

大学英语四级考试阅读部分 活页题集(二)

马玉杰 徐瑛 主编

新时代出版社

· 北 京 ·

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内 容 简 介

本书根据大学英语教学大纲,并结合近年来的四级考试命题特点,按照题型特点将阅读理解部分命题分为词汇和句子理解题、逻辑推理题、细节题和中心思想题四类,分别设置了专项练习,并在答案解析部分中分析了题型特点,提供了相应的解题技巧,读者可通过专项练习及时发现自己的不足,并进行有针对性的复习。为考核考生的综合阅读能力并检验练习效果,在最后设置了综合练习部分。

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前 言

大学英语四级考试是国家教委根据大学英语教学大纲,全面考核学生的英语应用水平而组织进行的一项标准化测试,旨在促进学生能以英语为工具,获取专业所需的信息,并为进一步提高英语水平打下基础。大学英语四级考试对大学生的毕业、升学、就业起着重要作用。

阅读理解是大学英语四级考试的重要部分,共 20 题,分值 40 分,一般要求考生在 35 分钟内完成。阅读理解部分具有取材广泛(包括人物传记、社会、文化、日常知识、自然科学等)、题材多样(可以是说明文、议论文、记叙文等)等特点,其目的在于测试考生通过阅读获取信息的能力,既要求准确,又要有一定的速度。考生应能通过阅读掌握文章的大意和中心思想,了解说明文章中心思想的事实和细节,既能理解字面影响,又能根据文章背景、语境进行一定的判断和推理;既能理解个别字、句的意思,又能理解上下文的逻辑关系。因此,阅读理解部分可归纳为涉及范围广泛、分值高、难度大等特点。

本书根据大学英语教学大纲,并结合近年来的四级考试命题特点,按照题型特点将阅读理解部分命题分为词汇和句子理解、逻辑推理题、细节题和中心思想题四类,分别设置了专项练习,并在答案解析部分中分析了题型特点,提供了相应的解题技巧,读者可通过专项练习及时发现自己的不足,并进行有针对性的复习。为考核考生的综合阅读能力并检验练习效果,在最后设置了综合练习部分。

本书由马玉杰、徐璘主编,桑军、王惟一、王子旭、索兰、徐孟阳、庄巧、冯程、蒋士俊、井文光、徐若曦、王广富、邢笃志、卢卫东、满江等同志参加了本书的编写。本书具有实用性强、针对性强等特点,对考生的复习备考有较大帮助。书中错误之处,诚请读者批评指正。

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模 拟 试 题

一、词汇和句子理解题

Model Test 1

Passage 1

Hollywood, part of Los Angeles, was developed into the center of the American movie industry during 1912, when a number of independent producers headed west from New York. In 1913, Hollywood established the first film making factory which continued to operate for 40 years.

Its first movies were made in Hollywood before World War I. The constant sunshine and mild climate of southern California made it an ideal site for shooting motion pictures. Hollywood's fame and fortune reached its peak in the 1930s and 1940s, the golden days of the black and white movies. Most of the famous motion picture corporations of those days, Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, Columbia and Warner Brothers are still very much in business and great stars like Greta Garbo, Marlene Dietrich, Charlie Chaplin, Gary Cooper, and many others, have become immortal.

"Hollywood's own history resembles the plot of the classic Hollywood crime film. Rival gangs decide to make an arrangement and carve up the territory among them. For a while Mr. Big and Mr. Bad honor this agreement... bribing the police and the politicians. Then, however, something goes wrong. Competition starts up again. Mr. Big and Mr. Bad are both Billed by their former partners' hired hands..."

Hollywood is no longer the heart of the American motion picture industry. Most movies today are filmed on location, that is to say, in the cities, in the countryside, and in any part of the world when the script requires. The Hollywood studios are still there, but most of them have been leased to television networks. About 80% of all American TV plays comes from Hollywood.

1. The word "resembles" in the third paragraph means A.

- A) stands for B) differs from C) describes D) assembles

Passage 2

The importance of particular metals in the human diet has been realized within the past few decades, and the idea that geology might be related to health has been recognized for a number of elements such as iodine(碘), zinc and selenium(硒). For example, soils with low iodine contents produce crops, and animals deficient in iodine. A lack of iodine in the human diet leads to some serious diseases.

The ultimate source of metals within the human body is rocks, which weather into soil, gaining or losing some of their chemical constituents. The crops we eat selectively remove from the soil the elements that they require for growth. The water we drink contains trace elements leached from rock and soil. Thus the geology and geochemistry of the environment have effects on the chemistry and health of plants, animals and people.

So far there is no data to suggest that people living on metal-rich soils experience a potential health hazard. The levels of metals within naturally contaminated soils are generally not high enough to cause serious health problems. Living on metal-rich soils does not represent a health risk unless large quantities of soil are digested or metal-rich dust

is inhaled. however, small children are particularly exposed to metal-rich top soils in playgrounds and gardens. They are also the most likely ones to eat potentially dangerous metal-rich soil.

Heavy metals are persistent; they do not break down to other chemicals in the environment. Industrially polluted sites usually undergo intensive clean-up and rehabilitation because heavy metals are a health concern once they enter the food chain. Some trace metals are alleged to cause cancer and are also known to cause poisoning.

In contrast, naturally contaminated soils have not been subject to risk assessment studies and rehabilitation measures, despite the fact that they frequently possess metal concentrations well above those of such polluted by humans and above environmental quality criteria.

There is a vital need to understand the potential risks and long-term health effects of living on naturally contaminated soils. Future environmental investigations of naturally polluted soils should concentrate on the potential pathways of metals into the food chain and human body. Geologists should be part of such studies as they can provide the essential background information on rock and soil chemistry as well as the chemical forms of heavy metal pollution.

2. What does the word "they" (paragraph 2) refer to? B

- A) constituents B) crops C) elements D) metals

Passage 3

A moment's drilling by the dentist may make us nervous and upset. Many of us cannot stand pain. To avoid the pain of a drilling that may last perhaps a minute or two, we demand the "needle"—a shot of novocaine—that deadens the nerves around the tooth.

Now it's true that the human body has developed its millions of nerves to be highly aware of what happens on both inside and outside of it. This helps adjust ourselves to the world. Without our nerves—and our brain, which is a bundle of nerves—we wouldn't know what's happening. But we pay for our sensitivity. We can feel pain when the slightest thing is wrong with any part of our body. The history of torture is based on the human body being open to pain.

But there is a way to handle pain. Look at the Indian fakir who sits on a bed of nails. Fakirs can put a needle right through an arm, and feel no pain. This ability that some humans have developed to handle pain should give us ideas about how the mind can deal with pain.

The big thing in withstanding pain is our attitude toward it. If the dentist says, "This will hurt a little," it helps us to accept the pain. By staying relaxed, and by treating the pain as an interesting sensation, we can handle the pain without falling apart. After all, although pain is an unpleasant sensation, it is still a sensation, and sensations are the stuff of life.

3. The underlined word "torture" refers to B A

- A) severe suffering B) painstaking C) sensitivity D) pain handling

Passage 4

Centuries ago, man discovered that removing moisture from food helps to preserve it, and that the easiest way to do this is to expose the food to sun and wind.

All foods contain water—cabbage and other leaf vegetables contain as much as 93% water, potatoes and other root vegetables 80%, lean meat 75% and fish anything from 80% to 60% depending on how fatty it is. If this water is removed, the activity of the bacteria which cause food to go bad is checked.

Fruit is sun-dried in Asia, Greece, Spain and other Mediterranean countries, and also in U. S. A, South Africa

and Australia. The methods used vary, but in general, the fruit is spread out on trays in drying yards in the hot sun. In order to prevent darkening, pears, peaches and apricots are exposed to the fumes of burning sulphur before drying. Plums, for making prunes, and certain varieties of grapes for making raisins and currants, are dipped in an alkaline solution in order to crack the skins of the fruit slightly, thus removing their wax coating and increasing the rate of drying.

Nowadays most foods are dried mechanically. The conventional method of such dehydration is to put food in chambers through which hot air is blown at temperatures of about 110 at entry to about 43 at exit. This is the usual method for drying such things as vegetables, minced meat, and fish.

Liquids such as milk, coffee, tea, soups and eggs may be dried by pouring them over a heated horizontal steel cylinder or by spraying them into a chamber through which a current of hot air passes.

Dried foods take up less room and weigh less than the same food packed in cans or frozen, and they do not need to be stored in special conditions. For these reasons they are welcomed by climbers, explorers and soldiers in battle, who have little storage space. They are also welcomed by housewives because it takes little time to cook them.

4. The underlined word "dehydration" in paragraph 4 refers to D.

- A) heating B) airing C) mechanization D) drying

Passage 5

Jungle country is not friendly to man, but it is possible to survive there. You must have the right equipment and you must know a few important things about woodcraft. Then your chances of staying alive are very good.

No one should go into the jungle without the right equipment. You need lightweight clothing, a good knife, and a compass. Fishhooks and a line, a rifle and ammunition, matches in a waterproof container, and a poncho are necessary too. So is a mosquito net to protect the head.

In the jungle you can get hopelessly lost within five minutes after leaving a known landmark. That is why you should always carry a compass. In open country, during the day, you can tell which way to go by studying the sun. At night the stars are sure guides to direction. But in most places the jungle rooftop is so thick that it is impossible to see the sun or the stars. Again and again you must check your position by the compass.

Keep alert. Watch the ground in front of you carefully. Stop and listen now and again. Avoid haste, and rest often. In a place that is hot and humid, the person who sets a fast pace will soon become tired. A steady, even pace is wisest in the long run.

If you lose your way, don't panic. Try to decide how long it has been since you were sure of your position. Mark the spot where you are with blazes on a tree. Put them on four sides of the tree, so that you will be able to see them from any direction. Then you can begin retracing your steps, knowing that you can always find the stop from which you started. Except in an emergency, never try to travel through the jungle at night.

Whenever possible, it is wise to follow streams and rivers that are going in your general direction. This may save you many extra miles of travel. But in the end it will save time and energy. Nothing is more exhausting than hacking a trail cross-country through unbroken jungle.

If a river is broad and deep and has no rapids, rafting is the best means of travel. Bamboo grows along the banks of many jungle streams. Since it is hollow and extremely strong, it makes a perfect raft.

If possible, stay away from high rides when you are traveling through jungle country. They are often covered with rattans. Rattans are climbing palms. They have sharp thorns that rip and tear at your clothing. Even with a sharp machete, it is almost impossible to hack a path through rattans without getting completely entangled in them.

Mosquitoes, ticks, and leeches will be with you all the time. The only defense against them is to wear the right kind of clothing. You should never wear shorts in the jungle. Your trousers must be lightweight and long. The cuffs

should be tucked into your boot tops.

Finding water that is safe to drink can be a problem. Many streams and rivers carry germs that can be deadly to man. Streams found near native villages are always dangerous, even if they are clear and fresh-looking. Such water must always be boiled before you drink it.

Luckily, the jungle has many kinds of plants and vines that give water. The big rough-barked vines called lianas are one of the best sources of water. A section several feet long could give you more than a pint of clear water. Water from almost all plant is pure enough to drink. But stay away from vines that have bitter or milky sap.

Many jungle plants also provide food. Before you go into the jungle, learn to recognize the varieties of plants that can be eaten. If you haven't had a chance to do this, watch what kinds of fruits and nuts the birds and monkeys choose. Such food is almost always safe for a man to eat.

When you are seeking meat, rivers and streams are the best places to hunt. You do not need to be familiar with the many different kinds of birds and mammals. You can eat any of them.

Animals that do not eat plants eat each other. When you see an animal in the jungle, you can be sure that its source of food is somewhere close by. That source may mean for you the difference between going to sleep well fed or hungry.

Surviving in the jungle is a science. The jungle people have become perfect in this science, and you can too. Learn as much as you can about what to expect in the jungle. Make sure you have the right equipment. Then no part of the jungle will seem completely unfriendly or frightening. In fact, you will be able to "live off" it for a long time.

5. What does the word "blazes" mean in paragraph 5? **B A**

A) Marks where bark is removed.

B) Light-colored spots.

C) Bursts of flame.

D) Sides of knife.

Passage 6

It is amazing to hear people often say that sport creates goodwill between the nations, and that if only the common peoples of the world could meet one another at football or cricket, they would have no inclination to meet on the battlefield. Even if one didn't know from concrete examples (the 1936 Olympic Games, for instance) that international sporting contests lead to orgies of hated, one could deduce it from general principles.

Nearly all the sports practiced nowadays are competitive. You play to win, and the game has little meaning unless you do your utmost to win. On the village green, where you pick up sides and no feeling of local patriotism is involved, it is possible to play simply for the fun and exercise; but as soon as the question of prestige arises, as soon as you feel that you and some larger unit will be disgraced if you lose, the most savage combative instincts are aroused. Anyone who has played even in a school football match knows this. At the international level, sport is frankly mimic warfare. But the significant thing is not the behavior of the players but the attitude of the spectators, and, behind the spectators, of the nations who work themselves into furies over these absurd contests, and seriously believe—at any rate for short periods—that running, jumping and kicking a ball are tests of national virtue.

6. The phrase "local patriotism" in paragraph 2 means **A B**

A) love for one's country

B) love for one's local place

C) love for personal prestige

D) love for honors

Passage 7

As early as 1710 the iron industry in England complained of increasing competition from the American colonies.

The American iron industry developed rapidly by 1750, numerous furnaces, forges, and mills were in operation in New England, and Virginia. When large quantities of pig iron from the American colonies first entered England in 1735, the product proved to be of such excellent quality that English iron-makers became involved in a bitter argument over the future of the colonial iron industry. The English iron smelters, who changed native iron ore into pig iron, insisted that American pig iron be kept out of England by means of high import taxes and, in fact, that the whole colonial iron industry be suppressed. In agreement with the iron smelters were owners of English mines and even forests, whose wood was used to fuel the furnaces which smelted the iron ore.

On the other side of the issue were the English iron manufacturers who desired more cheap pig to make nails, tools, and other iron wares. The iron manufacturers therefore were encouraged to produce of pig iron in the American colonies. They wanted to enter England tax free, but, at the same time, demanded that the colonists be prevented from working their crude iron into finished products. In addition to the iron manufacturers, English merchant shipowners were in favor of receiving American pig iron, for they looked forward to transporting the crude iron from America to England and the iron products from England to the colonies. The English wool industry supported the iron manufacturers so that the Americans could use the money from crude iron to buy cloth made in England, thus discouraging the growth of wool industry in America.

7. As used in the passage, "pig iron" means _____.

- A) native iron ore B) iron products C) crude iron D) ore for smelting

Passage 8

On the night of September 2, 1666, a fire broke out in a baker's shop near Fish Street Hill in London. Before the flames were finally extinguished, nearly the entire city had been reduced to ashes. Over thirteen thousand homes, fifty churches, and numerous public buildings and hospitals were lost in the blaze. Practically the whole city was destroyed.

The Great Fire was not seen as a total tragedy, however. The deplorable conditions of the city had been attacked by physicians and humanitarians for years before the fire; thus, with the opportunity clearly presented to create a shining new city, artists and craftsmen from all over England hurried to submit their designs for the rebuilding of London.

Among those who submitted plans was Sir Christopher Wren, one of England's leading architects and the Surveyor General of London. The task of rebuilding the city was given to him. Wren realized that the Great Fire would not have been so damaging if the city had been better laid out: broader streets were needed to replace the crooked, narrow alleys overhung with dilapidated wooden houses and shops. He also felt that redesigning the main thoroughfares of London would result in increased and more effective transportation within the city.

Shortly after Wren began working on his first drafts for the rebuilding, King Charles I issued a proclamation prohibiting the construction of any house or shop within the city limits until after the plans were completed. When the plans were unveiled to the citizens of London, however, they were overwhelmingly rejected. The most vocal leaders of the opposition were the landlords, who feared that such a drastic widening of the streets would reduce the amount of land available for development.

Winter was approaching; consequently, it was necessary for the rebuilding to proceed at once. Permission was, therefore, granted for the town people and landlords to commence reconstruction of their houses and shops at the sites where they had been before the fire. Had the need for immediate action not been so pressing, some kind of compromise could likely have been reached. This was not to be, however, and the ideas that could have made London one of the world's most beautiful cities never came to pass.

8. In the fourth paragraph, the word "vocal" means _____.

- A) having to do with voice
- C) very loud

- B) strongly active
- D) lacking of courage

Passage 9

When a consumer finds that an item she or he bought is faulty or in some other way does not live up to the manufacturer's claims, the first step is to present the warranty, or any other records which might help, at the store of purchase. In most cases, this action will produce results. However, if it does not, there are various means the consumer may use to gain satisfaction.

A simple and common method used by many consumers is to complain directly to the store manager. In general, the "higher up" the consumer takes his or her complaint, the faster he or she can expect it to be settled. In such a case, it is usually settled in the consumer's favor, assuming he or she has a just claim.

Consumers should complain in person whenever possible, but if they cannot get to the place of purchase, it is acceptable to phone or write the complaint in a letter.

Complaining is usually most effective when it is done politely but firmly, and especially when the consumer can demonstrate what is wrong with the item in question. If this cannot be done, the consumer will succeed best by presenting specific information as to what is wrong, rather than by making general statements. For example, "The left speaker does not work at all and the sound coming out of the right one is unclear" is better than "This stereo does not work."

The store manager may advise the consumer to write to the manufacturer. If so, the consumer should do this, stating the complaint as politely and firmly as possible. If a polite complaint does not achieve the desired result, the consumer can go a step farther. She or he can threaten to take the seller to court or report the seller to a private or public organization responsible for protecting consumers' rights.

9. The phrase "live up to" in this context means _____.

- A) meet the standard of
- B) realize the purpose of
- C) fulfill the demands of
- D) keep the promise of

Passage 10

Pottery is the name given to all kinds of pots and utensils made from clay and other minerals when they have been "fired", that is, hardened by heat in the potter's kiln. Articles made of pottery include plates, cups, and saucers, cooking dishes, wall and floor tiles, chemical storage jars, bathroom fittings, filters, drain pipes, electrical insulators and ornaments for the home.

Pottery is one of the oldest craft, which began to be practiced as soon as man learned to control fire, and long before the melting of metals. It enabled him from very early times to make vessels for storing and cooking food, for carrying water, and for ritual burial purposes. Early vessels were shaped by hand and probably "fired" in a big bonfire by covering them over with dried grass and dead branches, which were then set alight.

A great advance in pottery followed the invention of the potter's wheel and the kiln. It is not certainly known where the potter's wheel was first used, but it is thought that by about 3500 B.C. potters in Central Asia were using some kind of wheel. From there its use spread west and east to Egypt, Crete, China, and then to Ancient Greece and Rome.

At first the wheel was nothing more than a small disc, turned on a pivot by hand, but later it was improved by raising it and providing it with a larger circular platform near the ground as well which could be rotated by the potter

with his feet. Such a wheel was probably in use in Egypt by about 200 B.C. , though this is only conjecture; but it was certainly still in use in Europe at the beginning of the nineteenth century. In the eighteenth century, however, the potter's wheel was improved so that it could be worked by a treadle, or turned by an assistant. Modern potter's wheels are power driven.

There are three principal ways articles may be made of pottery. They may be simply shaped by hand. They may be thrown on the potter's wheel and shaped against the spin with the fingers or some scraping tool. Thirdly, the wet clay may be put in a pre-shaped "form" of plaster-of-Paris.

10. The word "treadle" in paragraph 4 means _____.

- A) handle B) pedal C) motor D) step

Model Test 2

Passage 1

In the early days of sea travel, seamen on long voyages lived exclusively on salted meat and biscuits. Many of them died of scurvy, a disease of the blood which caused swollen gums, livid white spots on the flesh and general exhaustion. On one occasion, in 1535, an English ship arrived in Newfoundland with its crew desperately ill. The men's lives were saved by Iroquois Indians who gave them vegetable leaves to eat. Gradually it came to be realized that scurvy was caused by some lack in the sailors' diet and Captain Cook, on his long voyages of discovery to Australia and New Zealand, established the fact that scurvy could be warded off by the provision of fresh fruit for the sailors.

Nowadays it is understood that a diet which contains nothing harmful may yet result in serious disease if certain important elements are missing. These elements are called "vitamins". Quite a number of such substances are known and they are given letters to identify them, A, B, C, D, and so on. Different diseases are associated with deficiencies of particular vitamins. Even a slight lack of Vitamin C, for example, the vitamin most plentiful in fresh fruit and vegetables, is thought to increase significantly our susceptibility to colds and influenza.

The vitamins necessary for a healthy body are normally supplied by a good mixed diet, including a variety of fruit and green vegetables. It is only when people try to live on a very restricted diet, say during extended periods of religious fasting, or when trying to lose weight, that it is necessary to make special provision to supply the missing vitamins.

Another example of the dangers of a restricted diet may be seen in the disease known as beri-beri, which used to afflict large numbers of Eastern peoples who lived mainly on rice.

1. "Warded off" in paragraph 1 means _____.

- | | |
|-----------------------------|---------------|
| A) kept from hospital wards | B) encouraged |
| C) avoided | D) washed off |

Passage 2

Are you taking advantage of the discounts available on airfares? If not, then you are unnecessarily paying too much.

Most airlines now have a number of options which can give the traveler up to 50 percent discount on the full economy fare on both domestic and international flights.

Students benefit most from the discount systems, with two schemes available. Students between the ages of 15 and 19 who are registered in full-time day courses at secondary institutions can receive 50 percent discount, while full-time students attending a recognized university or college receive a 25 percent discount, provided that they are under 26 years of age. In both cases, the air tickets are valid for one year and there is no minimum "stay away" period. Although not required, students traveling on these tickets are advised to pay early in order to insure against subsequent price increases.

If you are not a student, do not despair. You may qualify for the Common Interest Group system, if you are one of at least ten adults who are traveling together for a common purpose on one flight between the same origin/destination. If you qualify, you will receive a 15 percent discount on your ticket. Again, the tickets are valid for one year

and there is no minimum “stay away” period. Full payment for the tickets must be made at least 48 hours prior to departure.

Finally, if you can accept the uncertainty, you might consider the so-called “standby” system. In this scheme, which gives a 20 percent discount, you purchase your ticket at the airport on the day of travel, assuming of course that there are empty seats on the flight of your choice. With standby tickets there is no minimum and no maximum “stay away” period.

There are just some of the schemes available to air travelers. Before parting with your hard-earned cash, do check with your local travel agent about your eligibility for the various discounts available. Just remember: “Don’t pay the full fare.”

2. What does the underlined word “eligibility” mean?

- A) Qualification. B) Possibility. C) Feasibility D) Opportunity

Passage 3

For a long time Chester Carlson carried around his little black box—the invention over which he had worked and struggled for years. He showed it to the directors of twenty-one large American corporations, such as “general Electric, International Business Machines (IBM), Lockheed, and RCA”.

Nobody wanted it. Nobody wanted to invest a penny in it.

It must be painful for those directors to think of Chester Carlson now, for the little black box is the heart of the multi-billion-dollar Xerox Corporation. Carlson is the inventor of “xerography” (from two Greek words meaning “dry writing”), the dry-printing process used in thousands and thousands of offices, business, industries, universities, shops, and government agencies around the world.

Thanks to Carlson, it now takes minutes to copy a document which, twenty years ago, would have kept a secretary busy for a whole day. And for a few pennies anyone can have a copy of anything from cooking recipes to Greek poetry. More than thirty billion such copies are made each year.

When Chester Carlson went to work in a patent office in 1930, the copying methods were slow, dirty, and expensive. In his job, Carlson had to make many copies of patents for inventions. One night, after working late and painfully, he decided that somebody had better find an easier way to do it. He went to work in the kitchen of his apartment with measuring cups and cooking pots. By 1937, having developed a simple form of xerography, he applied for his first patent on the process.

Then began Carlson’s famous unsuccessful search for investors. It was not until 1944 that the Battelle Memorial Institute of Columbus, Ohio, agreed to spend \$ 3,000 for research on Carlson’s invention. According to the agreement, Carlson was to receive 25 percent of all profits; his share would rise to 40 percent if he could repay Battelle the \$ 3,000 within five years. This part of the agreement later brought millions of dollars to Carlson who, by borrowing from his family, had managed to repay his debt in time.

Even with Battelle’s help, it took another year to find a company willing to buy Carlson’s process. In 1945, Dr. John H. Dessauer, director of research of the Haloid Company (maker of copying machines), decided to adopt and market the process, which was then named “Xerox”. Three years later, the Haloid Company had changed its own name to become the Xerox Corporation. It is now the thirty-ninth largest corporation in the United States, with sales of over four billion dollars a year.

3. Why does the author say “it must be painful for those directors to think of Chester Carlson now”?

- A) Because they are sorry for not having given a hand to poor Carlson when he was helpless.
B) Because they cannot run their corporations well.
C) Because they missed a profitable investment.

D) Because they are suffering from some illness.

Passage 4

The government should focus on improving the health of present and future mothers to reduce future inequalities in health, according to the forthcoming independent inquiry on inequalities in health, which is expected to be published in November.

Sir Donald Acheson, who was commissioned to chair the inquiry just over a year ago as part of the government's new health strategy, *Our Healthier Nation*, gave the first public account of the inquiry in his Harveian speech to the Royal College of Physicians last week. He said, "There is evidence that inequalities which we observe today may be projected into the next generation."

Low birth weight is associated with poorer health and earlier death. Babies born to parents from social class I weigh an average 130g more than those born to class V and 200g more than babies registered by their mothers alone. Two principal determinants of a baby's weight at birth are the mother's weight before she becomes pregnant and her own birth weight. This disadvantage is further compounded by a steep social class gradient associated with breast feeding.

Sir Donald said, "While there are many interventions which will reduce inequalities between adults from the various social groups, those with the best chance of reducing future inequalities related to children, to parents and in particular to present and future mothers."

Sir Donald said that a policy which improves health on average may have no effect on inequalities, or may actually increase them. One example is antismoking campaigns which have proved effective among the better off but much less so among women in lower income groups. The report will call for antismoking campaigns to be targeted at the less well off in general and single mothers in particular. Programs in the past to encourage breast feeding, increase immunization uptake, or improve the uptake of cancer screening have also been effective in higher income groups.

Sir Donald did not give any details about his report, which will contain 39 recommendations covering 12 subject areas. But he said: "What is needed is a new emphasis for existing policies across the whole social spectrum—income, education, employment, the environment, transport, nutrition, smoking, and the rest, an approach which wherever possible gives priority not just to the poor but to the less well off as a whole."

Latest government statistics show that the gap between rich and poor has widened again, with the proportion of people living on an income of less than half the average rising to 24%. The Department of Social Security's analysis of households on below average income suggests that increasing numbers of children have been growing up in poverty, with nearly one child in four living in a family without a working parent.

4. The underlined word "those" in paragraph 4 refers to _____.

- A) interventions B) inequalities C) adults D) the various social groups

Passage 5

A person may have an idea about himself that will prevent him from doing good work.

He may have the idea that he is not capable of it. It is easy to get such an idea even though there is no justification for it. A child may think he is stupid because he does not understand how to make the most of his mental faculties, or he may accept another person's mistaken estimate of his ability. Older people may be handicapped by the mistaken belief that they are incapable of learning anything new because of their age.

A person who believes that he is incapable will not make a real effort, because he feels that it would be useless.

He won't go at a job with the confidence necessary for success, and he won't work hardest, even though he may think he is doing so. He is therefore likely to fail, and the failure will strengthen his belief in his incompetence.

Alfred Adler, a famous psychiatrist, had an experience that illustrates this. When he was a small boy he got off to a poor start in arithmetic. His teacher got the idea that he had no ability in arithmetic, and told his parents what she thought in order that they would not expect too much of him. In this way, they too developed the idea, "Isn't it too bad that Alfred can't do arithmetic?" He accepted their mistaken estimate of his ability, felt that it was useless to try, and was very poor at arithmetic, just as they expected.

One day he became very angry at the teacher and other students because they laughed when he said he saw how to do a problem which none of the other students had been able to solve.

Adler succeeded in solving the problem. This gave him confidence. He rejected the idea that he couldn't do arithmetic and was determined to show them that he could. His anger and his new found confidence stimulated him to be at arithmetic problems with a new spirit. He now worked with interest, determination, and purpose, and he soon became extraordinarily good at arithmetic. He not only proved that he could do arithmetic, but he learned early in life from his own experience that, if a person goes at a job with determination and purpose, he may astonish himself as well as others by his ability.

This experience made him realize that many people have more ability than they think they have. And that lack of success is as often the result of lack of knowledge of how to apply one's ability, lack of confidence, and lack of determination as it is the result of lack of ability.

5. The word "justification" in paragraph 2 most probably means _____.

- A) reason B) rightness C) need D) demand

Passage 6

Vandalism in our new, big schools is increasing. It costs Lanarkshire Country Council \$ 500,000 a year. Glasgow Corporation could build two new primary schools a year with the money they spend on repairs and replacements.

New schools in general are more seriously affected by vandalism than those with old-fashioned heavy brick buildings. This is partly because of the poor quality of materials now used.

Some educationists say that the contrast between the shining new schools and the squalor of much old housing makes for violent jealousy and anger which is expressed by some children.

The bad design of new school building is cited by many teachers as a major cause of vandalism. Large amounts of glass, often at playground level, are not only an obvious temptation, but a danger where any large groups of children are playing. Schools are still designed with single corridors too narrow for 700 or 1,000 large boys to pour down every break time. Tension, fights and vandalism are the obvious results. There is a narrow line between a high level of careless breakages, and the purposeful breaking of lavatory pipes or playground benches, the favorite targets. In a different category is the planned stealing of loudspeaker equipment which many schools have wired into the walls for public address systems. The loudspeakers are used in home-made stereo sets.

Complete and expensive alarm systems, plus doorkeepers and guard dogs, is the standard police answer to school vandalism. But the teachers who now take the burden of containing it, and police officers and psychiatrists who deal with the children who are caught, have one answer to combating vandalism, as well as stealing, threatening, and lying. As one put it, "The difficult ones usually come from working class communities which have been destroyed physically, and have lost their morality with their sense of community. The only way that will be restored is in very small schools which can rebuild a child's individual sense of identity and, from that, the idea of responsibility within a community."

6. The underlined word "vandalism" most probably means _____.