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全国英语等级考试

教材

第四级

全新版

全国英语等级考试教材编写组

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编写说明

全国英语等级考试(Public English Test System,简称 PETS)是教育部考试中心设计开发的面向社会的英语考试体系。它的目的是更好地为国家的改革开放和对外交往的不断扩大服务,并为在适当时机进一步改革我国各种英语教育考试奠定技术基础。

PETS 测试的重点是英语交际能力。它根据国际英语教学界通行的交际语言活动模式,对语言能力进行分类和定义。在试卷结构上,根据不同层次的需要,设置了考查听、说、读、写各种技能的题型,并确保各级别都能全面考查考生的交际能力。

全国英语等级考试第四级为 5 个级别中的中上级。通过该级考试的考生,其英语水平基本满足攻读高等院校硕士研究生(非英语专业)的需要,基本符合一般专业技术人员或研究人员、现代企业经理等工作对英语的基本要求。为满足第四级考试培训和学习需要,全国英语等级考试教材编写组在已出版成功教材的基础上,根据教育部 2010 年《全国英语等级考试大纲》(第四级)(以下简称《全新版考试大纲》)组织修订了本教材。

编写原则

1. 以纲为纲,紧扣大纲

本书以《全新版考试大纲》为编写依据,覆盖了《全新版考试大纲》规定的语法项目、功能意念语和词汇项目。面向欲参加 PETS 四级考试的所有自学考生和培训班考生。

2. 模块式结构和实用性训练,便于学习和应试相互促进

本教材每单元均由会话、课文、单词和短语、注释、练习和补充阅读组成,每一个模块的设置都以考试大纲为依据,以训练考生听、说、读、写的交际能力为目的,并且在练习部分提供了与实际考试题型完全一致的实用性训练,既有助于考生英语交际能力和知识的提高,又能为其顺利通过考试铺平道路。

3. 选材新颖,知识性、趣味性并重

本教材题材新颖,时代感强。“会话”模块选材实用,情景真实。“课文”和“补充阅读”模块的选材与本单元的交际话题相关联,又各有侧重,前者侧重知识性,后者侧重趣味性,相得益彰。

4. 系列配套,尽情享受

本系列教材配有辅助同步学习的《教材同步学习指导》、《教材同步练习册》和 MP3 光盘。同步学习指导、练习册与教材各单元配合,提供同步复习和巩固练习;此外,本教材图文并茂、美观实用,不仅便于教师全方位授课、学生系统学习,更使教、学成为一种享受。

编写体例

本教材共有 12 章,每章覆盖一个交际话题。各章的首页提示简要描述了在本章(交际话

题)内 PETS 第四级考生应达到的英语交际水平。

本教材共有 16 个单元,每单元内容包括:

1. **会话** 该部分由与本单元交际话题相关的 2 段会话组成,会话情景真实、语言地道、长短恰当、难度适宜,目的是训练和提高学习者的听力水平。每段会话前,均有提示语点明会话的背景和数道依据会话内容设置的问题,以帮助考生充分理解和操练会话。

2. **课文** 课文是体现话题的阅读材料。每单元中均有一篇与该单元主话题相关的课文,目的是训练和提高考生的阅读理解水平。此外,每单元课文后均附有 5 个问题,以帮助考生了解自己对课文的理解程度。

3. **单词和短语** 单词和短语是本单元会话和课文中出现的生词和短语,并按在会话和课文中出现的先后顺序给出了单词的最新国际音标、词性和中文释义。

4. **注释** 注释针对会话和课文,内容包括两方面:一是从语法、词汇等方面点拨会话和课文中的难点;二是对长句难句进行语法分析,并举例讲解语言点、知识点,目的是训练考生灵活运用语言的能力。

5. **练习** 练习是针对各单元的话题和重点考试内容设计的,考生可以对该单元的学习情况进行检测。该部分题型与笔试、口试考试真卷要求一致,以便于考生全面备考 PETS 四级。

6. **补充读物** 为使考生对相关话题进行更深入的了解,提高阅读能力,在每单元最后附有一篇补充阅读。

7. **录音材料** 本书所赠的 MP3 光盘包括:会话、课文、词汇、补充阅读的英语朗读,以及每课听力练习题的录音材料;本书的配套辅导——《教材同步学习指导》一书中同步训练习题的听力试题录音和《教材同步练习册》中的听力练习录音。

以上录音均由北美专业播音员朗读,发音标准、口音地道;听力练习的朗读语音、语速、停顿时长、朗读遍数均与真实考试一致。

愿所有考生顺利通过考试,学到真正有用的知识!

全国英语等级考试教材编写组

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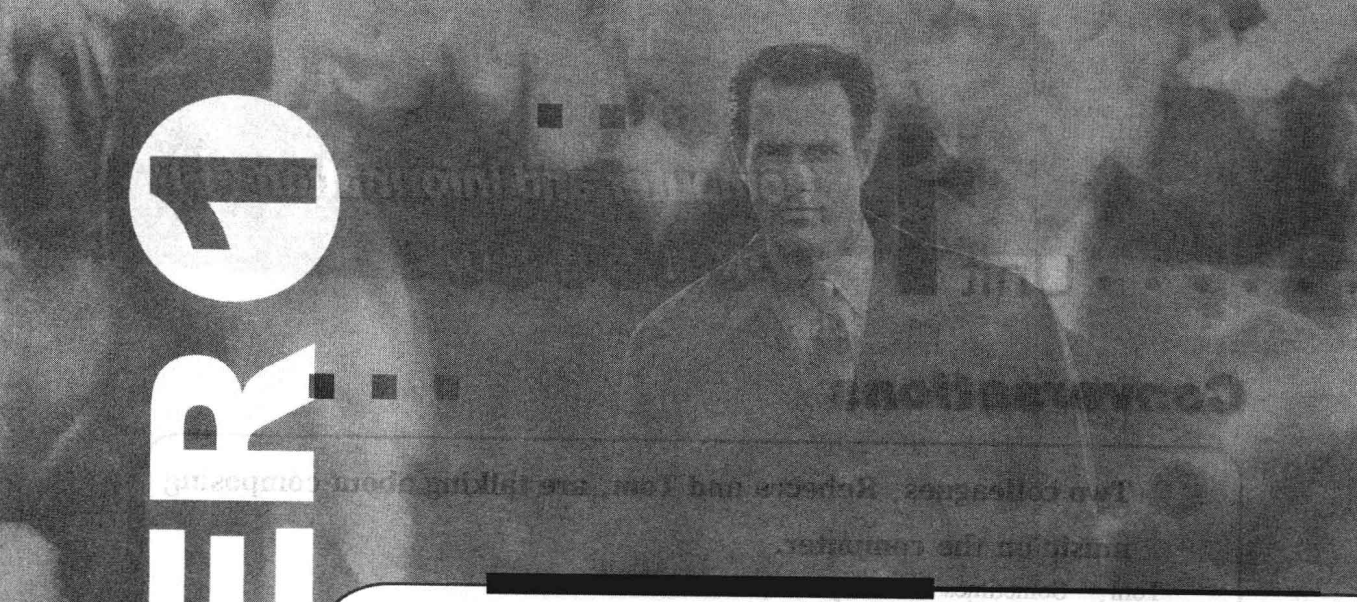


CHAPTER 1

第一章
COMPUTER AND INFORMATION
计算机与信息

学完本章，考生应能：

※ 用英语就计算机和网络的话题进行简单对话；

※ 掌握有关计算机方面的专业词汇和术语，读懂计算机方面的英文科普文章。

Unit 1 Computer and Information (I)
计算机与信息(I)

Conversations

1 Two colleagues, Rebecca and Tom, are talking about composing music on the computer.

Tom: Sometimes I feel my computer is alive.

Rebecca: I feel the same about my piano. But you know computers. . . They are just machines.

Tom: They are more than just machines.

Rebecca: What do you mean?

Tom: Composing a computer program is like composing music. I use computer language just like you use notes to create one new thing after another.

Rebecca: By the way, can you compose music on the computer?

Tom: Of course. I used to do it when I was in college.

Rebecca: You used to compose?

Tom: Yes. Computers let us try out different styles and ideas.

Rebecca: I agree. But you no longer compose?

Tom: No. I am too busy working now. You see, there is too much pressure from work.

Q

1. *What are the two speakers talking about?*
2. *Can Tom compose music on the computer?*
3. *Why does Tom no longer compose music on the computer?*
4. *What has Rebecca always wanted to be?*

Rebecca: I've always wanted to be a composer, I say, since I was in college. It's one of my dreams.

Tom: Your dream? I'm sure you would be good at it.

Rebecca: I'm afraid I'm too busy since I had a baby last year. I have to work, then you see at home a lot of chores are waiting for me.

Tom: If it is your dream, you'll make time one day. I really hope you will fulfil your dream.

2 Rebecca and Tom again are talking about the role of the Internet in education.

Rebecca: "Lifelong learning" has become a very fashionable term these days. Can you explain exactly what it means?

Tom: Well, it's a philosophy, or you may say an attitude towards learning. Traditionally we have thought of learning as something we did when we were young. We went to school, maybe college or university, then the majority went to work, and "learning" stopped. Well, nowadays, as you know, learning does not stop there.

Rebecca: You mean, we should be learning all the time we are working?

Tom: Exactly. We should be learning all the time we are living. You see, if you don't give up your dream, I mean, composing music, you are learning.

Rebecca: I see. But you know I can't afford to go to school.

Tom: This is where the Internet plays an important role. We can learn about everything from the Internet. It is an information service—it keeps us informed about whatever we want to know.

Rebecca: Can I get information about music, for example, any composers I want to know?

Tom: Of course. The Internet provides a medium of education that can be tailored to your needs. Let's compare that with the traditional way of gaining education—going to an educational institute and enrolling in classes. We join a class, have a teacher, probably some textbooks, and attend lessons.

Rebecca: It's so inconvenient for us adults.

Tom: That's right. But with the Internet, we can learn whenever we want in the comforts of our homes, and search for any information we need.

Rebecca: I feel so happy. Now, I can realize my dream without stepping out of my house.

Q

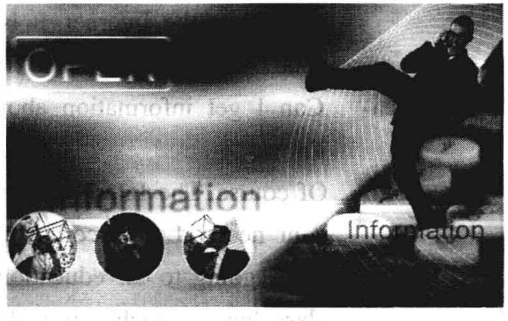
1. *What's the fashionable term they are talking about?*
2. *Does the Internet play an important role in people's life?*
3. *Can Rebecca get information about music from the Internet?*
4. *What is Rebecca's opinion on the traditional way of education?*

Passage

History of Computer

The first design for a programmable computer—one that would follow a set of instructions—is usually considered to be the "Analytic Engine" invented by English inventor Charles Babbage in 1832. His device was designed to perform a sequence of calculations using instructions input on punched cards, and it included a memory "store" and a processing unit. It was entirely mechanical in design.

Unfortunately, Babbage never assembled his computer, and it was not until the 1900s, with the invention of the electron tube, that components for a viable electronic computer became available. An electron tube is a device that can block, amplify, or act as an on/off switch for an electric current. During the 1920s and 1930s, scientists investigated how to link these devices in arrays that would accept electric signals representing numbers, process the signals according to programme, and output the results. Whereas electron-tube computers were huge, and programming them involved changing their circuitry by plugging and unplugging cables.



Aside from their large size, computers based on electron tubes had other drawbacks. The heating filaments in the tubes made the computers hot, and the filaments would often "blow". But in 1947, the development of the transistor by scientists at Bell Telephone Laboratories transformed the computer landscape. These tiny components were made from crystals of semiconductors such as germanium and silicon, and could do everything an electron tube could do, but were smaller and more reliable. Cheaper, more compact computers were soon in production, although some still occupied a whole room.

Along with the developments in hardware, there were changes in software. Originally, all instructions for computers were written in binary code ("machine code"). In 1951, a programmer named Grace Hopper proposed "reusable software", code that could be assembled according to instructions written in a "higher-level language" (something more closely resembling English). Hopper further proposed the concept of a compiler—a program that would translate instructions written in a higher-level language into machine code. FORTRAN, the first fully-fledged language, and its compiler were introduced in 1956. During this period, the punched cards and tape used to input data into computers were gradually replaced by magnetic tape and disks.

Integrated Circuits

In 1959, engineers at Texas Instruments showed that it was possible to incorporate many transistors, connected by metal tracks, onto one piece of silicon. This innovation became known as an integrated circuit, or "silicon chip", and the trend ever since is summarized in "Moore's Law": the number of transistors that can be put on a chip doubles every 12 to 18 months. Gordon Moore, who formulated this law in 1965, later cofounded the chip manufacturer Intel.

Integrated circuits soon led to the development of yet smaller, cheaper computers, called minicomputers. Although still too expensive for most individuals to afford, these were relatively simple to operate. Other innovations of the 1960s were keyboards for inputting data into computers and monitors for displaying these data and the results of calculations before they were printed out. In 1971, the floppy disk was introduced for data storage.

Microprocessors and Microcomputers

Although integrated circuits made computers smaller, the processing units still consisted of a number of circuits on separate chips. In 1971, an engineer working for Intel realized that a set of circuits commissioned for an electronic calculator could all be put onto one chip, and that the resulting device could be used as a general-purpose "computer on a chip". The result was the Intel 4004—the world's first microprocessor. Physically, it consisted of a silicon chip in a protective ceramic capsule, with a set of metal pins sticking out that connected it to other components in whatever device it controlled. It contained 2,300 transistors, executed 60,000 operations per second, and could be used for any device—including computers and robots—that required a "brain" for accepting input and following a program of instructions to produce an output. Within five years, many very powerful microprocessors had appeared. The invention of microprocessors set the stage for the arrival of the microcomputer, or personal computer (PC)—an affordable machine for the masses. The first PCs, in kit form, appeared in the mid-1970s, and by the mid-1980s machines such as the Apple Macintosh and those based on a PC first brought out by IBM in 1981 were popular throughout the world. The success of these machines led to an explosion of software, in particular a range of spreadsheet, word-processing, graphic, educational, and games programs. Since the 1980s, a number of strong-intertwined themes have driven the computer revolution forward, including a continuing increase in the processing power and decrease in the size and cost of PCs; a switch of emphasis from isolated to linked machines, as evidenced by the growth of local area networks and the Internet; and the spread of computer applications into virtually every aspect of home and business life.

Questions

1. *What is the function of an electron tube?*
2. *What are the drawbacks of computers based on electron tubes?*
3. *What is an integrated circuit? What does it result in?*
4. *Are microprocessors important in the history of computer? Why?*
5. *What has driven the computer revolution forward since the 1980s?*