

南昌理工学院精品教材

# VOA Special English Program

## 听力测试

### 实训教程

- Environment Report
- Agriculture Report
- Development Report
- Economic Report
- Health Report
- Science in the News
- Exploration
- People in America



主 编 余富斌  
副主编 吴 超 毛忠英

江西科学技术出版社

# VOA Special English Program

## 听力测试 实训教程

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## 前言

Special English 又叫“慢速英语”,是 VOA 专为全世界非英语国家初学英语的听众安排的一种简易、规范的英语广播节目。该节目所涉及的词汇由美国英语中最常见的 1500 个基本单词为主体构成,且播放时用的语句比较简短、明晰,播放的速度以每分钟 90 个单词的速度进行,即  $\frac{2}{3}$  的 standard English(标准速度)。由于这个节目适合许多国家英语学习者的需要,所以它的广播对象不久就扩大到世界其他地区,并很快在全世界范围内产生了广泛的影响。

Special English 节目对播音的速度、内容以及用词范围都作了具体规定,基本上达到了既能为英语学习者提供信息、又不损害英语本身风格的目的,使之成为 VOA 独具特色、拥有最大量听众的节目。教育部颁布的《高等学校英语专业基础阶段教学大纲》中明确规定了英语专业一年级学生必须听懂 Special English 广播节目。

编者根据高等职业院校学生的实际英语水平和能力,针对 2002 下半年和 2005 最新的 VOA 特别英语广播,从中精选了近 100 余篇有学习价值的专题节目,经过细致的加工整理编写了本教程。本教程收集了 Special English 专题节目中的 Environment Report(环境报道)、Agriculture Report(农业报道)、Development Report(发展报道)、Economic Report(经济报道)、Health Report(健康报道)、Science News(科学新闻)、Explorations(自然探索)、美国人物志(People in America)特色节目,不仅能迅速提高学习者纯正的语音语调,短时间内迅速提高对英语的感受力,而且可以使学生了解美国在科学、文化、经济、农业、环境和卫生等方面的最新成果,获取社会信息,拓宽知识视野。

本教程对大学生参加英语应用能力考试,大学四、六级考试大有帮助。每课后面配有难度适宜的练习,特别适合中学生、大学低年级学生和英语初学者,也适合其他英语专业人员使用。英语听力由此入门,让您彻底告别“聋哑英语”。

全书由余富斌教授统稿并审定,各章节的编者为:吴超编写第一章,胡海琼编写第二章,李萍编写第三章、第六章,张默欣编写第四章,赵红编写第五章、第八章,毛忠英编写第七章,赵波、邱敏蓉、黄卫军编写了各章 2005 年的报道。由于时间仓促、编者水平有限,错误和缺点在所难免,敬请各位专家和同仁不吝赐教。

编者  
2006 年 9 月

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# Chapter 1

## Environment Report

### Unit 1 Air Pollution/Lung Cancer

*Broadcast: March 22, 2002*

Researchers have completed a major study on the health effects of air pollution common in many large American cities. The study shows that air pollution increases the risk of death from lung cancer and other diseases. They say people living in heavily polluted areas have a sixteen percent higher risk of dying of lung cancer than people in less polluted areas. They say the risk is similar to that of someone living with a person who smokes cigarettes.

The latest study involved five-hundred-thousand people in more than one-hundred American cities. The researchers examined their health records from Nineteen-Eighty-Two through Nineteen-Ninety-Eight. They also gathered information about air pollution in the cities where the people lived. Researchers say the higher lung cancer risk is linked to pollution caused by small particles of soot from coal-burning power centers, factories and motor vehicles.

Power centers built before Nineteen-Eighty produce about half the nation's electricity. However, they also produce most of the power industry's dangerous pollutants. These include sulfur dioxide, nitrogen oxide and soot. Air pollution levels have decreased during the past twenty years because of better enforcement of clean air laws. Yet levels of small particle pollution in major cities are at or above pollution limits set by the Environmental Protection Agency.

The E-P-A set new pollution limits in Nineteen-Ninety-Seven after studies showed a link between small particle pollution and lung cancer. However, power companies have taken legal action against the agency to delay the restrictions. Environmental groups have long suggested that pollution from power centers has led to a sharp increase in deaths from lung diseases. They have urged action to either close the factories or force them to put in anti-pollution equipment. The American Lung Association says the latest findings show the urgent need to clean up aging power factories.

Experts who have spent years examining the links between pollution and sicknesses generally support the latest study. The Environmental Protection Agency says it will consider the research as part of its continuing study of air quality rules on small particle pollution.

#### *New words and expressions*

soot  
pollutant  
sulfur  
nitrogen

n. 烟灰; 黑烟, 煤烟  
n. 污染物质, 污染物  
n. 硫磺, 硫黄  
n. 氮

restriction  
anti  
urgent  
the Environmental Protection Agency  
The American Lung Association  
put in

n. 限制, 约束  
a. 反对的, 反对  
a. 紧迫的, 非常重要的  
(美国)环境保护署  
美国肺脏协会  
安装, 装置

### Notes

Researchers have completed a major study on the health effects of air pollution 研究人员已经完成了一项空气污染对人的健康影响的研究……

caused by small particles of soot from coal-burning power centers, factories and motor vehicles. 由燃烧煤的发电中心、工厂、机动车辆所释放的煤烟微粒引起的

### Exercise

Answers the following questions briefly according to the text:

1. Which is one of the major causes of lung cancer?
2. What are the most dangerous pollutants in the power centers?
3. What does EPA stand for?
4. What does EPA do in the anti-pollution movement?
5. For what purpose does EPS do a lot of researches?

## Unit 2 Antarctic Ice

**Broadcast: February 1, 2002**

New measurements show that ice in West Antarctica is thickening. Scientists concerned about global warming had worried that higher temperatures could melt the huge ice sheet in Antarctica. That could cause sea levels around the world to rise. However, some experts have said there is little evidence that global warming is responsible for melting the ice sheet.

Antarctica is the continent that surrounds the South Pole. It is the coldest and iciest area in the world. Stormy waters of the Atlantic, Indian and Pacific oceans separate Antarctica from other continents.

The Antarctic icecap is a thick layer of ice and snow that buries most of the continent. If the ice melted, the earth's oceans would rise and flood coastal cities around the world. Large, flat sheets of the icecap called ice shelves float in water near Antarctica. The Ross Ice Shelf is the largest one. Several rivers of the West Antarctica ice sheet flow into the ice shelf. Huge pieces of the ice shelf break off and slowly melt into the sea. The West Antarctica ice sheet currently covers more than nine-hundred-thousand square kilometers. The new study was done by researchers at the California Institute of Technology and the University of California at Santa Cruz. They studied several ice streams in West Antarctica that lead into the Ross Ice Shelf. The ice streams are similar to large flowing rivers of ice. The researchers used new satellite ra-



## Unit 3 Nuclear Waste

**Broadcast: January 25, 2002**

The United States Energy Department has approved building a huge nuclear waste burial center at Yucca Mountain in the state of Nevada. The nuclear waste dump would be used to bury about seventy-thousand tons of nuclear waste material.

The material includes used nuclear fuel from power centers and waste from the production of nuclear weapons. The waste is now stored at power centers around the country. However, these power centers have little storage space left.

The federal government owns Yucca Mountain. No one lives there. It is in an extremely dry area more than one-hundred-forty-five kilometers northwest of Las Vegas, Nevada.

Energy Secretary Spencer Abraham recently told Nevada state officials that the nuclear waste burial project is scientifically acceptable. He also said placing all of the country's nuclear waste at Yucca Mountain would help protect against terrorist attacks.

Mister Abraham said he will ask President Bush to approve the project. Officials of nuclear power industries also support the plan.

However, there is much opposition to the plan. Opponents include environmental groups, Nevada state officials, the two United States senators from Nevada and the Senate majority leader.

The dispute about Yucca Mountain has continued for many years. The federal government says the area is a good place for a nuclear waste dump because of its lack of population and low rainfall.

But opponents say the area is near inactive volcanoes and has experienced earthquakes. Movements in the earth could spread the radioactive material. Opponents say they are not sure if the rock could hold the waste and keep it from entering water underground.

Opponents also say the nuclear waste would have to be transported by trucks and trains across more than forty states to reach the proposed dump. They fear accidents could happen during this travel. Any such accident could endanger the population.

Congress still must approve the plan. Then the Energy Department must request permission for the project from the Nuclear Regulatory Commission. The commission must hold hearings. Then hearings must provide evidence that Yucca Mountain could hold the nuclear wastes for ten-thousand years, as government rules require.

### *New words and expressions*

dump	v. 倾倒(垃圾), 倾卸 n. 卸货场; 垃圾站
terrorist	n. 恐怖分子
opposition	n. 反对, 敌对
opponent	a. 对立的, 对抗的 n. 对手, 反对者
senator	n. 参议院议员

dispute  
hearing  
Congress  
the Energy Department  
Las Vegas  
Nevada  
protect against  
keep...from doing something

n. 争论, 辩论, 争吵  
n. 听证会; 听力, 听取意见  
(美国) 国会, 议会  
(美国) 能源部  
拉斯维加斯(美国著名的赌城)  
内华达州(美国西部内陆州)  
保护, 使……免于  
阻止, 妨碍

### Notes

Yucca Mountain: 丝兰山, 位于美国内华达州拉斯维加斯西北 145 公里, 那里荒芜人烟, 降水稀少, 气候干旱, 是美国核废料填埋中心。

### Exercise

Choose the best answer to complete the following sentences according to the text:

1. The nuclear waste \_\_\_\_\_ would be used to bury nuclear waste materials.  
A. dump      B. dung      C. town      D. tank
2. The waste material includes \_\_\_\_\_.  
A. used nuclear fuel      B. waste from the production  
C. only A not B      D. both A and B
3. Yucca Mountain is in \_\_\_\_\_.  
A. Nevada      B. northwest of Las Vegas  
C. a dry area      D. the area in which nobody lives
4. Opponents to the plan are \_\_\_\_\_.  
A. environmental groups      B. Nevada state officials  
C. two senators from Nevada      D. A, B and C
5. The reasons in opposition to the plan is \_\_\_\_\_.  
A. lack of population      B. low rainfall  
C. near inactive volcanoes      D. volcanoes and earthquakes

## Unit 4 World's Forests Endangered

**Broadcast: April 19, 2002**

Many of the world's forests are quickly disappearing because of increased development. The World Resources Institute, based in Washington, D -C, recently completed a report about the problem. It says forty percent of the world's undeveloped forest areas could be lost in ten to twenty years.

The report includes the results of a two-year study of almost half the world's forests. It includes forests in Chile, Venezuela, Indonesia, Russia, Central Africa and North America. The study is based on maps produced by a group linked to the World Resources Institute called

## Global Forest Watch.

The maps combine satellite technology with information from the ground. The maps show illegal tree cutting, mining and road development in areas once thought to be undamaged forest land. The report says most of the threat is a result of bad economics, poor supervision and dishonesty.

The World Resources Institute says Russia is one example. Russia has the largest forest area in the world. Yet, only twenty-five percent of forests in Russia today remain undamaged. Global Forest Watch says Russia's forests are disappearing because of tree-cutting, fires set by people and other activities.

In Indonesia, about seventy percent of trees are cut illegally. In Venezuela, tree cutting and mining activities threaten natural forest areas. Central Africa also was named in the report as another example of poor land management.

Global Forest Watch says government policies often support short-term economic gain, instead of long-term efforts to protect forests. In Chile, for example, government policies urge people to plant new trees by clearing native forests that are thousands of years old. As a result, ancient forests and the second-oldest living trees in the world are in danger.

The report notes that many countries have passed new laws to better protect forests. However, such laws are not always enforced.

Some companies are beginning to make better business decisions designed to protect the environment. They promise to avoid wood products that are cut illegally or in a destructive way. Global Forest Watch says the health of the world's remaining forests will depend on how well countries supervise and protect those areas.

### *New words and expressions*

undeveloped	a. 不发达的, 未开发的
mining	n. 采矿; 采矿业
supervision	n. 监督, 管理
Chile	智利(南美洲西南部国家)
Venezuela	委内瑞拉(南美洲北部国家)
Global Forest Watch.	全球森林观察学会
the World Resources Institute	世界资源学会
as a result	结果

### *Notes*

includes the results of a two-year study of almost half the world's forests 包括对世界一半的森林进行了长达两年的研究结果。

the maps combine satellite technology with information from the ground (林业) 地图把卫星技术和来自地表的各类信息结合起来。combine... with 与……结合。

### *Exercise*

Choose the best answer to complete the following sentences according to the text:

1. The world's forests are endangered because of \_\_\_\_\_.

- |                               |                               |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| A. increased development      | B. decreased development      |
| C. increased underdevelopment | D. decreased underdevelopment |

2. The maps combined satellite technology with information from ground show \_\_\_\_\_.  
A. illegal tree cutting                      B. illegal mining  
C. illegal road development              D. all A, B and C
3. Russia has the largest forest areas in the world, Yet only \_\_\_\_\_ of forest in Russia today remain endangered.  
A. 15%                      B. 25%                      C. 35%                      D. 45%
4. Government policies often support short-term economic gain, \_\_\_\_\_ long term efforts to protect forest.  
A. besides                      B. in addition to                      C. instead of
5. The health of world's remaining forest will \_\_\_\_\_ how well countries supervise and protect those areas.  
A. look upon                      B. regard as                      C. report on

## Unit 5 Medicinal Plant Conservation

**Broadcast: April 12, 2002**

Throughout history, people around the world have used traditional medicines made from plants. Today, these medicines made from plants have gained new acceptance in the United States. However, the popularity of medicines and products made from plants has caused concern that some of these valuable plants may disappear from the wild.

Americans spend more than three-thousand-million dollars a year on herbal medicines. About sixty-million Americans use these medicines. More and more doctors are suggesting herbal medicines for their patients. However, there is little research on how best to use these resources without destroying natural populations of the plants.

Some medicinal plants are harvested in huge amounts. For example, thirty-four million ginseng plants have been harvested each year from eastern forests in the United States. Now, the National Park Service is trying to do more to discover how to preserve herbal medicines that may be disappearing from America's forests.

The Park Service helped organize the Plant Conservation Alliance. This group includes more than one-hundred forty government agencies, private groups and educational organizations.

Some members of the group gathered with business leaders in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania in February. Scientists, business representatives, as well as American Indian tribal leaders met to discuss the use of medicinal plants. The meeting explored concerns about medicinal plants that have not been dealt with before. The meeting did not produce a statement on policy. However, it did show why efforts are needed to preserve wild medicinal plants.

At least one -hundred-seventy-five different kinds of plants are harvested for use as medicine. Some are very common and are found in many areas. However, some medicinal plants are becoming rare. These include ginseng, which is used to increase energy, and echinacea, which is used to fight infection.

Concern for medicinal plant populations may have a wider effect. Some delegates to the conference noted that industries that use herbs in their products are now interested in preserving forests and natural areas. They say that undeveloped forests can be more profitable than developed land.

### *New words and expressions*

medicinal [me'disinəl]  
 popularity [ˌpɒpjʊ'lærɪti]  
 herbal [ˈhɜ:bəl]  
 ginseng [ˈdʒɪnsɛŋ]  
 preserve [prɪ'zɜ:v]  
 echinacea [ˌekə'neɪʃiə]  
 profitable [ˈprɒfɪtəbl]  
 the Plant Conservation Alliance  
 deal with

a. 医药的, 药的  
 n. 普及, 流行, 声望  
 a. 草药的  
 n. 人参, 西洋参, 高丽参  
 v. 保护, 保持,  
 n. 海胆亚目  
 a. 有利可图的, 可赚钱的  
 (美国)植物保护联盟  
 安排, 处理, 涉及

### *Notes*

has caused concern that... 已经对……引起了注意。  
 the meeting explored concerns about medicinal plants... 会议探讨了对于药用植物的关注……

### *Exercise*

Mark the following statements T(true) or F(false) according to the text;

1. Some valuable plants may disappear from the wild because of medicines and products made from them.
2. Americans spend some 30,000 million dollars on herbal medicine a year.
3. 34 million ginseng plants have been harvested each year from eastern forest in the United States.
4. Scientists, business representatives, members from the Plant Conservation alliance, as well as Indian tribal leaders held a meeting to discuss the use of medicinal plants.
5. Ginseng which is used to increase energy and echinacea which is used to fight infection are becoming rare in the United States of America.

## Unit 6 Carbon Dioxide

*Broadcast: January 25, 2002*

Carbon dioxide makes up less than one percent of the Earth's atmosphere. But the gas is very important to life on Earth. Scientists are finding that processes involving carbon dioxide affect our climate in ways that are difficult to understand.

Last month, a committee of the National Academy of Sciences in Washington released a



report. It confirmed that world temperatures increased about six-tenths of a degree Celsius in the last one hundred years. The report also confirmed evidence that the level of carbon dioxide is increasing.

The best information about climate in the past comes from tests of ice many kilometers deep in Antarctica and Greenland. The tests show changes in temperature during the past four-hundred-thousand years. These tests show that levels of carbon dioxide today are the highest ever measured. These findings have led scientists to believe that carbon dioxide is a major cause of climate warming.

Carbon dioxide is released into the atmosphere when fuel is burned. Oil, coal and wood are all fuels that release the gas. When biological waste breaks down, it also releases carbon dioxide.

However, plants use carbon dioxide in the process called photosynthesis. This process provides food for almost all life on Earth. Some groups that support burning oil and coal want to increase the amount of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. They oppose international efforts to control carbon dioxide.

Some scientists believe that forests and trees are able to capture large amounts of carbon dioxide from the air. Some groups even suggest that an increase in carbon dioxide could cause plants to grow faster.

A recent study in North Carolina found that more carbon dioxide in the air can cause trees to grow faster.

But the researchers found the effect appears to last for only three years. Another study showed that much of the carbon dioxide that is taken in by trees is released within three years. The study noted that leaves release carbon dioxide when they fall from trees and break down in the soil. Plants also naturally release carbon dioxide through the process of respiration.

The natural balance of gases in the atmosphere is a complex scientific issue. The debate over carbon dioxide is only one part of efforts to understand world climate change.

### *New words and expressions*

carbon [ˈkɑːbən]	n. 碳
dioxide [daɪˈɒksaɪd]	n. 氧化物
process [prəˈses]	n. 过程, 作用
confirm [kənˈfɜːm]	v. 进一步证实, 确定
biological [baɪəˈlɒdʒɪkəl]	a. 生物学的
respiration [ˌrespiˈreɪʃən]	n. 呼吸, 呼吸作用
complex [ˈkɒmpleks]	a. 复杂的, 综合的
issue [ˈɪʃuː]	n. 论点, 问题, 结果
debate [dɪˈbeɪt]	n. 争论, 辩论
the National Academy of Sciences	美国国家科学院
Celsius	摄氏度
Greenland	格陵兰(岛名, 位于北美洲的东北部, 属丹麦)
break down	毁掉, 分解

### *Notes*

... affect our climate in ways that are difficult to understand ..... 以我们很难理解的方式