

商务英语



# 阅读教程 3

## BUSINESS ENGLISH: A READING COURSE

学生用书 Student's Book

主 编 叶兴国  
本册主编 王嘉禔



New Century Business English 新世纪商务英语专业本科系列教材

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# 新世纪商务英语专业本科系列教材

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## 前言

近年来对外经济贸易大学、广东外语外贸大学和上海对外贸易学院等院校先后获教育部批准，试办商务英语本科专业。这标志着我国的大学教育朝满足经济社会发展的需求又迈进了一步，也标志着我国的商务英语教学跃上了新的层次。

改革开放以来，特别是加入世界贸易组织后，我国的国际商务环境发生了巨大的变化。以国际贸易为例，贸易事业的运行对象、政策领域、体制环境、管理方式和运行平台等方面已经发生了重大变化：贸易的运行对象已经从传统的货物贸易向包括货物贸易、服务贸易和知识贸易在内的“大贸易”拓展；贸易政策涉及的范围已经从过去单纯的贸易政策领域向与贸易有关的领域延伸；贸易的体制环境已经从封闭的国内贸易体制环境向开放的全球多边贸易体制环境转型；国家对贸易的管理方式已经从传统的内外贸分割管理向内外贸一体化管理的方向转变；贸易运行平台已经从传统的贸易运行平台转向数字化、信息化和网络化的贸易运行平台。

在新形势下，“国际贸易就是跨境商品买卖”这一传统定义已经难以涵盖当前国际贸易活动的丰富内涵。国际商务开始涵盖任何为了满足个人和机构需要而进行的跨境商业交易。具体地说，国际商务包括商品、资本、服务、人员和技术的国际流通，知识产权(包括专利、商标、技术、版权等)的跨境交易，实物资产和金融资产投资，用于当地销售或出口的来料加工或组装，跨国的采购和零售，在国外设立仓储和分销系统等。就所涉及的领域而言，国际商务涉及国际营销、国际金融、国际会计、国际审计、国际税收、国际结算、对外直接投资、国际物流、知识产权、电子商务和贸易法律等领域。就所涉及的行业而言，国际商务包括但不限于国际贸易、国际投资、物流、旅游、银行、广告、零售、批发、保险、电信、航空、海运、咨询、会计和法律服务等行业。在上述环境下使用的英语都可以归入国际商务英语的范畴。

为了使商务英语阅读教材更好地适应已经发生变化的国际商务环境，切实提高学生实际运用商务英语的能力，我们编写了《商务英语阅读教程》。本教程主要供高等院校商务英语专业本科、英语专业本科和财经类本科一、二年级学生使用，也可供具有相当英语水平的商界从业人员阅读。本教程注重能力培养，主要培养学生的阅读理解能力、细致观察语言的能力、逻辑思维能力、吸收语言知识和文化背景知识的能力、通过阅读获取信息的能力、以正常速度阅读和快速阅读的能力。本教程还将培养阅读兴趣、提高阅读技能、养成阅读习惯和扩大词汇量作为预设目标。

本教程执行《高等学校英语专业英语教学大纲》的词汇标准和阅读能力要求，第二册的词汇和阅读能力要求相当于二级要求，第四册的词汇和阅读能力要求相当于四级要求；在此基础上，增加商务英语词汇和阅读能力要求。

本教程力争体现以下特色：

**复合性：**选文力求体现一般英语文章和商务英语文章的复合，逐渐增加商务英语文章的数量。

**权威性：**一般英语文章尽量选自经典作家和经典著作，以第二册为例，课文中有爱因斯坦的*The World As I See It*，马克·吐温的*The Danger of Lying in Bed*，米勒的*Death of a Salesman*；商务英语文章尽量选自国外的权威刊物，如《财富》、《经济学家》、《商业周刊》、《读者文摘》、《广告时代》、《今日世界》、《当代管理》、《每月评论》、《时代周刊》、《新闻周刊》、《福布斯》、《远东经济评论》、《世界贸易》、《商业战略研究》、《金融战略》等。另外从互联网上选择了一些材料，兼收了一般英语文章和商务英语文章，在内容上兼顾了文章的经典性和新颖性。

可读性：选文力求短小精悍，内容隽永，特别注重文章的趣味性和可读性，以培养学生的阅读兴趣；另一方面，力求题材的丰富性和体裁的多样性。

系统性：每单元的阅读材料涉及国际商务的一个方面，如营销、金融、会计、跨国公司、投资、物流、贸易、保险、国际组织或政府间组织等。阅读技巧涉及词汇理解、句子理解、篇章理解、段落理解和快速阅读技巧等。篇幅上从短到长，难度上由浅入深，循序渐进。

除了上述特点，为了让大学生尽早阅读真实的，而不是专门为课本编写的英语文章，除个别晦涩难懂的词语，一般不对文章作任何改写，但在不影响文章连贯性的前提下对部分课文作了一些必要的删节。在选材过程中，力求一个单元的阅读材料具有某种内在联系。每册大约有500个生词。课文A和课文B的生词在课文旁列出；为提高阅读的流畅性，其他阅读材料中仅在生词后作随文注。在练习形式上，编者从课堂教学方面考虑，设计了一些讨论题，也安排了一些多项选择、正误判断、填空、词义配对和翻译等练习。在设计多项选择题时兼顾了细节事实、语义理解、逻辑推理和作者态度或观点等。所有练习均围绕文章中的疑点、难点、重点而设计。

本教程共四册，主要编写人员包括叶兴国教授(主编、第二册主编)、谢文怡教授(第一册主编)、王嘉祺教授(第三册主编)和翁凤翔教授(第四册主编)。甘翠平、李海燕、方芳参加了第三册的编写工作。

本教程的编写得到了上海市教委第五期重点学科外国语言学及应用语言学项目资助，项目编号为A-3102-06-000。许多专家学者对本教程的编写给予了帮助。在此，我们向关心和帮助本教程编写的所有人员一并表示衷心的感谢。

由于编者水平有限，书中难免有不妥甚至错误之处，我们恳切希望使用本教程的教师、学生和其他读者批评指正。

叶兴国

2009年9月于上海对外贸易学院



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# UNIT 1



## Part I Pre-reading Questions

- 
1. What is education?
  2. What is the function of education?
  3. Do you think education has realized one of its goals — the elimination of social inequality?



## Text A

### Getting In Gets Harder

*The children of the baby boomers are flooding colleges with applications, making the process more competitive than ever.* 1

When high-school senior Maxine Wally got rejected from Northwestern University last month, she lay down on her mother's bed and cried. She thought she had a good **shot**. Wally consistently took the toughest classes she could fit into her schedule, and her grade point average puts her near the top of the class at her well-regarded public high school in Berkeley, Calif. After months of researching Northwestern on the Web and **grilling** friends, teachers and advisers who had gone there, Maxine **pinned her hopes on** getting accepted. "I've been trying to tell her — gently — that getting into college can be very competitive," said Maxine's mom Wendy. "But young people," sighed Wendy, "want to follow their dreams." 5 10

For students like Maxine who are applying to college for next fall, that dream is turning out to be frustratingly unobtainable. It turns out the **odds** of getting into a selective college have never been worse. Why? It's simple **demographics**. A little less than two decades ago the biggest population **bulge** in the history of America, the baby boomers<sup>①</sup>, were busy having kids. Now those kids are in junior high school and high school and creating a demographic **boomlet** all their own. This spring the largest number of high-school graduates in the history of the country — some 3.32 million — will **don a cap and gown**, according to the U.S. Department of Education. Next year, at the peak of the peak, the number of high-school graduates is expected to **top** 3.33 million. "For many middle- and upper-middle-class kids, the transition from high school to college was never without some obvious stress," says Barmak Nassirian, spokesman for the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers. "But now it has become a multiyear nightmare." 15 20 25

Last year about three-quarters of four-year colleges and universities reported an increase in the number of applications from the previous year. This year applications are pouring in again. The deadline for most colleges is between Dec. 1 and Jan. 15, and although administrators don't **tally** the numbers of applications they receive until later in the year, many admissions officers — even some at schools not normally considered highly selective — are already calling it a **banner** year. Last year Washington and Lee University in Lexington, Va., got 4,000 applications for 455 seats. By the first week in December the school had already topped that number — and the deadline was still six weeks away. Colorado College, which received 3,410 applications for 500 seats in 2002, expects to break 5,000 this year. Last year Ball State in Muncie, Ind., saw applications jump 22 percent when it got 13,000 applications for 3,100 spaces. So far this year applications are up an additional 15 percent. 30 35 40

**Flagship** state schools, like the University of Texas at Austin, where the number of students applying has jumped from 14,982 to 27,237 in the last 10 years, are turning away more kids than they want to. "The positive side is that we get to be more selective," says Gary Lavergne, UT's director of admission research. "But when you see a kid collapse with grief because they didn't get in, well, that's not fun." 45

College counselors say that as schools get **choosier**, parents have grown more **resigned** to the realities of kids' prospects. "It used to be that parents would go crazy if their kid couldn't get into a status school," says Harvard admissions officer turned private college counselor Chuck Hughes, who 50

shot /ʃɒt/ n. 尝试

grill /grɪl/ v. (严厉)盘问

pin one's hope on 寄希望于

odds /ɒdz/ n. 可能性, 机会

demographics /, demə-  
'græfɪks/ n. 人口统计数据

bulge /bʌldʒ/ v. 暴涨, 突增  
boomlet /'bu:mɪlt/ n. 小景气, 略有繁荣

don /dɒn/ v. 穿上

cap and gown 方帽长袍

top /tɒp/ v. 超过; 多于

tally /'tæli/ v. 计算; 记录

banner /'bænə(r)/ a. 极好的, 出色的

flagship /'flæɡʃɪp/ n. 最佳物; 首要物

choosy /'tʃu:zi/ a. 好挑剔的  
resigned /rɪ'zænd/ a. 顺从的



runs a company called Road to College. “Now parents are starting to realize how crazy competitive it is.” To **hedge their bets**, kids are applying to more schools than ever, too. In 1991, 59 percent of prospective college students applied to three or more colleges. In 2006, 71 percent applied to three or more and 18 percent applied to seven or more.

College admissions officers are **split**. On the one hand, they say they don't like being forced to reject so many worthy kids. On the other hand, they're enjoying — and profiting from — the attention. As the number of applicants rises, admission becomes increasingly selective. Most parents and students equate selectivity with a quality education, which in turn encourages even more applications and allows colleges to become even more selective.

So, despite the fact that some schools are turning away larger and larger numbers of hopeful applicants, colleges are spending big bucks on marketing, about \$2,000 per student, to keep applications rolling in. And it's not just glossy brochures and interactive Web sites. Ball State, for instance, recently hired a public relations firm to create a brand image for the school and come up with a tag line (“Education, redefined”). These days the university advertises itself on billboards and through a series of **slick** television ads. When it comes to marketing, “sometimes it feels like we're all locked in an arms race,” admits Bryn Mawr admissions chief Jenny Rickard. “But no college wants to back away,” even though they are getting more than enough applicants to keep their institutions healthy.

At some colleges the **bumper** crop of applications<sup>®</sup> is causing crowd-control problems. For years Rutgers University has run a private bus to **ferry** prospective students and their parents around its **sprawling** New Brunswick, N.J., campus. But in the last five years, as the number of applicants has jumped from 26,000 to 43,000, there's no more room on the bus. By the first week in September parents had already reserved most of the spots through December. The university is looking at building a massive new visitors center to handle the overflow.

By 2015 the number of high-school graduates will begin to drop back out of the **stratosphere**. But admissions directors are already worrying about the shrinking pool of future applicants, especially the **sliver** of those who can afford to **foot** the \$40,000 annual **tab**. The most selective institutions have begun to aggressively recruit applicants from China, Korea, India and South America. Publicly, college admissions officers say they're encouraging international students to enroll in order to improve diversity on campus. At most colleges, though, the active **outreach** is directed at wealthy international students who can afford to pay the full **sticker price** of a private four-year education.

For her part, Maxine Wally is sad but resigned. The sheer numbers of applicants this year, she says, makes the process “feel almost random.” But a few days after her rejection from Northwestern she'd dried her tears and was putting the finishing touches on her applications to Barnard, New York University and Boston University. “I know I'm one of many, but that doesn't mean I'm not smart and driven and ready to be a committed student.”

Total Words: 1,121 words

Total Reading Time: \_\_\_\_\_ minutes \_\_\_\_\_ seconds

This text is taken from <http://www.newsweek.com>.

hedge one's bets 几面下注  
(以防损失)

split /splɪt/ v. 分裂

slick /slɪk/ a. 华而不实的

bumper /'bʌmpə(r)/ a. 特大的

ferry /'feri/ v. 运送

sprawling /sprɔ:ɪlɪŋ/ a. 不规则伸展的

stratosphere /'strætə(u)-  
sfɪə(r)/ n. 最上层, 最高阶段

sliver /'slɪvə(r)/ n. 一小部分  
或一小片

foot /fʊt/ v. 付钱

tab /tæb/ n. 账单

outreach /,aʊt'ri:tʃ/ n. 能达到的范围

sticker price 标价

## Notes

- ① baby boomer: 婴儿潮时期出生的人。主要指第二次世界大战后(1946—1965)美国出生的一代人。那一时期,随着美国经济的崛起,婴儿出生率和成活率急速增长。
- ② the bumper crop of applications: 文章取了bumper“异常巨大的,异常多的”一意。a bumper crop of或a bumper harvest of表示比平常更丰富、更丰盛的收获。文章中the bumper crop of applications则表示相比往年的情况,这一年的大学入学申请异常多。

## Exercises

### I. Answer the following questions about the text.

1. According to the text, why has the chance of getting into a college never been slimmer?
2. What are college admissions officers' attitudes towards the competitive enrollment of high-school graduates?
3. According to the text, what problems does the large number of high-school applicants bring to colleges and universities?
4. What are admissions directors worrying about? Are they taking any relevant measures?
5. How do you look at the same situation in China that has been prevailing for years?

### II. Choose the best answer to each of the following questions according to what is stated or implied in the text.

1. What does “a good shot” in line 5 refer to?
  - A. Maxine got a heavy blow from the rejection of her application by Northwestern University.
  - B. Maxine was stimulated by the rejection of her application and decided to apply to more colleges.
  - C. Maxine tried hard and almost did all she could to apply to Northwestern University.
  - D. None of the above.
2. Why does the author say 3.32 million high-school graduates this spring will don a cap and gown?
  - A. Because 3.32 million high-school graduates will be enrolled by colleges and universities this spring.
  - B. Because 3.32 million students will graduate from high schools this spring.
  - C. Because 3.32 million high-school graduates will go to jobs directly without furthering their studies in colleges and universities this spring.
  - D. None of the above.
3. Why do admissions officers call this year a banner year?
  - A. Because for most colleges, the number of applications this year drops sharply from the previous year.
  - B. Because for most colleges, the number of applications this year gains an increase from the previous year.
  - C. Because for most colleges, the number of applications this year is almost as the same as that of last year.
  - D. None of the above.
4. Which of the following schools can be classified as one of the “flagship state schools”?
  - A. The school with the largest number of high-school graduates' applications.
  - B. The school with the best equipment.
  - C. The school with the longest history.
  - D. The school with the highest public praise.
5. According to the text, what does “to hedge their bets” refer to?
  - A. Even though owing debts, high-school graduates are applying to more colleges and universities to increase the odds of being admitted.



- B. In order to lower the financial cost of application, high-school graduates are applying to only one or two colleges and universities even though the odds of being admitted are slim.
- C. Due to the exemption from application fee, high-school graduates are applying to more colleges and universities in order to increase the odds of being admitted.
- D. In case that the application to one college is turned down, high-school graduates are applying to more colleges and universities in order to increase the odds of being admitted.

### III. Translate the following sentences into Chinese.

1. After months of researching Northwestern on the Web and grilling friends, teachers and advisers who had gone there, Maxine pinned her hopes on getting accepted. (Para. 1)
2. For students like Maxine who are applying to college for next fall, that dream is turning out to be frustratingly unobtainable. It turns out the odds of getting into a selective college have never been worse. (Para. 2)
3. But admissions directors are already worrying about the shrinking pool of future applicants, especially the sliver of those who can afford to foot the \$40,000 annual tab. (Para. 9)

#### Text B

### Is It Worth It?

1 *As the cost of private schools soars, we look at what parents get for their money.*

Fee-paying schools have long played a giant part in public life in Britain, though they teach only 7% of its children. The few state-educated prime ministers went to academically selective schools, now rare; a third of all  
5 MPs<sup>①</sup>, more than half the appointed peers in the House of Lords<sup>②</sup>, a similar proportion of the country's best-known journalists and 70% of its leading barristers were educated privately. There is no sign that the elevator from independent schools to professional prominence is slowing: nearly half of the undergraduates at Oxford and Cambridge were privately schooled too.

10 Many ambitious parents would like to set their children off on this gilded path. But there is a problem: the soaring cost. Fees at private day schools have more than doubled in the past 20 years, in real terms; those at boarding schools have risen even faster. Since 2000 fees have risen by at least 6% every year, according to Horwath Clark Whitehill, a consultancy — double retail-price inflation and half as much again as the growth in wages. If this continues, a four-year-old embarking on a career in private day schools this autumn will have cost his parents around £170,000 (\$335,000) in today's money by the time he completes secondary school. So even though more Britons than  
15 ever before describe themselves as comfortably off, the share of children being educated privately is barely higher than it was two decades ago.

Yet as the cost grows, so do the incentives. It is increasingly hard to be sure of securing an acceptable alternative. State-financed schools for the gifted are now scarce. Other time-honoured routes, such as finding God (and a place in a religious school packed with the offspring of similarly provident  
25 parents) or buying a house next to a good state school (the price will be hefty, but can be recouped by selling once the children have grown), are becoming harder. Ed Balls, the schools secretary, has signalled a shift away from increasing state-funded religious education, and many schools are thinking of choosing students by lottery rather than proximity.

30 On March 3rd parents all over England will get letters telling them which schools their 11-year-olds are to go to — and many will be watching with interest to see what happens in Brighton, on the south coast. For the first time, places in its eight secondary schools will have been allocated randomly within each catchment area.

35 Already the benefits are being felt by local private schools. Brighton College<sup>③</sup>, in the town centre, has seen the number of 11-year-olds taking its

barrister /'bærɪstə(r)/ *n.* (在英国有资格出席高等法庭的) 律师  
gilded /'gɪldɪd/ *a.* 镀金的

embark on 着手, 开始做某事

time-honoured /'taɪm.ɒnəd/ *a.* 经久不衰的  
route /ru:t/ *n.* 路线; 途径  
provident /'prɒvɪdənt/ *a.* 有远见的  
hefty /'heftɪ/ *a.* (数目, 数量) 相当大的  
recoup /rɪ'ku:p/ *v.* 补偿

catchment area (学校、医院等的) 服务区



spartan /'spɑ:tən/ *a.* 禁欲的; 简朴的

pinpoint /'pɪnpɔɪnt/ *v.* 准确地查找

etiquette /'etɪket/ *n.* 礼节

premium /'pri:mjəm/ *n.* 奖金

lure /l(j)ʊə(r)/ *v.* 吸引

insider /,ɪn'saɪdər/ *n.* 内部人士

remortgage /ri:'mɔ:ɡɪdʒ/ *v.* 再抵押

shaky /'ʃeɪki/ *a.* 摇晃的; 不稳定的

close off 封锁; 堵塞

mindful /'maɪn(d)fəl/ *a.* 留心的; 注意的

dozy /'dɔ:zi/ *a.* 愚笨的; 迟钝的

volatile /'vɒlətaɪl/ *a.* 易变的

entrance test rise by almost half. Its head teacher, Richard Cairns, says he is thinking of expanding.

Just what will these refugees from randomness be getting for their money? Researchers at the Centre for the Economics of Education have used data on earnings, social class and education to distinguish the effects of private schooling from other advantages that students at such schools may enjoy (such as having richer, better-educated parents). Those who left private schools in the 1980s and early 1990s can expect to earn 35% more in life than the average product of a state school, they found, around half of which can be attributed to education, not background. That, they calculated, means parents achieved an average 7% return on their investment in fees.

If that were the entire benefit their children received, it would not be bad — but there is more, says Francis Green, one of the researchers. “Private education is a consumption good, not just an investment. Long gone are the days of spartan dormitories and cold showers — kids in the private sector now have fabulous science labs and sports facilities, and access to a huge range of subjects and activities.”

The researchers also managed to pinpoint the way private schools work their magic: through better exam results, rather than through networking opportunities or better teaching of soft skills, such as etiquette or leadership. Once they compared state- and private-school leavers with identical qualifications, the earnings premium disappeared. “In the past few decades, private schools have transformed themselves into highly effective exam-passing machines,” says Mr. Green. They hire better-qualified teachers, and more of them, offering higher salaries to lure those with qualifications in difficult subjects such as physics, mathematics and foreign languages, and now have twice as many teachers per pupil as state schools do.

Whether today’s parents can expect similar returns on their investment depends partly on whether fees continue to grow at a similar pace. One insider thinks this unlikely: many parents have remortgaged to pay fees, and with house prices shaky and banks tightening their lending criteria, this route is fast closing off.

But parents willing to take a riskier route could reap greater rewards. Another group of researchers interviewed parents and children from 124 well-off white middle-class families in three English cities. The parents had made the decision to send their children to poorly-performing local comprehensives. The children did well, with excellent exam results and plenty of places offered by highly-regarded universities, including Oxford and Cambridge.

One reason for their success, the researchers suggest, is that the schools, mindful of their positions in official league tables, were keen to keep these valuable clients. Teachers paid the youngsters more attention in class than they did to dozier students and arranged extension activities for them. One school, desperate to keep a bright child in the sixth form, even ran an A-level drama course especially for her.

The parents were delighted by their huge savings. But they had to work hard. More than half became school governors, and all monitored their children’s progress relentlessly. “They thought their children would do well being exposed to a more socially and ethnically diverse educational experience,” says David James, one of the researchers. “But as people must do with more volatile, risky investments, they watched closely and were ready to pull out if needs be.” So parents inclined to take this route must ask themselves two things: what their risk profile is, and whether they are willing to be activist investors.

Total Words: 1,025 words

Total Reading Time: \_\_\_\_\_ minutes \_\_\_\_\_ seconds

This text is taken from *The Economist*, February 28, 2008.

## Notes

- ① MP: Member of Parliament, 英国议会下议院议员。
- ② House of Lords: 英国议会中的上议院。英国议会由上议院和下议院组成。上议院议员分为两种:上议院神职议员(即英国国教中的高级神职人员)和上议院世俗议员(即贵族成员)。上议院议员大部分以指派方式产生;下议院议员则由民主选举产生。
- ③ Brighton College: 英国布莱顿公学,成立于1845年,注重学生整体方面的教育,在充分发掘学术潜力的同时,鼓励学生在轻松自然的环境中培养自己的兴趣爱好。布莱顿公学的学术质量一直名列前茅。

## Exercises

### I. Answer the following questions about the text.

1. What does “this gilded path” in line 10–11 refer to? And what are the pros and cons of parents setting their children off on this gilded path?
2. What are other alternatives besides private schools for kids’ education?
3. Why are school officials considering choosing students by lottery rather than proximity?
4. Why have some parents sent their children to poorly-performing local comprehensives?
5. How do you look at the phenomenon — the soaring cost of private education — that exists in both Britain and China?

### II. Decide whether the following statements are true or false according to the text.

1. Although private schools in Britain educate only 7% of its children, they have long played an enormous part in public life, because it is evident that a number of outstanding public figures were once privately schooled.
2. Since fees for private schooling soars, some acceptable alternatives, such as state-financed schools, work better.
3. Private schooling puts overemphasis on cultivating students in full scale — high value is attached to the teaching of soft skills and exam results are overshadowed.
4. Although fees for private schooling soar, taking its success into account, it is still the primary consideration for parents in Britain.
5. One of the reasons for the success achieved in local comprehensives is that teachers there pay close attention to every student.

### III. Translate the following sentences into Chinese.

1. Those who left private schools in the 1980s and early 1990s can expect to earn 35% more in life than the average product of a state school, they found, around half of which can be attributed to education, not background. (Para. 6)
2. The researchers also managed to pinpoint the way private schools work their magic: through better exam results, rather than through networking opportunities or better teaching of soft skills, such as etiquette or leadership. (Para. 8)
3. One insider thinks this unlikely: many parents have remortgaged to pay fees, and with house prices shaky and banks tightening their lending criteria, this route is fast closing off. (Para. 9)



文章是由段落组成的，熟悉段落对准确而快速的理解文章内容及发展是很有必要的。根据其功能，段落可以分成以下四种类型：

1. 主题段(topic paragraph)：主题段是概括全文内容、突出全文主题的段落。主题段多见于说明文和议论文中，往往是文章的第一段或前一二段。

2. 支撑段(supporting paragraph)：顾名思义，支撑段旨在支撑文章的主题，使其具体化、形象化。在突出全文主题之后，支撑段落通常对文章的主题作进一步的解释、说明或细致的描写、叙述。

3. 过渡段(transition paragraph)：过渡段是阐述文章内容从一个观点、一个方面过渡或转变到另一个观点、另一个方面的段落。了解这类段落的作用有助于全面理解文章的发展趋势。

4. 结论段(conclusion paragraph)：结论段是对文章涉及的各个方面进行归纳或提出结论性意见的段落。结论段通常出现在全文的最后一段或几段。

① None of this means that CSR has suddenly become a great idea. This newspaper has argued that it is often misguided, or worse. But in practice few big companies can now afford to ignore it.

② Beyond the corporate world, CSR is providing fertile ground for think-tanks and consultancies. Governments are taking an ever keener interest: in Britain, for example, the 2006 Companies Act introduced a requirement for public companies to report on social and environmental matters. And the United Nations promotes corporate responsibility around the world through a New York-based group called the Global Compact.

③ Business schools, for their part, are adding courses and specialised departments to keep their MBA students happy. "Demand for CSR activities has just soared in the past three years," says Thomas Cooley, the dean of New York University's Stern Business School. Bookshelves groan with titles such as "Corporation Be Good", "Beyond Good Company" and "The A to Z of Corporate Responsibility".

④ Why the boom? For a number of reasons, companies are having to work harder to protect their reputation — and, by extension, the environment in which they do business. Scandals at Enron, WorldCom and elsewhere undermined trust in big business and led to heavy-handed government regulation. An ever-expanding army of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) stands ready to do battle with multinational companies at the slightest sign of misbehavior. Myriad rankings and ratings put pressure on companies to report on their non-financial performance as well as on their financial results. And, more than ever, companies are being watched. Embarrassing news anywhere in the world — a child working on a piece of clothing with your company's brand on it, say — can be captured on camera and published everywhere in an instant, thanks to the internet.

⑤ Now comes concern over climate change, probably the biggest single driver of growth in the CSR industry of late. The great green awakening is making company after company take a serious look at its own impact on the environment. It is no surprise, therefore, that 95% of CEOs surveyed last year by McKinsey, a consultancy, said that society now has higher expectations of business taking on public responsibilities than it did five years ago.

⑥ Investors too are starting to show more interest. For example, \$1 out of every \$9 under professional management in America now involves an element of "socially responsible investment", according to Geoffrey Heal of Columbia Business School. Some of the big banks, including Goldman Sachs and UBS, have started to integrate environmental, social and governance issues in some of their equity research. True, the finance industry sends mixed signals: it demands good financial results above all else, and in parts of the financial world — notably the private-equity part — skepticism on CSR still runs deep. But private equity itself is having to respond to public pressure by agreeing to voluntary codes of transparency.

⑦ As well as these external pressures, firms are also facing strong demand for CSR from their employees, so much so that it has become a serious part of the competition for talent. Ask almost any large company about the business rationale for its CSR efforts and you will be told that they help to motivate, attract and retain staff. "People want to work at a company where they share the values and the ethos," says Mike Kelly, head of CSR at the European arm of KPMG, an accounting firm.

就以这篇文章为例，第一段是主题段，几句话简明扼要地突出了企业社会责任的重要地位：这个概念不是一夜之间变得如此火爆的；在目前形式下，它有被误解的趋势，但是其在跨国企业之间的重要地位是不容动摇的。第二、三段是过渡段，作者举出了具体的例子，从社会各个方面说明企业社会责任这一概念对整个社会的深刻渗透，突出其目前的重要性。第四到第七自然段均为支撑段，分析了企业社会责任这一概念对社会各个层面的深刻影响。在这四个支撑段中，前三段指出了企业社会责任这一概念如此火爆的三个外在原因，最后一段阐述了一个内在原因，即这一概念对推动公司内部发展也有着相当积极的作用。支撑段对主题段进行了全面的阐述。