

AN ADVANCED ENGLISH READING COURSE

For Postgraduate Students

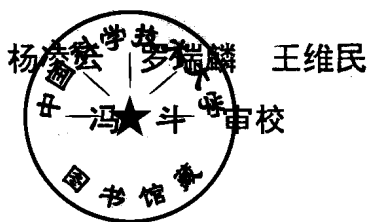
研究生 英语阅读教程

杨凌云 罗瑞麟 王维民 编
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电子科技大学出版社

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前 言

为贯彻国家教委近年颁布的《非英语专业研究生教学大纲》，满足广大理工科研究生以及高等院校高年级学生学习和应考的需要，电子科技大学和西南交通大学多年从事研究生教学工作、有着丰富教学和科学研究经验的教师联合编写了《研究生英语阅读教程》。

本教材的阅读文章均选自美国近几年出版的书刊、报纸、杂志等权威性原版著作。选文内容广泛，包括人物特写、语言、社会生活、最新科技动态以及反映美国风土人情和生活习俗等的文章。

本教材强调在对学生进行专项阅读技能和综合阅读技能训练的基础上进行大量阅读，旨在帮助学生熟悉阅读技能，提高阅读速度和理解水平，培养学生具有较强的阅读能力。故在阅读中除了对阅读技巧进行专项提问外，还有大量综合练习，以检验学生掌握并运用阅读技能以正确理解原文的能力。本书包括四部分：一、大纲要求的阅读技能简介；二、对所讲解阅读技能的实际运用；三、综合阅读练习；四、北京地区研究生学位考试阅读部分模拟题。此模拟题给学生提供了身临实战以及自我检测的方便。为了方便广大学生和报考 TOEFL 和 GRE 的人们自学，书后对各种练习题和测试题均附有答案。

本教材内容丰富、新颖、有较强的可读性和针对性，所选材料语言规范，内容活泼，知识性强。学生可以从中熟悉当代语言，增强语感，加深理解，从而提高阅读当代英语的能力。

由于时间仓促，书中缺点和错误在所难免，请读者批评指正。

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PART ONE

A PREVIEW OF READING SKILLS

At the stage of postgraduate study for the non-English major students, efficient reading has become more and more significant to the students. However, what kind of reading can be called efficient? And how to achieve efficient reading? The so-called efficient reading is to read with speed and with comprehension. This goal can be achieved by skillful and extensive reading. Therefore, besides reading abundantly and extensively, to read with skills is of the utmost importance in achieving efficient reading. The following is a general preview of some of the important reading skills.

1. Reading for Main Idea

The main idea or the topic of a reading (either a paragraph or a complete composition) is the most important message which is present from the beginning to the end of a reading. In a paragraph, the main idea is usually stated in one sentence—the topic sentence, which often occurs at the beginning or the end of the paragraph. Sometimes it appears in the middle, and sometimes just implied. The other sentences of the paragraph serve to support, or develop the main idea of that paragraph. Consequently, to identify main

idea is essential to comprehension and speed, because once you know the main idea everything that follows seems to click into place.

Read the following three paragraphs to see the different positions the topic sentence appears.

Paragraph One

Everything that can be said about prose fiction, in general applies to science fiction. Every piece of science fiction, whether short story or novel, must have a narrator, a story, a plot, a setting, characters, language, and theme. And like any prose, the themes of science fiction are concerned with interpreting man's nature and experience in relation, to the world around him. Themes in science fiction are constructed and presented in exactly the same ways that themes are dealt with in any other kind of fiction. They are the result of a particular combination of narrator, story, plot, character, setting, and language. In short, the reasons for reading and enjoying science fiction, and the ways of studying and analyzing it, are basically the same as they would be for any other story or novel.

Paragraph Two

Every piece of science fiction, whether short story or novel, must have a narrator, a story, a plot, a setting, characters, language, and theme. And like any prose, the themes of science fic-

tion are concerned with interpreting man's nature and experience in relation to the world around him. Themes in science fiction are constructed and presented in exactly the same ways that themes are dealt with in any other kind of fiction. They are the result of a particular combination of narrator, story, plot, character, setting, and language. *In short, everything that can be said about prose fiction, in general applies to science fiction.*

Paragraph Three

Every piece of science fiction, whether short story or novel, must have a narrator, a story, a plot, a setting, characters, language, and theme. And like any other prose, the themes of science fiction are concerned with interpreting man's nature and experience in relation to the world around him. *In short, everything that can be said about prose fiction, in general applies to science fiction.* Themes in science fiction are constructed and presented in exactly the same ways that themes are dealt with in any other kind of fiction. They are the result of a particular combination of narrator, story, plot, character, setting, and language.

2. Guessing Unknown Words From Context

You have to come across some unfamiliar words when reading. Some students are accustomed to the way of stopping and consulting the dictionaries whenever an unknown word occurs, which has become a hindrance to the improvement of reading, let alone efficient reading. The best way to solve this problem is to continue

reading, to try to guess the word from its context, the words preceding or following the item you do not know.

Read the following paragraph and the question after it as an example.

1. Some students want to live with other similar people. If they are women, they join a club called a sorority. The sorority buys or rents a house where they live, eat, and give parties.

(1) A sorority is

a) a club where women students live.

b) a fraternity.

c) a dormitory.

d) an ideal society.

It is easy to answer this question because these words such as "students, women, club" give us very clear hints what sorority means.

3. Skimming And Scanning

The common point of these skills is to read with speed; the difference of the two is in that the former's end is to find the main idea, while the latter's purpose is to locate specific information. Skimming is very useful for a student to evaluate a text to determine its relevance and whether or not it should be read carefully. When a student's goal is to find the answer to certain questions in a reading, without having to read every word, sentence and para-

graph, scanning assumes its importance. The integration of these two skills will make your reading much more efficient. Remember two points; (1) Time is of the essence here; (2) Comprehension is better when you read a reading several times faster than you read it once slowly.

Read the following passage, by using these two skills, to answer the questions that follow.

Traditionally, the study of history has had fixed boundaries and focal points—periods, centuries, dramatic events, and great leaders. It also has had clear and firm notions of scholarly procedure; how one inquires into a historical problem, how one presents and documents one's findings, what constitutes admissible and adequate proof.

Anyone who has followed recent historical literature can testify to the revolution that is taking place in historical studies. The currently fashionable subjects come directly from the sociology catalog; childhood, work, leisure. The new subjects are accompanied by new methods. Where history once was primarily narrative, it is now entirely analytic. The old question "What happened?" and "How did it happen?" have given way to the question "why did it happen?" Prominent among the methods used to answer the question "Why" is psychoanalysis, and its use has given rise to psychohistory.

Psychohistory does not merely use psychological explanations

in historical contexts. Historians have always used such explanations when they were appropriate and when there was sufficient evidence for them. But this pragmatic use of psychology is not what psychohistorians intend. They are committed, not just to psychology in general, but to Freudian psychoanalysis. This commitment precludes a commitment to history as historians have always understood it. Psychohistory derives its "facts" not from history, the detailed records of events and their consequences, but from psychoanalysis of the individuals who made history, and deduces its theories not from this or that instance in their lives, but from a view of human nature that transcends history. It denies the basic criterion of historical evidence; that historians be alert to the negative instances that evidence be publicly assessible to, and therefore assessable by, all historians. And it violates the basic tenet of historical method; that would refute their theses. Psychohistorians, convinced of the absolute rightness of their own theories, are also convinced that theirs is the "deepest" explanation of any event, that other explanations fall short of the truth.

Psychohistory is not content to violate the discipline of history (in the sense of the proper mode of studying and writing about the past) ; it also violates the past itself. It denies to the past an integrity and will of its own, in which people acted out of a variety of motives and in which events had a multiplicity of causes and effects. It imposes upon the past the same determinism that it imposes upon the present, thus robbing people and events of their individuality and of their complexity. Instead of respecting the particulari-

ty of the past, it assimilates all events, past and present, into a single deterministic schema that is presumed to be true at all times and in all circumstances.

Which statement best gives the main idea of the above passage?

1. Traditional historians can benefit from studying the techniques and findings of psychohistorians.
2. The approach of psychohistorians to historical study is currently in vogue even though it lacks the rigor and verifiability of traditional historical method.
3. Areas of sociological study such as childhood and work are of little interest to traditional historians.

Indicate whether each of the following statements is true or false, according to the passage you have just finished reading.

1. One characteristic of the practice of psychohistorians is that past and current events are all placed within the same deterministic schema.
2. The methods used by psychohistorians probably prevent them from presenting their material in chronological order.
3. The information supplied in this passage answers the question what the basic criterion of historical evidence required by traditional historians is.

4. Prediction

Predicting from titles, subtitles, illustrations, abstracts, and so forth, is an essential skill. Pre-reading activity can cultivate this skill. By reading the titles, subtitles, illustrations, abstracts, etc., and by using your background knowledge of the subject you are dealing with, you may not only predict what a reading is about, but also avoid the gross mistakes in vocabulary interpretation sometimes made when you have no idea of the reading.

Read the following page as an example



NOTES FROM ALL OVER

GERMANY



Economic growth has stalled, inflation is high, productivity and export growth are stagnating. Believe it or not, this is the reunified Germany. Many blame the situation on the on-going multi-billion-dollar bailout of the former East Germany, but another problem is the escalating cost of German social democracy.

The bill for social services eats up 29 percent of the country's gross national product, and businesses fork over up to 53 percent of their retained earnings in corporate taxes. With production costs skyrocketing, Germany's once vaunted share of world exports is falling. In 1990, for the first time in a decade, Germany ran a merchandise trade deficit with the United States.

America was long ago shaken out of its economic complacency. Germany is about to get a similar jolt.

—Peter Fuhman in *Forbe*

AUSTRALLA



When Australians make a purchase, it's time to get out the plastic—not credit cards, but actual currency. The central bank has issued a plastic five-dollar note, worth about \$ 3. 30 in American money, the first of a currency series scheduled to replace paper notes over the next couple of years. The plastic money is expected to soil less, last longer in circulation and have security features that can't be used with paper currency.

—The Wall Street Journal