

总主编 陆 勇

大学英语 快速阅读进阶

第

3

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主 编 陆 勇 刘菁筠



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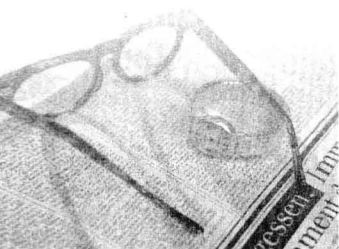
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前言

《大学英语快速阅读进阶》系列教材终于和各位读者见面了,这是多方努力的结果,是各位编委辛勤汗水的结晶。

本阅读教程是在这样的背景下孕育而生的:(1) 根据 2007 年国家教育部高教司颁布的《大学英语课程教学要求》(以下简称《课程要求》),大学英语的教学目标是培养学生的英语综合应用能力。阅读作为一项基本技能,始终是英语综合能力训练中的一个重要环节。从一定意义上讲,提高阅读能力,仍是培养和提高大学生英语综合运用能力的关键之一。(2) 在新改革后的大学英语四、六级考试中,快速阅读理解部分的分值比例为 10%,这对学生的阅读能力提出了更高的要求。(3) 正如《课程要求》所言,我国幅员辽阔,各地区、各高校之间情况差异较大,大学英语教学应贯彻分类指导、因材施教的原则,以适应个性化教学的实际需要。因此,新升本科院校需要有与自己实际情况相符的阅读教材,以促进大学英语教学改革之需。

鉴于此,本阅读教程是百色学院联合广西民族师范学院,在参考国内外多种英语快速阅读教材的基础上,根据编者多年从事大学英语快速阅读教学的经验,以及目前新升本院校实际整体英语水平和英语能力编写而成的。

本套教程的编写有如下特点:

(1) 本教程由具有丰富的教学经验的大学英语教师分工协作、集体编写而成,具有很强的专业性。

(2) 每册书单元内部及各册书之间都是由浅入深、由易到难、循序渐进的排列顺序。各册书之间的过渡跳跃幅度不大。

(3) 1—4 册文章的长度梯度合理,1—2 册相对短少,第 3 册接近大学英语四级,第 4 册与四级相同并略有超过,充分体现进阶的梯度。

(4) 精心选择阅读文章,新颖,富于时代气息,给人耳目一新的感觉。其中主题涵盖教育、科技、政治、经济和文化等各个方面,具有时代性、可读性、文化教育性和针对性,并体现一定的区域性文化与经济特色。

(5) 体裁和题材多样化,具有知识性、趣味性、应用性等特点。

(6) 练习题型的设计均按照最新的大学英语四、六级考试标准和难度进行,具有针对性。

《大学英语快速阅读进阶》第1—4册由百色学院陆勇任总主编,各分册采取主编负责制原则。第1册由邓大飞、陈正利任主编,黄浩、陆晓蓉、覃丽霞任副主编;第2册由陆勇、符赛男任主编,罗翠琼、王雅兰、周彩玉任副主编;第3册由陆勇、刘菁筠任主编,罗莉莉、李涵、谭丽、潘忠文任副主编;第4册由邓大飞、廖志恩任主编,覃丹、农雅琪、蒙志珍任副主编。

本教材的编写与出版得到了苏州大学出版社的大力支持,在此,我们表示衷心的感谢。

由于编者水平有限,加之时间仓促,如有不当之处,衷心希望广大教师同仁和学生提出批评和建议,以便今后进一步改进和完善。

编者

2011年6月



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Unit 1

Western Culture and Customs

Directions: You will have 15 minutes to go over each passage quickly and answer the questions. For questions 1–7, choose the best answer from the four choices marked A, B, C and D. For questions 8–10, complete the sentences with the information given in the passage.



Passage One

Good Friday Haircuts and Seaweed for Dinner

The name Good Friday is generally believed to be a corruption of God's Friday. In Ireland, since the days of the early church, it has always been dedicated to penance, fasting, and prayer. As might be expected, it was the severest day of Lenten austerity. Most people went beyond even the black fast prescribed by the church. They ate nothing at all until midday and even then, all they took was three mouthfuls of bread and three sips of water—three being in honor of the Holy Trinity.

Little or no work was done on the land, except for the planting of a small quantity of grain or potatoes to invoke a blessing on the crops. The rest of the time was spent making sure the house, yard and out-buildings were clean and tidy.

Within the house, the women and girls loosened their hair and allowed



it to hang down as a symbol of mourning. They, and the children, would also go barefoot throughout the day. The men and boys trimmed their finger and toenails and also cut their hair. According to superstition, a haircut on Good Friday would prevent headaches during the coming year.

Several other superstitions and customs were associated with the day:

- A child born on Good Friday and baptized on Easter Sunday was said to have the gift of healing. If it was a boy, it was expected that he would enter the ministry and attain a high position in the church.
- If a person should die on Good Friday and was buried on Easter Sunday, he or she was sure of immediate entry into Heaven.
- Eggs laid on Good Friday were marked with a cross and each member of the family ate one of these on Easter Sunday. Eggs set to hatch on this day were said to produce healthy birds.
- No one would move house or begin any important business.
- No blood could be shed which meant that animals or birds could not be slaughtered.
- No one could work with wood or burn it, and no nail could be driven.
- No fishing boats went to sea, and all fishing nets or lines were left idle. On the east coast, boats in the harbor would be left lying towards the quay wall and, in coastal communities everywhere, the residents gathered shellfish and edible seaweed which they ate as their main meal. The Gaelic for this “shore food” is *bia tragha*.

From 12 noon until 3 pm, the three hours that according to tradition, Jesus hung on the cross, silence was observed, and families gathered together to meditate and pray. It was expected that the sky would darken. In fact, dark, dreary, cold and wet weather was welcomed as a sign that nature was in mourning for the Saviour, too.

Many people went to the church and it was the custom to remove one's shoes before going inside. Families also visited the graveyards to pray for the dead and many people went to pray at holy wells. After going around a well a certain number of times on their bare knees, they would often take



some of the water home with them because it was believed that if it was drawn on Good Friday, it had the power to cure illnesses.

When I was growing up, we'd be home from school and it was the custom in our family to attend church and "do the stations" between 12 noon and 3 pm. In the Roman Catholic religion, the stations are a pictorial rendition of the events that took place as Christ carried the cross to Calvary. It was such a very solemn occasion that, even as children, we knew we had to be on our best behaviour.

My parents also observed a strict Lenten fast. I can't recall them eating anything during the day and all my brothers and I were offered was hot tea without milk or sugar and dry toast. However, there was one special treat that was reserved for Good Friday evening: Hot Cross Buns (十字面包)! They're not an Irish tradition, but they were so popular throughout the British Isles, and my mother relented and bought one for each of us. Decorated with white, lemon flavored frosting in the shape of a cross, the insides were a rich, yeasty-tasting sweet bread filled with plump raisins; dipping one of these into black tea was a vast improvement over dry toast!

If you've ever wondered how Hot Cross Buns originated, it's likely that they've come down to us from the ancient pagan custom of eating a special cake to honor the Saxon goddess of Spring, "Eostre". The church tried to prohibit the custom but when they couldn't, they gave the cakes a Christian meaning by blessing them and decorating them with crosses. Whatever their origins, when I was growing up, it wasn't Good Friday without Hot Cross Buns and we'd all sing the following rhyme when Mum brought them to the table:

Hot Cross Buns! Hot Cross Buns! One a penny, two a penny, Hot Cross Buns!
If you don't have daughters, then give them to your sons.
One a penny, two a penny, Hot Cross Buns!

(<http://www.irishcultureandcustoms.com/ACalend/GoodFriday.html>)



1. What is the purpose of the passage?
 - A. An introduction of the origin of Good Friday.
 - B. Telling us that good Friday has a long history.
 - C. Telling us what people do on Good Friday.
 - D. An introduction of Good Friday in Ireland.
2. Why do people take three mouthfuls of bread and three sips of water?
 - A. In order to honor the Holy Trinity.
 - B. In order to honor their ancestors.
 - C. In order to have a good luck in the coming year.
 - D. In order to have a good harvest in the coming year.
3. On Good Friday, people would do the following things EXCEPT _____.
 - A. cutting their hair
 - B. going barefoot throughout the day
 - C. trimming their finger and toenails
 - D. having too much food
4. Which of the following statements is NOT true?
 - A. No one would move house or begin any important business.
 - B. No one could work with wood or burn it, and no nail could be driven.
 - C. No one went to the church.
 - D. No fishing boats went to sea, and all fishing nets or lines were left idle.
5. According to the tradition, the three hours from 12 noon to 3 pm is NOT the time when _____.
 - A. Jesus hung on the cross
 - B. silence was observed
 - C. people went to sleep
 - D. families gathered together to meditate and pray
6. According to the tradition, what would people do when they went to the church?
 - A. Have a wonderful meal.



- B. Remove their shoes.
 - C. Ask for holy water.
 - D. Remove their clothes.
7. What would Mum do when she brought Hot Cross Buns to the table?
- A. She would pray.
 - B. She would hold them with two hands.
 - C. She would ask me to help her.
 - D. She would sing a rhyme.
8. On the east coast, boats in the harbor would be left lying towards the _____.
9. If a person should die on Good Friday and was buried on Easter Sunday, he or she was sure of immediate _____ Heaven.
10. In fact, dark, dreary, cold and wet weather was welcomed as a sign that nature was _____ the Saviour.



Passage Two

Thanksgiving Day

Thanksgiving Day is the most truly American of the national holidays in the United States and is most closely connected with the earliest history of the country.

In 1620, the settlers, or Pilgrims, sailed to America on the May Flower, seeking a place where they could have freedom of worship. After a tempestuous two-month voyage they landed at in icy November, what is now Plymouth, Massachusetts.

During their first winter, over half of the settlers died of starvation or epidemics. Those who survived began sowing in the first spring.

All summer long they waited for the harvests with great anxiety,



knowing that their lives and the future existence of the colony depended on the coming harvest. Finally the fields produced a yield rich beyond expectations. And therefore it was decided that a day of thanksgiving to the Lord be fixed. Years later, President of the United States proclaimed the fourth Thursday of November as Thanksgiving Day every year. The celebration of Thanksgiving Day has been observed on that date until today.

The pattern of the Thanksgiving celebration has never changed through the years. The big family dinner is planned months ahead. On the dinner table, people will find apples, oranges, chestnuts, walnuts and grapes. There will be plum pudding, mince pie, other varieties of food and cranberry juice and squash. The best and most attractive among them are roast turkey and pumpkin pie. They have been the most traditional and favorite food on Thanksgiving Day throughout the years.

Everyone agrees the dinner must be built around roast turkey stuffed with a bread dressing to absorb the tasty juices as it roasts. But as cooking varies with families and with the regions where one lives, it is not easy to get a consensus on the precise kind of stuffing for the royal bird.

Thanksgiving today is, in every sense, a national annual holiday on which Americans of all faiths and backgrounds join in to express their thanks for the year's bounty and reverently ask for continued blessings.

Almost every culture in the world has held celebrations of thanks for a plentiful harvest. The American Thanksgiving holiday began as a feast of thanksgiving in the early days of the American colonies almost four hundred years ago.

In 1620, a boat filled with more than one hundred people sailed across the Atlantic Ocean to settle in the New World. This religious group had begun to question the beliefs of the Church of England and they wanted to separate from it. The Pilgrims settled in what is now the state of Massachusetts. Their first winter in the New World was difficult. They had arrived too late to grow many crops, and without fresh food, half the colony



died from disease. The following spring the Iroquois Indians(美国纽约州东北部易洛魁族印第安人) taught them how to grow corn, a new food for the colonists. They showed them other crops to grow in the unfamiliar soil and how to hunt and fish.

In the autumn of 1621, bountiful crops of corn, barley, beans and pumpkins were harvested. The colonists had much to be thankful for, so a feast was planned. They invited the local Indian chief and 90 Indians. The Indians brought deer to roast with the turkeys and other wild game offered by the colonists. The colonists had learned how to cook cranberries and different kinds of corn and squash dishes from the Indians. To this first Thanksgiving, the Indians had even brought popcorn.

In the following years, many of the original colonists celebrated the autumn harvest with a feast of thanks.

After the United States became an independent country, Congress recommended one yearly day of thanksgiving for the whole nation to celebrate. George Washington suggested the date November 26 as Thanksgiving Day. Then in 1863, at the end of a long and bloody civil war, Abraham Lincoln asked all Americans to set aside the last Thursday in November as a day of thanksgiving.

Thanksgiving falls on the fourth Thursday of November, a different date every year. The President must proclaim that date as the official celebration.

Thanksgiving is a time for tradition and sharing. Even if they live far away, family members gather for a reunion at the house of an older relative. All give thanks together for the good things that they have.

In this spirit of sharing, civic groups and charitable organizations offer a traditional meal to those in need, particularly the homeless. On most tables throughout the United States, foods eaten at the first Thanksgiving have become traditional.

Turkey, corn, pumpkins and cranberry sauce are symbols which represent the first Thanksgiving. Now all of these symbols are drawn on holiday decorations and greeting cards. The use of corn meant the survival



of the colonies. “Indian corn” as a table or door decoration represents the harvest and the fall season.

Sweet-sour cranberry sauce, or cranberry jelly, was on the first Thanksgiving table and is still served today. The cranberry is a small, sour berry. It grows in bogs, or muddy areas, in Massachusetts and other New England states. The Indians used the fruit to treat infections. They used the juice to dye their rugs and blankets. They taught the colonists how to cook the berries with sweetener and water to make a sauce. The Indians called it “ibimi” which means “bitter berry”. When the colonists saw it, they named it “crane-berry” because the flowers of the berry bent the stalk over, and it resembled the long-necked bird called crane. The berries are still grown in New England.

In 1988, a Thanksgiving ceremony of a different kind took place at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine. More than four thousand people gathered on Thanksgiving night. Among them were native Americans representing tribes from all over the country and descendants of people whose ancestors had migrated to the New World.

The ceremony was a public acknowledgment of the Indians’ role in the first Thanksgiving 350 years ago. Until recently most schoolchildren believed that the Pilgrims cooked the entire Thanksgiving feast, and offered it to the Indians. In fact, the feast was planned to thank the Indians for teaching them how to cook those foods. Without the Indians, the first settlers would not have survived.

(<http://wenku.baidu.com/view/bb940e21dd36a32d3758129.html>)

1. What is the name of the ship when the Pilgrims sailed to America?
 - A. May Flower.
 - B. Not mentioned.
 - C. May.
 - D. Pilgrim.
2. The Americans celebrate Thanksgiving Day on _____.
 - A. the first Thursday of November
 - B. the second Thursday of November



- C. the third Thursday of November
D. the fourth Thursday of November
3. What are the most traditional and favorite food on Thanksgiving Day?
A. Roast turkey and pumpkin pie.
B. Apples, oranges, chestnuts, walnuts and grapes.
C. Plum pudding and mince pie.
D. Cranberry juice and squash.
4. _____ taught the settlers to grow corn.
A. The Spanish
B. The English
C. Iroquois Indians
D. The French
5. Who suggested the date November 26 as Thanksgiving Day?
A. Abraham Lincoln.
B. George Washington.
C. George Bush.
D. Bill Clinton.
6. _____ are the symbols of thanksgiving.
A. Turkey
B. Corn
C. Pumpkins and cranberry sauce
D. All of the above
7. Which of the following statements is NOT true?
A. Turkey, corn, pumpkins and cranberry sauce are symbols which represent the first Thanksgiving.
B. Sweet-sour cranberry sauce, or cranberry jelly, was on the first Thanksgiving table and is still served today.
C. The first settlers could live without any help from the Indians.
D. Without the Indians, the first settlers would not have survived.
8. During their first winter, over half of the settlers died of _____.
9. Almost every culture in the world has held _____ of thanks for a plentiful harvest.
10. The Thanksgiving ceremony was a _____ of the Indians' role in the first Thanksgiving 350 years ago.



Passage Three

Halloween

On October 31st, dozens of children dressed in costumes knock on their neighbors' doors and yell "Trick or Treat" when the door opens. Pirates and princesses, ghosts and popular heroes of the day all hold bags open to catch the candy or other goodies that the neighbors drop in. As they give each child a treat, the neighbors exclaim over the costumes and try to guess who is under the masks.

Since the 800's, November 1st is a religious holiday known as All Saints' Day. The Mass that was said on this day was called Allhallowmas. The evening before became known as All Hakkiw e'en, or Halloween. Like some other American celebrations, its origins lie in both pre-Christian and Christian customs.

October 31st was the eve of the Celtic new year. The Celts were the ancestors of the present-day Irish, Welsh and Scottish people. On this day ghosts walked and mingled with the living, or so the Celts thought. The townspeople baked food all that day and when night fell they dressed up and tried to resemble the souls of the dead, hoping that the ghosts would leave peacefully before midnight of the new year.

Much later, when Christianity spread throughout Ireland and October 31st was no longer the last day of the year, Halloween became a celebration mostly for children. "Ghosts" went from door to door asking for treats, or else a trick would be played on the owners of the house. When millions of Irish people immigrated to the United States in the 1840s the tradition came with them.

Today school dances and neighborhood parties called "block parties" are popular among young and old alike. More and more adults celebrate