Jones had a day's holiday.
2. Mr Jones went to the mountains by train.
3. Mr Jones threw his hat out of the window.
4. There was a name and address on the bag.
5. The people in the carriage laughed at Mr Jones.
6. Someone sent Mr Jones the hat and the bag.

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**B Answer these questions.**

1. Where did Mr Jones go for his holiday?
2. How did he go there?
3. What did he often do during the trip?
4. What did the wind do then?
5. What did Mr Jones do?
6. What did the other people in the carriage do then?
7. What did they say?
8. And what did Mr Jones answer?

**C Put the right sentences under the right pictures.**


1. He got into the train.
2. He looked out of the window.
3. He put on his beautiful hat.
4. He threw his bag out of the window.
5. Mr Jones took his small bag.
6. Someone found the hat and the bag together.
7. The people laughed.
8. The wind pulled his hat off.



An old lady went out shopping last Tuesday. She came to a bank and saw a car near the door. A man got out of it and went into the bank. She looked into the car. The keys were in the lock.

The old lady took the keys and followed the man into the bank.

The man took a gun out of his pocket and said to the clerk, ‘Give me all the money!’

But the old lady did not see this. She went to the man, put the keys in his hand and said, ‘Young man, you’re stupid! Never leave your keys in your car: someone’s going to steal it!’

The man looked at the old woman for a few seconds. Then he looked at the clerk—and then he took his keys, ran out of the bank, got into his car and drove away quickly, without any money.



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# Elementary Steps to Understanding

Elementary Steps to Understanding



## 1



Dave worked in a **factory**, and he always made sandwiches in the morning, **took** them to work and **ate** them at **midday**.

Then he **married**, so he **thought**, 'Now my wife's going to make my sandwiches.'

On **the first** day, she made him some, and when he **got** home in the evening, she said to him, 'Were the sandwiches **all right**?'

'Oh, yes,' he answered, 'but you only gave me two **slices** of **bread**.'

The next day she gave him four slices, but he said again, 'Four slices aren't enough.'

**The third** day she gave him eight slices, but those were not enough for him either, so on **the fourth** day she took a **loaf** of bread, cut it in half and put a big **piece** of **meat** in it.

In the evening she said to him, 'Was your lunch nice?'

'Oh, yes,' he answered. 'But two slices of bread aren't **enough**.'

**A Which of these sentences are true (T) and which are false (F)? Write T or F in the boxes.**

- |   |                          |
|---|--------------------------|
| 1. Dave worked in an office.  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. Dave always ate sandwiches for lunch.                            | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. Dave liked sandwiches.   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. Four slices of bread were not enough for Dave.                   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. Dave's wife gave him only two slices of bread on the fourth day. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. Dave ate a lot of bread.   | <input type="checkbox"/> |

**B Answer these questions.**

- Who made Dave's sandwiches before he married?
- Who made them after he married?
- What did his wife say on the first evening?
- What did Dave answer?
- What did Dave tell his wife on the second evening?
- What did she do on the fourth day?
- What did she ask him in the evening?
- What did Dave answer?

**C Write this story, but put one of these words in each empty place.**

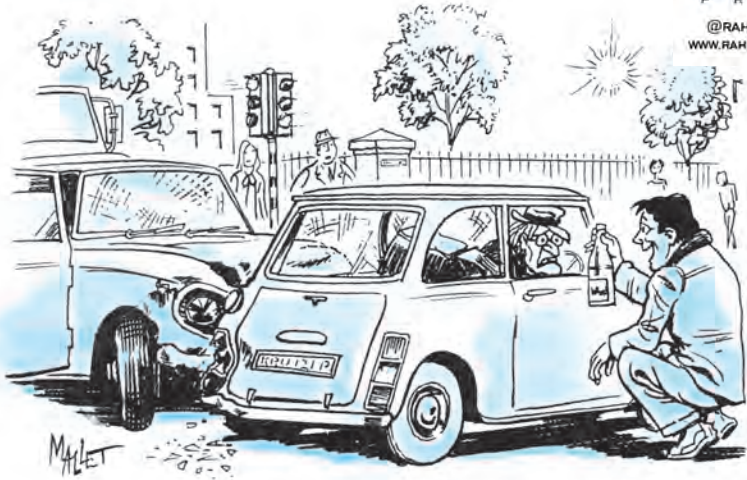
*bread butter fingers loaf meat sandwich slice slices*

'I want to make some sandwiches.'

'Well, go and buy a . . . of . . . . Cut in into . . . . Put some . . . on one side of each . . . . Then cut some . . . up, and put some of it between each two . . . of the . . . .'

'Do I put the sides with . . . on them inside or outside?'

'Don't be stupid! Inside, of course, or your . . . will be covered with . . . when you pick a . . . up!'



Harry did not **stop** his car at some **traffic-lights** when they were red, and he hit another car. Harry **jumped** out and went to it. There was an old man in the car. He was very **frightened** and said to Harry, 'What are you doing? You nearly **killed** me!'

'Yes,' Harry answered, 'I'm very sorry.' He took a **bottle** out of his car and said, 'Drink some of this. Then you'll feel better.' He **gave** the man some whisky, and the man drank it, but then he **shouted** again, 'You **nearly** killed me!'

Harry gave him the bottle again, and the old man drank a lot of the whisky. Then he **smiled** and said to Harry, 'Thank you. I **feel much better** now. But why aren't you drinking?'

'Oh, well,' Harry answered, 'I don't want any whisky now. I'm going to sit here and **wait** for the police.'

**A Which of these sentences are true (T) and which are false (F)? Write T or F in the boxes.**

1. Harry hit an old man.
2. Harry hit another car.
3. The old man was very frightened.
4. Harry gave the old man some water.
5. The old man drank a lot of whisky.
6. Harry did not drink any whisky.

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*Outside the 1 000 headwords:* traffic-lights, whisky



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# Intermediate Steps to Understanding

Intermediate Steps to Understanding

## 1



Mr and Mrs Taylor had one **child**. He was a boy, he was seven years old, and his name was Pat. Now Mrs Taylor was **expecting** another child.

Pat had seen **babies** in other people's houses and had not liked them very much, so he was not **delighted** about **the news** that there was soon going to be one in his house too.

One evening Mr and Mrs Taylor were making plans for the baby's **arrival**. 'This house won't be big enough for us all when the baby comes. I **suppose** we'll have to find a larger house and **move** to that,' said Mr Taylor **finally**.

Pat had been playing outside, but he came into the room **just** then and said, 'What are you talking about?'

'We were saying that we'll have to move to another house now, because the new baby's coming,' his mother answered.

'It's no use,' said Pat **hopelessly**. 'He'll follow us there.'

**A Which of these sentences are true (T) and which are false (F)? Write T or F in the boxes.**

1. Mr and Mrs Taylor had a son.
2. Pat was five years old.
3. Mrs Taylor was going to have another baby.
4. Pat did not like babies.
5. Pat was not happy about the new baby.
6. Mr and Mrs Taylor lived in a large house.


**B Answer these questions:**

1. Did Pat have any brothers or sisters at the beginning of this story?
2. Why was he not happy to hear that his mother was expecting a baby?
3. What did his father say one evening about the baby's arrival?
4. Where was Pat when his father said this?
5. What did he do?
6. What did he ask?
7. What did his mother answer?
8. What did Pat answer?

**C Write this story. Put one word in each empty place. You will find all the correct words in the story on page 4.**

Before Mr Taylor married, he lived in a very small flat, but when he married, it was no . . . trying to live there with a wife, so he had to . . . to a . . . flat. He was . . . to have a lot of trouble finding one, so he was . . . when he found one easily. Then he had to make . . . for moving his furniture. He also ordered more from a shop in a town, but he had to wait a month for its . . . , because it had to come from the north of England. I . . . he was lucky to have to wait only one month. Some people wait . . . month after month, and finally give up.



An important **businessman** went to see his doctor because he could not sleep at night. The doctor **examined** him **carefully** and then said to him, 'Your **trouble** is that you need to learn to **relax**. Have you got any **hobbies**?'

The businessman thought for a few moments and then said, 'No, doctor, I haven't. I don't have any time for hobbies.'

'Well,' the doctor answered, 'that is your main trouble, you see. You don't have time for **anything except** your work. You must find some hobbies, and you must learn to relax with them, or you'll be **dead** in less than five years. Why don't you learn to **paint pictures**?'

'All right, doctor,' the businessman said. 'I'll try that.'

The next day he telephoned the doctor and said, 'That was a very good idea of yours, doctor. Thank you very much. I've already painted fifteen pictures since I saw you.'

**A Which of these sentences are true (T) and which are false (F)? Write T or F in the boxes.**

1. The businessman wanted to sleep less at night.
2. The businessman had trouble in sleeping at night because he did not relax enough.
3. The businessman did not have any hobbies, because he wanted to relax when he was not busy.
4. The doctor said that he would be dead in five years

*Outside the 1 500 headwords:* relax



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# Advanced Steps to Understanding

Advanced Steps to Unde



1



Harry Marsh was a **driving examiner** who had to test people who **wanted** to get a **driving-licence**. One day he came out of his office **as usual** and saw a car at the **side** of the road, with a young man in it. He got into the car **beside** the **driver** and told him to **check** the **lights**, then the **brakes** and then all the other usual things. The driver performed everything **promptly** and **faultlessly**, without saying a word.

Then Harry told the driver to **start** his engine and drive **forward**. Then he told him to turn right into a side road, stop, go **backwards** into another side road and then drive to the office again.

On the way, the driver said to Harry politely, 'Could you please tell me why we are doing all these things? I was passing through this town and only stopped to look at my **map**.'

**A Which of these sentences are true (T) and which are false (F)? Write T or F in the boxes.**

1. People who wanted a driving-licence had to have a test first.
2. If a driver could check all the things like lights and brakes, Harry passed him.

*Outside the 2 075 headwords: licence*

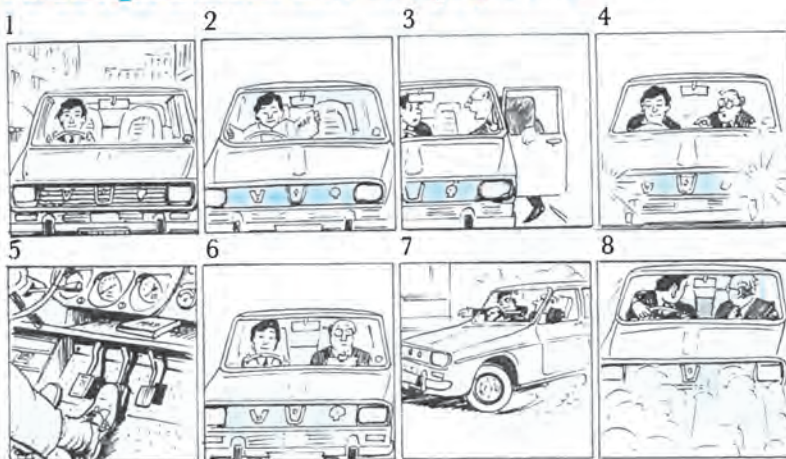
3. The young man had a lot of faults in his performance.
4. Harry gave the young man a driving test by mistake.
5. Harry asked the young man to drive him to his office because he was late.
6. The young man had not really come to have a driving test.


### B Answer these questions.

1. What was Harry's job?
2. What did he see outside his office one day?
3. What did he do?
4. What did he tell the young man to do?
5. What did the young man do?
6. What did Harry tell him to do after that?
7. What did the young man ask him after he had finished?
8. Why had his car been parked outside Harry's office?

### C Put the right sentences under the right pictures.



1. A young man was driving through a town alone.
2. And then he made him go backwards.
3. He made him turn right.
4. He stopped to look at his map.
5. He told the young man to check his brakes.
6. Suddenly an older man got into the car.
7. Then he made him drive forward.
8. Then he told him to check his brakes.

## 2



George was a newspaper **reporter** who worked for a small **local** newspaper in a country town. Nothing much ever happened there.

One day George's **boss** sent for him.

'George,' he said, 'James Bright is making a **speech** at the Town Hall tonight. I want you to go and **report** on it for us.'

'James Bright?' said George. 'He's a **terrible** old **fool**. He never says anything **worth** reporting.'

'Bright is our **best-known** local **politician**,' said the boss. 'We'll have to print a report on that speech.'

So George went to the **meeting** and Bright spoke for two hours without stopping. When George got back to the office at last, the boss was waiting for him.

'Well, George,' he said. 'What did the old man say?'

'**Absolutely** nothing,' said George.

The boss wasn't **surprised**. 'All right, George,' he said. '**You'd better** not write more than two and a half **columns** on it.'

*Outside the 2 075 headwords: boss*



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