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普通高等教育“十五”国家级规划教材(第一版)

# 大学体验®英语

## Experiencing English

Fast  
Reading

## 快速阅读教程

总主编 崔敏 刘龙根

主 编 刘淑范

x p e r i e n c i n g

# 2

## 修订版



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HIGHER EDUCATION PRESS



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## 修订版前言

学习任何一种语言都需要大量的阅读，阅读一方面能促进对这门语言所承载的文化的累积，另一方面能增强对语言的理解和分析。在当今“知识爆炸”的时代，科技更新速度快，信息瞬息万变，不管是普通知识还是专业知识，都需要快节奏才能跟上时代发展的步伐。与此同时，《大学英语课程教学要求》也对非英语专业大学生英语阅读理解能力做出了具体的定性和定量要求。

泰勒（Taylor）早在1975年就指出：“Reading has to be fast to be successful”。一定的阅读速度是获取信息，维系阅读兴趣的重要保障。在互联网和多媒体高度发达的今天，快速选择、掌握和甄别有用信息的能力尤为重要。但“快而不懂，一无用处”则说明快速阅读还必须注重阅读效率，即单位时间内整合有效信息的能力。这证明快速阅读必须是科学合理地阅读，以保证阅读速度和阅读有效性。而这两方面能力的培养必须通过阅读实践来完成。

本教程以《大学英语课程教学要求》为依据，结合大学英语教学进度编写，兼具科学性和实用性。教程共分四册，每册含18个单元，每单元分Text A 和Text B两篇。教程编写采取“主题和技能”相结合的模式，即单元设置围绕主题内容，阅读练习设计针对阅读技能与文章内容。本教程在2005年第一版的基础上，结合师生在使用过程中的反馈进行修订。修订后的练习设计兼顾大学英语四、六级新题型应用和阅读策略训练。书后附有练习的参考答案。

本教程的文章长度和难度从第一册到第四册按照《大学英语课程教学要求》中对一般要求、较高要求和更高要求三个层次的阅读理解能力的不同要求精确编排，文章内容皆为原汁原味的英语文章，兼顾知识性、趣味性和丰富性。每册都配有“Introduction to Important Reading Strategies and Skills”，系统有序地解读快速阅读策略，如略读、逻辑推理等，可以作为使用本教程前教师教学和学生自学的重要内容。四册书循序渐进，可配合其他的大学英语教材供大学英语4个学期教学使用，也可作为辅导材料供非英语专业大学生进行自主阅读训练。

“工欲善其事，必先利其器”。要想提高英语快速阅读能力，首先要选择合适的快速阅读训练材料。本教程的快速阅读材料内容丰富，题材多样，语言地道、规范，结构严谨，同时兼顾知识性、趣味性和科学性，以此激发读者学习英语的积极性，增加词汇量，扩大文化背景知识，有利于训练学生掌握快速阅读的方法，熟悉考试题型和提高答题技巧。所选材料难度适中，所含生词辅以汉语注释，学生不致产生畏难情绪，丧失阅读信心。所选文章篇幅适宜，学生不致产生疲劳感。

提高快速阅读能力不能一蹴而就，而是需要坚持不懈的努力，长期的积累，大量的阅读，循序渐进。只有这样才能逐渐培养出较强的快速阅读能力。

编 者

2012年6月

## 第一版前言

英语阅读能力的培养是大学英语教学的重要任务。对此,《大学英语课程教学要求(试行)》做出了定性定量的要求。阅读不仅是获取信息的主要手段,也是学习和掌握语言的有效途径。对于广大非英语专业大学生而言,只有通过大量阅读,才能获得充足的语言输入,进而打下扎实的英语基础,形成较强的英语语感,提高英语综合应用能力。

培养英语阅读能力一方面要依赖足够的阅读实践,在阅读中学会阅读;另一方面,能动地运用元认知策略,理性地改进阅读方法,积极地提高英语阅读技能,无疑能对培养较强的阅读能力起到事半功倍的作用。

英语阅读能力包含多种要素,而快速处理阅读材料所输入信息的能力是其中极其重要的微技能,这一点早已为阅读研究者所认识。Grabe (1991) 曾经指出:“...a description of reading has to account for the notions that fluent reading is rapid, purposeful, interactive, comprehending, flexible, and gradually developing.”。Taylor (1975) 也强调“reading has to be fast to be successful”。一定的阅读速度是获取主要信息所必需的,是保持阅读兴趣、专注于阅读内容所要求的。尤其是在当今这个“信息爆炸”、新知识以几何级增长的时代,快速阅读技能的重要性愈加突出。这样,快速阅读技能的培养也就必然成为大学英语教学的要务。而大学英语教学中要致力于快速阅读教学,就需要有适当的教材作支撑,适用的教材是保证教学活动顺利开展的必要条件。《大学体验英语快速阅读教程》的编写正是为了满足目前国内大学英语教学的这一实际需要。

本教程的编写以《大学英语课程教学要求(试行)》为依据。

本教程共四册,每册含18个单元,可供大学英语教学1~4学期使用(按每学期18周,每周一个单元计)。各册中每单元分Text A和Text B(一篇用于课堂,另一篇供课后练习)。每册配有“Introduction to Important Reading Strategies and Skills”。本教程的编写采取“主题与技能”相结合的模式,即单元设置围绕内容主题,练习设计针对阅读技能与文章内容。第一、二册练习包括多项选择与正误判断两种题型,第三、四册练习包括多项选择与简短问答两种题型。书后附有全书练习的参考答案。

受编写时间与编者经验和水平所限,教程中不当之处在所难免,诚望广大读者不吝指正。

编 者

2005年6月





After looking at the title, for example, you can ask yourself what you do and do not know about the subject before you read the text. Or you can formulate questions that you would like to have answered by reading the text. These exercises will help you focus more effectively on the ideas in a text when you actually start reading.

To help you predict, you may also use skimming and scanning skills as described below.

### 3. Skimming

Skimming involves reading quickly through a text to get an overall idea of its contents. Features of the text that can help you include the following:

- (a) Title
- (b) Subtitle(s)
- (c) Details about the author
- (d) Abstract
- (e) Introductory paragraph
- (f) First, second and last sentences of body paragraphs
- (g) Concluding paragraph

A text may not contain all of these features — there may be no abstract, for example, or no subtitles — but you can usually expect to find at least (a), (e), (f) and (g). Focusing on these will give you an understanding of the overall idea or gist of the text you are reading — in other words, a general understanding as opposed to a detailed reading.

Another term for this kind of reading is *surveying*. Surveying can be described as looking quickly through a book, chapter of a book, article from a journal, etc., to decide whether or not it is suitable for your purpose. To decide whether or not a text is suitable, especially if it is a book, you will also need to focus on the following features in addition to those mentioned above:

- (a) Edition and date of publication
- (b) Table of contents
- (c) Foreword
- (d) Introduction
- (e) Index

### 4. Scanning

When you scan a text, again you look quickly through it. However, unlike skimming, scanning involves looking for specific words. Scanning involves rapid reading for the specific rather than the general, for particular details rather than the overall idea.

When you read a text, for example, you may want to find only a percentage figure or the dates of particular historical events instead of the main ideas. Scanning will help you find such information more efficiently.

### 5. Detailed reading

A second and third reading of a text will focus on the secondary ideas and details which support,

explain and develop the main ideas. This can be described as a more comprehensive reading. It involves a slower and more careful reading process. At this stage you can also try to guess the meaning of unfamiliar vocabulary.

## 6. Guessing unknown words

It is unlikely that you will understand 100 percent of the vocabulary in a text, especially at a first reading. Use first the context and then your own knowledge of the subject to help you guess the meaning of unknown words. At your first reading of a text it is usually best not to stop and consult a dictionary. This will interrupt your process of reading and understanding. Often the meaning of unfamiliar words and phrases becomes clear as you continue to read through the text. The dictionary can be used at a later stage.

In using context to help you guess unknown vocabulary, refer first to *immediate context* and then to the *wider context* in which a word is found. The immediate context is the sentence in which a word is found, and sometimes the sentences immediately before and after this. The wider context can include other sentences and even other paragraphs in a text. Both forms of context can often provide important information that helps you guess the meaning of unfamiliar words. It is possible to find hints or clues about a word's meaning from the context. Definition, restatement, general knowledge, related information, examples, comparison, contrast and word formation could give you some hints or clues to the meaning of unfamiliar words.

Example 2: This includes *poultry* for the main course (e.g. chicken, turkey, duck, goose), salads, breads, and vegetables, and features a variety of desserts, for example, pies, puddings, and ice cream.

## 7. Understanding main ideas

You will practice recognizing the main ideas contained within a text. In the process of skimming you will already have identified some of these main ideas. During a second and third reading you can recognize and understand them more fully. Each paragraph will usually contain one main idea, sometimes referred to as the paragraph topic.

The reading materials provide several exercises which help you identify and understand the main ideas in a text. Knowing the key points in a reading text is vital in assessing its importance and relevance for your needs. Understanding the main ideas will also lead you to an understanding of a writer's organization.

Example 3: One hundred years ago, school teachers were expected to provide a variety of services in addition to their teaching duties and to behave themselves in an exemplary (serving as an example) manner. They cared for the oil lamps, tended the fire, and supplied their students with sharp pencils. After a long day in the classroom, they were expected to spend some time every evening reading the *Bible*. Women teachers could not marry, and barber shops were off limits to men



teachers. Of course, alcohol and tobacco were forbidden.

Which statement best expresses the main idea?

- A. Teachers performed domestic tasks.
- B. The teaching profession demanded total dedication.
- C. Teachers needed the guidance of religion.
- D. Teachers set good examples by not using tobacco and alcohol.

## 8. Recognizing important facts and details

To understand the main idea thoroughly, however, you must recognize the important facts or details which help develop or support it. These facts and details give you a deeper understanding of the main idea. They may prove a point, show a relationship between ideas, or serve as examples to help you understand the main idea more fully. Here are some ways to help you recognize important facts or details:

- 1) Read for the main idea. If you have identified the main idea, you can more easily recognize the important facts that support it.
- 2) Keep it in mind that not all facts or details are equally important. Look only for the facts that related to the main idea.
- 3) To check on your understanding of the material you have read, review the facts or details which you have identified as the main idea. If adding up the facts or details does not lead logically to the main idea, you have failed either to identify the main idea or to recognize the important supporting details.

## 9. Inferring

Sometimes a writer will suggest or express something indirectly in a text. In other words, a writer will imply something and leave it to the reader to infer or understand what is meant. When writers do this, they rely to some extent on the knowledge of their readers — knowledge of a subject or cultural knowledge, for example. Inferring a writer's meaning is sometimes important in the process of understanding a reading text. Readers have to read between the lines for complete understanding of a passage. Compare the following examples:

Example 4: When the phone finally rang, Joe leaped from the edge of his chair and grabbed for it.

Example 5: Joe was very nervous and anxious as he waited for an important phone call. Unable to relax for a moment, he sat on the edge of his chair. When the phone rang, Joe reached for it with great eagerness.

## 10. Understanding text organization

Writers structure, or organize, their writing in many different ways. Recognizing the way in which a text has been organized will help you understand its meaning more fully. A writer may want, for example, to outline a situation, discuss a problem and propose a solution. This will usually result in

a particular pattern of organization. Or a writer may want to compare and contrast two ideas and will choose basic structures commonly used to compare and contrast.

Another feature related to organization is a writer's use of time. To give an account of events or describe a process, writers will often use a chronological order, in which events are recounted in the order in which they have occurred. Other writers will choose to organize an account of events in different ways, perhaps with repeated contrasts between past and present time.

### 11. Recognizing signal words

Signal words, which authors use in writing, provide an aid for the reader to grasp the thread of thought in the material. By using signal words to predict what may come next, the reader can decide whether he should speed up his reading, slow down or pause to make sure what is being read is understood. Recognizing signal words, therefore, becomes important to improvement both in reading speed and in comparison.

There are five basic groups of signal words. You probably know all of them as words, but perhaps you've never realized their important functions in reading and writing. The five groups are:

- 1) words that signal more of the same, including *furthermore, and, more than that, also, likewise, moreover, in addition, what is more, for instance, for example*;
- 2) words that change the direction of thought, including *although, however, on the contrary, but, in spite of, otherwise, despite, nevertheless, yet*;
- 3) words that signal an order or sequence of events, including *first, second, third, and so on, then, after, before, next, last, afterwards, finally*;
- 4) words that signal a summary, including *as a result, finally, therefore, accordingly, in short, thus, consequently, in conclusion, so, in brief, in a word*;
- 5) words that signal cause and effect, including *because, for this reason, so, therefore, as, since, consequently*.

### 12. Understanding figurative language

Writers use figurative language — language that compares — to produce images in their descriptions or narrations. Sometimes non-human things are given human features (**personification**); sometimes comparisons are made using the words like or as (**simile**); more often comparisons are not stated but suggested (**metaphor**).

Example 6: Time and tide wait for no man.

He is as stupid as an ass.

All the world's a stage, and all the men and women merely players.

Figurative language is an important stylistic device that writers use. It makes their description or narration more vivid and interesting. Understanding figurative language is an important reading skill which helps readers to recognize the "secret power" of words and appreciate the sensory impression and emotional reactions created by authors.

**13. Assessing a writer's purpose**

Once you understand the organization of a text, you can then recognize the writer's purpose more clearly. The text organization a writer selects will partly depend upon his or her particular purpose. A writer may want to inform or persuade, and he or she will select a structure or pattern of organization according to this purpose.

A writer may also intend to do both of these things in a written text — to inform as well as persuade. In such cases it is often helpful to try to assess which of these purposes seems to be more important or dominant.

**14. Evaluating a writer's attitude**

Writers are not necessarily neutral or objective when they write, particularly if they are trying to persuade readers to agree with their opinions. It is important that you recognize what an author's attitude is in relation to the ideas or information being presented. This is because such attitudes can influence the ways in which information is presented. You will be looking at ways in which a writer's attitude may be identified. You will also practice evaluating how relatively neutral or biased his or her attitude may be.

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Unit

# 1

## American Life

Text A    Choosing the Way We Live  
Text B    The Evolving Notion of Home





Text **A**

## Choosing the Way We Live

Are you single or married? Are you a cat owner or a dog owner? Do you exercise, or are you a “couch potato”? These questions and many others are about your lifestyle.

People in the United States feel that they can choose their lifestyles and even shape their own identities. The individualism and personal freedom of the United States mean that immigrants not only can make a new world for themselves but can also choose a new way of life.

The great variety of lifestyles in the United States leads to constant national discussion of the choices that people make. This freedom of choice is fun and exciting, but it also creates stress and uncertainty. In newspapers, lifestyle issues are discussed in the features or style section. In *The Chicago Tribune* this section is called “Tempo”. People turn to this section for lively discussions on lifestyle choices they face with regard to their personal identities, their families, and their social lives.

Many people believe that they can make their lives happy and satisfying despite their problems. If they lack confidence or tend to feel anxious, shy, angry, or depressed, they believe that they can change themselves. Self-help books, magazines, and feature articles are filled with advice from experts about steps to take to become a more happy or fulfilled person and to improve one’s self-respect. Part of this search for self-improvement is a belief that even one’s own appearance can be controlled. This is why there are so many articles in the newspaper about looking young, wearing the latest fashions, and becoming physically fit.

Lifestyle choices also involve moral and social issues. How should children be raised? How should people behave on a date? How should elderly people be treated? How can people stay happily married? All these kinds of issues are constantly discussed and are constantly changing. Not only are experts such as psychologists consulted, but *celebrities* (名人) from the political and entertainment worlds are held up as lifestyle leaders as well. In the newspaper, feature articles called profiles discuss in detail the personal lives or public work of movie stars, authors, artists, and exceptional individuals who are not celebrities. The lifestyle choices these people make contribute to the public discussion of all the issues that people think about.

A well-known advertising slogan is “Just do it.” In the culture of the United States, people believe that they can take action and become the kind of people they want to be and live the way they want to live.

(424 words)

How fast do you read?

424 words ÷ \_\_\_\_\_ minutes = \_\_\_\_\_ wpm

