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# Steps to Understanding

*Introductory, Elementary, Intermediate, Advanced*

**L. A. Hill**

OXFORD



# Steps to Understanding

- Each book in the series contains 30 carefully graded stories to provide training in reading and listening comprehension.
- The stories are accompanied by a variety of activities, e.g. true/false questions as well as 'thinking' questions that require the student to work more creatively.
- Each book contains a complete wordlist.
- A Cassette accompanies each level and contains both the stories and questions.
- The Introductory level uses 750 headwords; the Elementary level 1,000 headwords; the Intermediate level 1,500 headwords; and the Advanced level 2,075 headwords.

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Steps to Understanding is a series of four sets of stories appropriate for students from introductory to advanced levels.



# Introductory Steps to Understanding

L. A. Hill



Tokyo  
Oxford University Press  
Oxford Hong Kong New York

# 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, and then alone. After his/her own reading alone, he/she can check his/her 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)





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.

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

1. An old lady went to the bank last Tuesday. ☐
2. A man left his keys in the lock of his car. ☐
3. The old lady gave the keys to the man. ☐
4. Someone stole the man's car. ☐
5. The bank clerk gave the man some money. ☐
6. When the man went away, he did not take any money. ☐

**B Answer these questions.**

1. Where did the man go when he got out of his car?
2. What did the old lady see in the car?
3. What did she do then?
4. What did the man do in the bank?
5. What did the old lady do?
6. What did she say to the young man?
7. What did the man do then?
8. Did he steal any money from the bank?

**C Opposites. Put one word in each empty place.**

1. The lady was not . . . : she was old.
2. The man did not . . . his keys out of the lock: he left them in it.
3. The man was not . . . : he was young.
4. He did not want . . . of the money: he wanted all of it.
5. He was not . . . : he was stupid.
6. He did not . . . out of the bank: he ran out of it.
7. He did not drive away . . . : he drove away quickly.
8. He did not drive away . . . the money: he drove away without it.