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大学英语快速 阅读 2

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前言

《大学英语快速阅读》(2)为北京大学出版社出版的大学英语立体化网络化系列教材之一,共收短文三十二篇。内容涉及人生价值与追求、学习与就业、旅游观光、环境保护、缤纷社会、服务与经济、纵深报道、科学与自然等方面。按主题分为八个单元。

编写此书时,编者除注意到内容的科学性、文化性、可读性和趣味性外,还突出体现了内容的丰富性、新颖性以及语言的地道性和准确性,同时对其实用性也给予了充分的注意,以满足广大院校学生的需求。

此教材旨在帮助读者扩大英语词汇量,提高快速阅读速度和增强阅读理解能力,从而广泛深入地了解有关历史、文化、经济、风俗、人情以及自然科学和人文科学方面的信息。本教材着重学生英语快速阅读策略和技巧的培养,通过本教材系统、科学的强化训练,学生的英语阅读速度可在短时间内得到大幅度提高。本教材是依据新颁布的《大学英语教学大纲》(修订版)关于大学英语四六级学生的快速阅读速度要求和《关于试点阶段的大学英语四级考试说明》,设计的单元练习。在练习设计上编者没有以语言为中心的旧模式侧重弄清每一个细节和看懂每一个词,而是侧重培养学生正确理解文章的大意、抓住主要事实和有关细节的能力,以及快速浏览和查读能力。题型的设计包括是非判断、句子填空和多项选择,练习数量为七题。同时编者还给出了每篇文章阅读所需要的时间,以供读者参考。对于篇幅少长且难度较大的文章可放慢阅读速度。

本教材适合我国高校非英语专业大学一年级第二学期开设快速

阅读课使用,也可作为四六级强化班的培训教材;同时也适合参加托福、GRE、雅思、考研等各种英语考试的广大考生学习使用。

由于编者水平和时间所限,难免还有不足之处,敬请广大读者批评指正。

编者

2005 年 11 月

Unit 1

Passage 1 (Time Required: 4'58")

On the Road to College

Vocabulary Tips

wink *n.* 一眨眼的时间

curvy *adj.* 弯曲的, 多弯的

browse *vt.* 浏览; 翻阅

college fairs 大学招生博览会

narrow *vt.* 使缩小; 使(观点等)变得狭隘

time-consuming *adj.* 耗时的; 花费大量时间的 go all the way 坚持到底

repetitive *adj.* 重复的; 重复多次的

folder *n.* 文件夹

short cut 捷径; 近路

bumpy *adj.* 颠簸的; 崎岖的

crucial *adj.* 关键的; 至关紧要的

availability *n.* 利用的可能性; 有效性

sophomore *adj.* 大学二年级的

overwhelm *vt.* 使不知所措

wear out 使疲乏; 使耗尽

Starting Time _____ Finishing Time _____

Attending college seems so far yet it is so near! High school goes by like a wink, but the road to college is a long one. However, there are short cuts, curvy ways, dull paths, and scenic routes. Sometimes the road is smooth as butter, and other times it is bumpy as rocks. For me, the process was half smooth, half bumpy, at times interesting, and time-consuming.

Before filling out a college application, there is much preparation to do. Researching for information was one of these crucial steps. I was not certain of which colleges to apply to and what programmes were offered. Thus, I went online, filled out several surveys and browsed university websites. Attending college fairs and talking to college representatives were useful, too. After I had a good feel for a few colleges, I requested brochures directly and visited campuses.

Other than considering the different academic programmes, I also looked into student organizations and availability of scholarships. I saw hundreds of options, but finally narrowed my list down to ten colleges. This part of preparation was the exciting first step, and I started to realize that I was going to college in a year!

During my research phase, I also had to study for standardized tests. Taking these tests was most difficult and time-consuming for me. The main reason was because I had just arrived for my sophomore year and had to take the SAT's during my junior year. My English level, especially my vocabulary base, was insufficient for me to do well. I was well prepared for the math section, but the verbal section was enough for me to worry about. I set up a plan, stuck to it, and spent much of my free time during junior year studying for this and other tests. Even though I was tired of the repetitive process of studying, taking tests, and then studying again, I knew I had to go all the way. And I'm glad I did, for I did my very best.

After all the preparation comes the tedious part: completing the actual application. I had requested and received all my applications during the summer before my senior year. Thus, I had looked through them and started thinking about essay topics, teachers to write recommendations, and my resume of activities. When I started my senior year, I was ready to go—essay finished, recommendation forms prepared, and a resume completed. I am fairly organized, but I was still overwhelmed by the amount of energy and time needed to complete applications for ten schools. I got a headache every time I thought of the unfinished forms sitting on my desk, saved in my computer, or tucked in my folders. By the end of December, I was pretty much worn out, but I had finished at last! I felt like jumping for joy, but letting out a huge sigh of relief was enough.

I sincerely felt that I had grown a year older or lost a few pounds after this months-long application process! However, the reality is that I learned what my future holds and how the person I have become can contribute to a college environment. Now, my part was complete—it was up to them.

(547 words)



Comprehension Exercises



Without referring back to the reading articles, do the following exercises.

I. Decide whether the statements are true (T) or false (F):

- Before filling out a college application, I was certain of which colleges to apply to. ()
- According to the article, we can conclude that completing American college applications is pretty time-consuming. ()

II. Fill in the blanks with the information you obtained from the reading:

- During the junior year in America, students have to take part in _____.
- After all the preparation for completing the actual application, the author had requested and received all her applications _____.

III. Select the best answer from the four options given below for each of the following questions:

- What is the crucial process before filling out a college application?
 - Collecting all the applications and asking for the teachers' help.
 - Preparing for attending standardized tests.
 - Making sure which colleges to apply to.
 - Researching for the information relative to the problem.
- Which of the following doesn't belong to what the author followed to do after the enough preparation for applications?
 - Browsing university websites.
 - Attending college fairs and talking to college representatives.
 - Starting thinking about essay topics.
 - Looking into student organization and availability of scholarships.
- After the months-long application process, the author felt that _____.
 - she had to go all the way
 - she learned what her future held and how to contribute to a college environment
 - she would never apply for the offers to the universities
 - she was tired of the repetitive process of studying and taking tests

Youth is the season of hope.

青春是希望的季节。



Better College Loans

Vocabulary Tips

incentive *n.* 奖励;鼓励

maximum *n.* 最大限度;(法定的)最高极限

subsidy *n.* 津贴;补助金;补贴

payment *n.* 制服的款项

default *n.* 违约;不履行

implementation *n.* 贯彻;执行

call for 号召;要求

recipient *n.* 领受者;接受者

fierce *adj.* 激烈的;残忍的

see *vt.* 保证

compensate *vt.* 补偿;赔偿

hinder *vt.* 阻碍;妨碍

previously *adv.* 以前

obligation *n.* 责任;义务

Starting Time _____ Finishing Time _____

The government has been pushing a new student loan programme to help some poor and needy students with their schooling, since the new semester started on September 1.

A new National Student Loan Assistance Programme, announced last Wednesday, is said to be an improvement on the old one that began in 1999. That's because it makes thing easier for students and has more incentives for commercial banks.

Changes for Students

The first change is that loan recipients have one to two years after graduation to pay off the loan and six years maximum from the time the loan is made. And it has had favourable response from students.

Under the old system, the loan had to be repaid within four years. This means that, if a student were to get the loan in his freshman year, he would have had to pay it off right after graduating.

"The extended repayment terms may take some pressure off me," said one Peking University grad student named Liu, who has been receiving financial aid since 1999. "Due to the fierce competition for jobs, I'm not sure I can find work immediately after graduation and start repaying it. Now, there's less need to worry," he said.

In addition, the government provides certain subsidies to help students cover the interest payments while they are still at university. But in the past, they had to pay 50 per cent of the interest, with annual interest around 5 per cent.

Under the new policy, if, for example, a student were to get a loan of 10,000 yuan per year, and could avoid having to pay the 5 per cent interest charge, he could save 2,000 yuan in a four-year period.

Encouraging Banks

The new policy also takes banks into consideration.

It gives those reluctant to loan money to students a bit of a push. It says that they can be compensated by the government and universities at a rate of about 10 per cent of the amount of the loan no matter what the student does.

Student loans defaults have been a recurring headache for banks in recent years. The high default rate has hindered the further implementation of the programme.

In Liaoning Province, for example, student defaults were running as high as 20 per cent. This discouraged banks from making student loans. The 5.2-billion-yuan worth of loans in recent years has only reached half the government's loan target. The new policy takes some of the pressure off banks and if the default rate is below 10 per cent, they can still show a profit. The policy has had a fairly good reception from the banks. And, they have been more active in responding to government calls for student loan providers, said Tang Shuangning, vice president of China's Banking Regulatory Commission.

And the new policy also gives the universities more responsibility.

Previously, universities didn't have any legal obligation under the programme. That is now changed and universities will have to make their students more credit aware and be more active in seeing that they repay the loans on time. That is because they will have to pay if the student fails to make the loan payment on time.

This is to get the universities to play a more active role. The reason is that, since loans are meant to help students study, the universities should make students aware.

(564 words)



Comprehension Exercises



Without referring back to the reading articles, do the following exercises.

I. Decide whether the statements are true (T) or false (F):

1. The government has just announced another new National Student Loan Assistance Programme, just before the author wrote the article. ()
2. According to the new policy, the recipients have to pay off all the loans in eight years after they get them. ()

II. Fill in the blanks with the information you obtained from the reading:

3. As a matter of fact, the new programme is simply _____ on the old one that began in 1999.
4. Through the information, giving those reluctant to loan students a bit of push, we know that the new policy has already _____.

III. Select the best answer from the four options given below for each of the following questions:

5. The old loan system required that students should repay the loan _____.
A. in two years after they got it
B. before they graduated
C. right after they graduated
D. in about six years
6. According to the article, which of the following is true?
A. The new policy has already considered the benefit of loan providers.
B. Students are dissatisfied with the new policy.
C. Universities could get interest from the loans that students repaid.
D. University used to play a very active role in seeing that students repaid the loans on time.
7. The new policy doesn't involve _____.
A. the time for students to pay off the loan is delayed two years comparing with the old one
B. the government gives the banks that loan money to students some compensation
C. now the loan recipient at school can obtain certain subsidies to cover the interest payments
D. under the old system, students had to pay 50 per cent of the interest of the loan per year

To choose time is to save time.
合理安排时间,就等于节约时间。



They Are Looking for Better Minds

Vocabulary Tips

senior *n.* (大学) 四年级学生

multinational *n.* 跨国公司

work out 设计出; 制定出

learn from 从……习得; 借鉴

favour *vt.* 喜爱; 宠爱; 赞成

recruiter *n.* 招聘人员

teamwork *n.* 配合; 协力

high season 旺季

times *n.* 时期

hire *vi.* 接受雇佣

joint venture 合资企业

intense *adj.* 强烈的; 剧烈的

obstacle *n.* 障碍

entry-level *adj.* 初级(水平)的

Starting Time _____ Finishing Time _____

It's November once again. And college seniors all over the country are putting aside their text books and getting busy with resumes and interviews.

Ren Zhanzhong, head of the China Higher Education Career Centre, reminds us that 3.4 million students will graduate in 2005. That's an increase of 600, 000 from this year.

These students are preparing for the high season of campus hiring, a time when many opportunities will appear.

And HR departments of well-known multinationals like Siemens, IBM and Sony are experiencing one of the busiest times of the year, working out hiring plans and providing lectures and other activities to attract better students.

Fresh Minds

Many companies favour university grads. They want new blood and new ideas.

Siemens Communications China is one of these companies. In 2002, the average age of its employees was 38. By 2004, that had dropped to 29, following the hiring of many young people, Li Jing, project director of the strategic products management department, said earlier this month.

IBM China tells a similar story. Out of about 3,000 employees of this leading IT company, at least 30 per cent came directly from universities.

"University students are young, creative, energetic, and open-minded. They bring new things to our company. And we've learned from many years' experience that new grads stay longer in their first company than job hoppers," said Michael Kwang, an executive at IBM China.

This year, IBM China will hire about 400 university grads, compared with 200 last year.

Siemens China plans to hire a similar number, 150 new people for its country headquarters in Beijing and 245 people for joint ventures and branches.

No Experience, No Worry.

Because of the intense competition in the job market, many students fear that a lack of practical work experience will be an obstacle. However, some recruiters don't think it's a big problem.

Bai Wenjie, HR director of IBM China said: "We consider an applicant's basic qualities a lot, instead of his or her work experience. We know that college students don't have lots of experience, but we do want people who have a strong learning ability and a good teamwork spirit."

Zhang Yanmei, human resources director at Sony China, expressed it this way: "I think everyone has experience. Do you play video games or listen to the radio or an MP3 player? We also consider that experience at Sony!"

English Is Essential

For most multinationals, English is the working language. So, basic language skills, especially in oral English, are needed.

According to Bai, IBM is a multinational with employees from all over the world. If a person's English is not so good, he or she might meet some difficulties in communicating with colleagues.

For Japan-based Sony, a good command of English is also very important. "In Sony China, we don't require employees to speak Japanese. English is our working language. Many senior employees in Sony China don't speak Japanese at all. So students don't have to worry about this," said Zhang.

Students welcome these campus recruitment lectures. Zhang Yong, at the University of International Business and Economics, says that lectures gave him a clearer idea of what to do to be competitive for entry-level positions and what multinationals would expect from grads.

Deng Jianhui, Party vice-secretary at Tsinghua University's Information Science and Technology School, says universities welcome companies to come give students a real feel of the professional world outside the more theoretical lessons of college classes.

(579 words)



Comprehension Exercises



Without referring back to the reading articles, do the following exercises.

I. Decide whether the statements are true (T) or false (F):

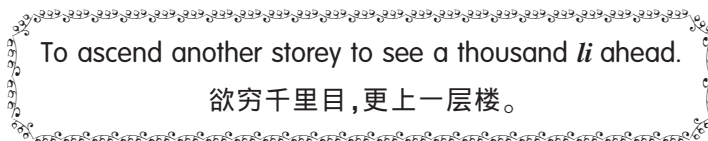
1. One of the usual methods take an occupation for college senior is to take part in the recruitment sessions, such as the campus hiring. ()
2. From the article, we've learned that both IBM China and Siemens China hope to hire university students. ()

II. Fill in the blanks with the information you obtained from the reading:

3. Many companies favour university grads because they want _____.
4. In order to attract better students, in advance IBM and Sony would take some effective measures like _____, _____ and _____.

III. Select the best answer from the four options given below for each of the following questions:

5. An executive at IBM China thinks that _____.
 A. university grads usually work harder than the others in the company
 B. university grads can bring new things to the company
 C. it is very easy to administer the university grads during the work
 D. university grads pay less attention to salary
6. English is essential for university grads because _____.
 A. some employees in many companies can only speak English
 B. it is the working language for communication in most multinationals
 C. with the improvement of the society communication in English is necessary
 D. they can not cooperate well with the other colleagues if they do not master it
7. In the article, which of the following is not mentioned by the author?
 A. Lectures given to college seniors by some companies are welcome by universities.
 B. By listening to the recruitment lectures, university grads can get a real feel of the professional world outside the more theoretical lessons of college classes.
 C. IBM emphasizes the learning ability and teamwork spirit when they recruit new Employees.
 D. Many companies are unwilling to hire university grads for their requirements usually are a little high.



Meeting the Challenge

Vocabulary Tips

readjustment *n.* 再调整

surface *vi.* 呈现, 浮现

climb *vi.* 逐渐上涨

prospect *n.* 前景

pose *vt.* 造成, 形成

overall *adj.* 全面的

merit *vt.* 值得; 应受

self-interest *n.* 利己, 私利; 自身私利

perpetually *adv.* 永久性地; 连续不断地

respectively *adv.* 各自地; 分别地

rigid *adj.* 严格的

exert *vt.* 产生 (影响等)

proportion *n.* 比例

obstruct *vt.* 阻挡; 阻碍

vocational *adj.* 职业的, 行业的

qualification *n.* 资格; 资格证明

money worship 拜金主义

arise from 由……引起, 由……产生

inevitable *adj.* 不可避免地

entail *vt.* 把……给予

Starting Time _____ Finishing Time _____

This world changes everyday. This world is in constant readjustment of itself. Change is the most popular word today. We are in the process of changing from the industrial society to a service and information society.

Likewise, China is changing and readjusting itself. China is in the process of reforming itself, freeing itself from the rigid planned economy and at the same time establishing and improving a socialist market economy. The Chinese society is changing in the process of reforming and reforming in the process of change. During this process, many problems have been resolved and meanwhile new problems have surfaced, among which the following four problems, in particular, are exerting the heaviest impact on China today and possibly on China tomorrow.

1. The aging of the population. The population of the old and very old citizens is climbing, while the proportion of children—particularly urban children—in the whole Chinese population is declining. This will obstruct the development of our national economy, and threaten the sound development of our health care system, retirement system and other benefits systems.

2. Threatened employment. The continuous industrial restructuring places a stricter

requirement on the entry into new jobs as well as on employees' vocational qualifications. The growth of the service sector, the increasing demand for skilled workers, the pressure resulting from the intensifying competition at home and abroad, the problems resulting from the rural population migrating into cities, all pose a grave threat to the employment prospects at present and in the future, as well as to an overall improvement of the lives of the people.

3. Problems threatening families and children. The relative growth of divorce rate, a whole generation of youngsters growing up with the one-child-family background, people's frequent changes of their jobs and residence, etc., all these combine to pose problems for families and children.

4. Challenges to traditional social values. The phenomenon of money worship and obsession in our society, a growing concern with self-interests and neglect of public welfare exert negative impact on people's attitude towards many Chinese traditional virtues.

These problems merit the immediate attention and concern of every one, because they will affect the life of each of us. Arising from the changed economic and social conditions, these problems have nationwide and even world-wide consequences. During the process of urbanization and modernization, these problems are inevitable and there's no way for us to avoid any contact with them. The only way out of the worsening situation is for us to learn to deal with them.

On the other hand, the perpetually changing society brings us not just problems, but opportunities as well. Change can be viewed as something that constantly generates challenge and crises, and challenge, in our view, is the opportunity to build a better society. The word of crisis in Chinese is one with two characters, *wei* and *ji*, meaning respectively danger and opportunity. Thus, *weiji* entails opportunities. Social changes in China create problems for the society and meanwhile more opportunities for the people. In the economic globalization today, let us meet challenges, embrace opportunities, shoulder responsibilities and work together to make tomorrow a better day.

(527 words)



Comprehension Exercises



Without referring back to the reading articles, do the following exercises.

I. Decide whether the statements are true (T) or false (F):

1. China is making itself free from the rigid planned economy and meanwhile establishing and improving a socialist market economy. ()
2. Social changes in China create not just problems for the society, but more opportunities for the people. ()

II. Fill in the blanks with the information you obtained from the reading:

3. China is in the process of changing from _____ to a service and _____ society.
4. Changes can generate challenge and crises, but in our view it is also the opportunity _____.

III. Select the best answer from the four options given below for each of the following questions:

5. The ageing of the population will hinder _____.
A. the economy reforming of China
B. the development of our national economy
C. the rate of employment of China
D. the life of each of Chinese
6. Threatened employment is restricted by _____.
A. the traditional social values of China
B. the population of China
C. the continuous industrial restructuring
D. the phenomenon of money worship and obsession in our society
7. People's attitudes towards Chinese traditional virtues are impacted by _____.
A. the rapid development of China
B. the economy reforming of China
C. the continuous industrial restructuring
D. the growing concern with self-interests and neglect of public welfare

