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阅读·简答

寇菊霞 编著

西北工业大学出版社

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【内容简介】 本书是按照最新的《大学英语教学大纲》和《大学英语六级考试大纲》编写的。全书共有四章：前两章为理论指导，主要阐述了阅读理解的心理过程和阅读的方法，并介绍了六级考试阅读理解的两种题型；后两章为阅读理论实践，包括精选的 120 篇文章和 2 套阅读理解模拟试题，供学生练习和自测。

本书适用于 CET－6 考生，也可作为研究生、WSK(EPT)、TOEFL 等考生的考前参考书。

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前 言

随着大学英语考试的不断发展，参加六级考试的学生越来越多。许多学生反映，他们在准备六级考试的过程中，花费了大量时间进行阅读练习，但是感到收效甚微。为了解决这一问题，我们对阅读理论和实践进行了深入细致的研究。结果表明，问题的根本原因是：大多数学生在准备阅读的过程中片面追求阅读篇数，不求甚解地盲目阅读；没有认识到知识在阅读理解中的重要作用和忽视了在阅读中扩大知识面。针对这一问题，我们在本书中吸收了阅读心理学的理论，用“扩大知识面，提高阅读能力”的新概念指导学生进行阅读理解训练。我们期望，通过这种理论联系实践的方法使学生的阅读理解能力在相对较短的时间内有实质性的提高和突破。

本书共有四章。第一章阐述了阅读心理学的理论和方法。第二章介绍了六级考试阅读理解的两种题型：多项选择题和简短回答题。第三章主要是120篇阅读文章，该章第

一节还简述了不同体裁文章的阅读技巧。第四章为两套六级考试阅读理解模拟题，供学生自测。

本书主要适用于大学英语六级考试，同时也适用于硕士研究生入学考试以及 WSK(EPT)、TOEFL 等英语水平考试。

由于我们水平有限，书中难免有错误和不妥之处，敬请广大读者批评指正。

编　者

1999 年 9 月

目　录

第一章 大学英语阅读理解新概念

阅读理解是大学英语考试中的一个重要项目。许多考生没有能够顺利通过考试，其主要原因是阅读理解能力较差。据调查，大部分考生已认识到阅读理解的重要性，但是他们在准备考试的过程中只注重阅读一篇文章后能够做对几个题或不求甚解地追求阅读篇数。这样造成的结果是，考生花了大量时间阅读，但没有能够真正提高阅读能力。针对这个问题，我们在本书中将用一种新概念指导考生阅读，以期提高考生的阅读理解水平。

一、阅读理解的心理过程——表征知识

阅读心理学认为，阅读理解是读者的知识被表征出来的过程。根据这一理论，读者阅读某篇文章时，如果他了解这篇文章的文化背景，熟悉这篇文章所涉及的有关知识，那么他就会很容易理解这篇文章的内容，并进行推论。

下面我们用实例来说明这一论点。

【例 1】

America has long been known a "melting pot", for it is a nation of immigrants from all over the world. It is believed that the first immigrants to arrive were the American Indians, who came from Siberia more than 10,000 years ago. Today, about

half of their number have "melted" into the American population of 220 million, while the rest of the 850,000 still live on land set aside for them in 31 states.

Europe, the major source of immigration, began sending colonists to America in the early 17th century. Tens of millions flooded to America's shore from Europe between 1,800 and the First World War. The next largest group of Americans trace their ancestry to Africa. Black people now constitute over 11 percent of the population. The melting pot has also absorbed nearly 600,000 Japanese, half a million Chinese and 340,000 Filipinos. Many live in Hawaii, more than two-thirds of whose people boast an Asian or Polynesian heritage.

【例 2】

The sensory neurons keep the brain informed of what is happening outside and inside the body through a variety of sensory pick-up units called receptors. Some of these, lying at or near the skin surface, may be specially sensitive to tissue damage (causing pain), or light contact (producing a touch sensation), or pressure, or temperature, either hot or cold. Other receptors on the tongue and in the respond to chemicals that produce tastes and odors. In the retina of the eye, rod-like receptors respond to light of varying intensities, while cone-like receptors respond to color. Receptors in the ear respond to minute vibrations caused by sound waves striking the eardrum. Other receptors are embedded deep in the walls of intestines; when the intestines contract vigorously because of the presence

of indigestible food or gas, these receptors transmit waxing and waning signals of pain, which are interpreted as cramps. Still other receptors lodged in the muscles fire off signals to the brain any time a muscle contracts or a joint moves or is subjected to added pressure or tension.

例1是一篇关于美国移民问题的文章。众所周知，美国是一个移民国家，被称为“大熔炉”。由于大家对于这一问题和美国历史比较了解，所以阅读这篇文章时就不会感到有什么困难。但是当阅读例2(第二篇文章)时就会有完全不同的感受。这篇文章的内容属于生物学范畴。本文主要讨论了感觉神经细胞通过感受器使大脑受到外界各种形式的刺激并作出相应的反映。显然，大多数读者对于文章所涉及的领域不太熟悉，因此阅读这篇文章时就会感到比较难懂。

总之，通过上面两个例子的比较可以看出，文化背景和相关知识对于读者在阅读中理解文章内容能够起到十分重要的作用。对此，我们必须有一个清醒的认识并给予足够的重视。

二、扩大知识面，突破阅读理解

根据上面的论述，丰富的知识对于读者来说无疑是突破阅读理解的关键。那么，究竟读者怎样才能扩大自己的知识面，促进阅读能力的提高呢？首先必须指出，这里所讲的知识并非专业文化知识，而是可以被文理科学生都能所接受的普及性知识，诸如英美概况、科普知识等。一般性文章和普及性读物是这些知识的载体，读者完全可以通过阅读获得这些知识。实践证明，阅读范围越广，阅读量越大，知识面就越大，阅

读水平也随之提高。但是这并不是意味着毫无目标地大量阅读和扩大知识面。根据《大学英语六级考试大纲》中规定的阅读理解题材范围，考生应注意扩大以下三个方面的知识：

1. 文化背景知识

这方面的知识主要指美国、英国、加拿大、澳大利亚等英语国家的政治、经济、文化、教育、历史、地理等方面的基本概况。

【例 1】

下面这篇文章是关于英国苏格兰的基本概况，主要介绍了苏格兰的地理位置、气候和经济。

England, Wales and Scotland together form Great Britain. Scotland, lying in the northern part of Great Britain and bordering England on the south, is half the size of England and Wales, having an area of about 76,000 square kilometers. It is 400km from the English border to John O'Groats at the northern tip of the mainland. Most of Northern Scotland is a mountainous region known as the Scottish Highlands. In the center of Scotland there are the Central Lowlands, and the South is an undulating, hilly region known as the Southern Uplands which rise to 800m.

In Scotland the main rain-bearing winds come from the Atlantic Ocean. The west part is wet with an average rain-full of up to 200cm while the east is dryer with about 75cm. The winters are cool or cold with an average January temperature of 40F. The summers are cool or warm but rarely hot.

As to agriculture, the main cereal crops in Scotland are oats and barley. It is too cold and damp to grow much wheat. The oats are made into porridge which the scots eat for breakfast, and the chief use of barley is for making Scotch whisky, one of Britain's biggest exports. Climatically, farming in some regions is difficult, people raise and shear sheep. They weave wool into Scottish tweed, which also brings in much money in foreign trade.

【例 2】

下面这篇文章介绍了美国的政治体制——总统和国会。

The president of the USA has more power than any other president in the democratic world — except the French president. It is he who formulates foreign policy and prepares laws for the home front. He is leader of the nation and Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces. He represents the USA and, since the USA is a superpower, the eyes of the whole world are on him. The fate of the world is in his hands, or so the world believes, and one careless, ill-prepared speech could precipitate a crisis.

Actually, a great deal of the president's power is controlled by Congress, the American name for "parliament". It is Congress that declares war, not the president. Unlike the Prime Minister of great Britain, or of Germany, he can make a treaty with a foreign power. But this treaty must be debated and agreed by Congress before it comes into force. The same control applies to laws at home. Congress has on several

occasions refused to ratify treaties or give approval to laws proposed by the president. The USA is the only democracy, apart from France, where a president can rule with a parliament, the majority of whose members do not belong to his own political party.

Some Americans have the feeling that idealism has gone out of politics and that personal ambition and money have taken its place. The election campaign for the presidency is unique in the amount of money poured into it. The wooing of voters lasts for months.

But before the campaign for the election of the president can begin, each political party has to choose its candidate for the presidency. This can lead to some very close contests. Men aspiring to be elected as the party candidate employ top public relations and advertising men, who invent clever catch phrases and set about "selling" their man. There are whistle stop tours by train, by plane, by car. The candidate delivers countless speeches and shakes countless hands. This razzmatazz typifies American enthusiasm and extravagance.

Big money is necessary to support a presidential candidate's campaign and the candidate himself must be rich enough to pay his share. An attractive wife is an advantage, too. Money is also needed to become the Governor of a State, or a successful Senator, or member of the House of Representatives. Yet from this small group many excellent men have become president, and the same is true of members

of Congress.

2. 社会生活常识

这方面的知识主要涉及世界各国的社会热点、生活习惯、风土人情、宗教信仰等。

【例 1】

下面这篇文章介绍了古埃及人的丧葬习俗和金字塔。

The ancient Egyptians believed strongly in life after death. They also believed that a person would need his body to exist in this afterlife. Therefore, they carefully preserved the body by treating it with spices and oils and wrapping it in linen cloth. The wrapped body was then placed into a tomb. A body that is treated in this way is called a mummy.

Egyptian kings and nobles wanted to be certain that their mummies would be kept in a safe place forever. They had great tombs built for themselves and their families. Many kings were buried in secret tombs carved out of solid rock in a place near Thebes called the Valley of the Kings.

About eighty kings built towering pyramid-shaped stone tombs. These pyramids have become famous as one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World.

One of the most amazing things about these pyramids is that they were constructed without using wheels or heavy equipment to move or raise the rocks. Egypt did not learn about the wheel until long after the pyramids were built. Workmen used levers to get large blocks of stone on and off

sledges and hauled them into place over long ramps built around the pyramids.

【例 2】

下面这篇文章讲述的是美籍华人仍保持着中国古老文化传统。

Chinese Americans retain many aspects of their ancient culture, even after having lived here for several generations. For example, their family ties continue to be remarkably strong (encompassing grandparents, uncles, aunts, cousins, and others). Members of the family lend each other moral support and also practical help when necessary. From a very young age children are imbued with the old values and attitudes, including respect for their elders and a feeling of responsibility to the family. This helps to explain why there is so little juvenile delinquency among them.

The high regard for education which is deeply imbedded in Chinese culture, and the willingness to work very hard to gain advancement, are other note-worthy characteristics of theirs. This explains why so many descendants of uneducated laborers have succeeded in becoming doctors, lawyers, and other professionals. Many of the most outstanding Chinese American scholars, scientists, and artists are more recent arrivals, who come from China's former upper class and who represent its high cultural traditions.

3. 科普知识

这方面的知识主要指的是大家所熟知的自然科学常识，包括生物化学、现代医学、天文气象、航天技术、科学发明等。

【例 1】

下面这篇文章讲述了电磁铁的发明及基本原理。

The electromagnet was invented in England by William Sturgeon, who took an iron rod and bent it into the shape of a horseshoe. This "horseshoe" was coated with varnish and a layer of copper wire was wrapped around it. An electric current was passed through the wire, thus making the rod magnetic. The rod was now, because of magnetic attraction, able to support nine pounds of iron.

In the U. S., a scientist named Joseph Henry improved on Sturgeon's electromagnet by insulating the copper wire with silk. He was able to wrap many turns of wire around an iron core without danger of short circuits between the turns. His magnet could hold 2,300 pounds. This experiment prompted Henry to try his hand at converting magnetism into electricity. First he coiled some insulated wire around an iron bar, connecting both ends of the wire to a galvanometer. The iron bar was placed across the poles of the electromagnet. Then the coil of the electromagnet was connected to a battery. The galvanometer indicated a voltage, then dropped to zero. Henry signalled his assistant to disconnect the coil. The galvanometer showed that once again a voltage had been produced, although

this time in the opposite direction. The principle of electromagnetic induction had thus been discovered. Unfortunately for Joseph Henry he did not publish his findings and someone else (Faraday) got credit for the discovery.

【例 2】

在下面这篇文章中，作者主要谈论了遗传工程。

Across the United State, scientists are mounting what may become the most innovative agricultural research drive since the 1920's, when hybrid corn was developed. Surprisingly, the new genetic revolution is not taking place in America's fields. Instead, it is occurring in biology laboratories, for it involves the deliberate manipulation in test tubes of the genes of crop plants. This genetic engineering may prove the biggest boon to agriculture since plant breeding began.

The new concepts grew out of the bio-engineering of bacteria for the production of such things as human hormones and vaccines for viral diseases. Plant cells, however, are far more complex than bacteria, and it will probably take many years for today's encouraging laboratory results to have a major impact on the farm. In fact the payoff may not come until the next century.

But although bio-technologists are still in the earliest phases of this new field of science, they are already actively exploring ways to redesign plants so they will sunlight more efficiently, resist viruses and other pests, grow in hot or dry

areas, in saline soils or in the presence of pesticides, and perhaps even make their own fertilizer out of nitrogen in the air. In addition, scientists have had early success in making wholly new plants that are unavailable by conventional plant breeding a potato-tomato combination, for example.

The new technology holds the promise of virtually limitless horizons in food production. Only imagination sets the limits: frost-resistant wheat, tropical potatoes, saltwater rice, a plant producing a combination of a pea and a carrot-all may be with us one day.

通过以上阐述，考生可能已明白了扩大知识面的重要性和所应掌握的知识范围。在此，笔者要用古人的训语来提醒考生注意阅读方法。古人云：学而不思则罔。如果一个学生阅读完文章后不去思考文章中所涉及的问题，不去总结和积累有关知识，那么这种阅读是毫无效果的。我们认为，考生读完一篇文章后，应认真吸收文章中的知识营养，并要善于积累。比如，考生读了几篇有关遗传工程的文章，积累了有关遗传工程的知识，一旦考试中有类似这方面的文章，考生就能轻而易举地读懂它。因此，考生在阅读中应勤于思考，善于总结和积累。只有这样阅读水平才会有实质性的提高和突破。