

A FRESHMAN ENGLISH READER

# 英语泛读教程

## 第二册

杨冬丽 曹 艳 编著

黑龙江人民出版社

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图书在版编目(CIP)数据

英语泛读教程/杨冬丽,曹艳编著. —哈尔滨:黑龙江人民出版社,2005.1

ISBN 7-207-06289-3

I.英… II.①杨…②曹… III.英语—阅读教学—高等学校—教材 IV.H319.4

中国版本图书馆 CIP 数据核字(2004)第 065351 号

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责任编辑:朱佳新 李春兰

封面设计:秦 明

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出版者 黑龙江人民出版社

通讯地址 哈尔滨市南岗区宣庆小区1号楼

邮 编 150008

网 址 [www.longpress.com](http://www.longpress.com) E-mail [hljrmcbs@yeah.net](mailto:hljrmcbs@yeah.net)

印 刷 哈尔滨理工大学东区印刷厂

开 本 787×1092毫米 1/16·印张 12.75

印 数 1-1 000

字 数 357 500

版 次 2005年1月第1版 2005年1月第1次印刷

书 号 ISBN 7-207-06289-3/H·215

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定价:39.60元(全二册)

(如发现本书有印制质量问题,印刷厂负责调换)

## 前 言

《英语泛读教程》第二册供高等学校英语专业一年级第二学期教学使用，目的是使学生增加英语国家文化背景知识、扩大英语词汇量、养成勤于思考的习惯以提高其英语阅读能力。

按照《高等学校英语专业基础阶段英语教学大纲》的要求，泛读课属单项技能训练课，其特点主要表现在“泛”与“读”两个方面。泛读教材所选用的阅读材料内容广泛，涵盖社会生活的各个方面。同时，阅读材料的文体丰富，既有文学作品，又有记叙文、说明文、议论文、新闻、广告等语言风格的文章。泛读课的主要任务是指导学生通过大量的阅读实践，培养善于思考的阅读习惯，掌握各种阅读方法，提高阅读的速度和准确性。另外，泛读课还可以使学生在广泛阅读的过程中逐步扩大词汇量，使其能较快地消除阅读理解中的词汇量不足这一严重障碍，高效率地增强学生的阅读技能。

《英语泛读教程》的课文选自经典著作、现代及当代期刊和优秀教材读本，题材包括社会、政治、经济、文化、历史、文学、艺术、宗教、医学、风土人情、科普知识等学科领域。

《英语泛读教程》第二册共 17 个单元。第 1 单元至第 16 单元每个单元分三个部分。第一部分 (Section A) 的内容在课堂上处理，学生课前不需要预习。

词汇测试 (Warm-up Activity) 所选的单词出自 Section A 的课文，为课文中的生词或常用词，目的是帮助学生阅读课文。

课文遵循由浅入深、循序渐进的原则，长度从 600 单词左右逐渐增加。鉴于泛读课的特点，本教程的重点是使学生尽可能广泛地接触具有生命力、地道而又鲜活的素材，以便从中汲取语言知识和各方面的多种信息，真正达到扩大知识面、增加词汇量、开拓视野、提升能力的教学初衷。因此，每单元 Section A 中除阅读理解 (Reading Comprehension) 外，综合练习主要是结合阅读的内容检验学生词汇、句法以及语言的综合能力——其中包括词汇练习 (Vocabulary) 和与课文内容相关的完型填空 (Cloze) 等。

第二部分 (Section B) 所选课文主要是相关题材的深化或补充，供学生课外阅读，由教师在课堂上进行检查，对有一定难度的文章也可由教师结合 Section A 的内容作适当讲解。

第三部分 (Section C) 包括三篇相关内容的短文，用于快速阅读的训练。该项练习必须在规定的时间内完成，教师可根据学生的情况适当调整阅读时间以期收到最佳的效果。

作为学生课堂或课外讨论的内容，每个单元后列有思考题。

阅读技巧（Reading Skills）归纳为一个单元（Unit 17），与其他各单元的内容相结合，指导学生能动地运用阅读技巧提高阅读速度和效率，在阅读练习中使学生掌握根据上下文判断生词词义的技巧、熟悉英语句子结构并了解文章题材与中心思想的区别以及事实与观点的区分。通过广泛的阅读和有针对性的练习，重点培养学生恰当运用阅读技巧和分析文章中心思想的能力，使其逐步养成边阅读边思考的良好阅读习惯，并能够对文章进行初步的鉴赏和分析，为下一阶段的学习奠定扎实的基础。

《英语泛读教程》编者

2005 年 1 月

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## Unit 1

## Observation

### Section A

**Directions:** *You are expected to study this section in class. Do not preview.*

#### Warm-up Activity

**Directions:** *For each item, choose the one that is closest in meaning to the italicized word or phrase.*

1. The old man *cherished* the girl as if she were his daughter.  
A. cared for                      B. looked after                      C. cared about
2. She didn't *utter* a word all night.  
A. write                      B. read                      C. say
3. That part of the town is completely *void* of interest for visitors.  
A. avoiding                      B. empty                      C. lacking
4. She *skipped* the boring bits of text and just looked at the pictures.  
A. read through                      B. left out                      C. went over
5. It's rather *peculiar* that we were not given this information.  
A. strange                      B. special                      C. natural
6. Don't waste your time on such *trifling* matters.  
A. important                      B. necessary                      C. insignificant
7. He was *conspicuous* for his bravery.  
A. famous                      B. noticeable                      C. admirable
8. Sometimes a doctor may wonder whether he has gained most or lost most by learning his *trade*.  
A. occupation                      B. business                      C. knowledge
9. It's the faintest and simplest expression the water ever makes, and the most *hideous* to a pilots' eye.  
A. shocking                      B. expected                      C. mysterious

## Text

### Reading the River



It turned out to be true. The face of the water in time became a wonderful book—a book that was a dead language to the uneducated passenger but which told its mind to me without reserve, delivering its most cherished secrets as clearly as if it uttered them with a voice. And it was not a book to be read once and thrown aside, for it had a new story to tell every day. Throughout the long

twelve hundred miles there was never a page that was void of interest, never one that you could leave unread without loss, never one that you would want to skip,



thinking you could find higher enjoyment in some other thing. There never was so wonderful a book written by man, never one whose interest was so absorbing, so unflagging, so sparkingly renewed with every reperusal. The passenger who could not read it was charmed with a peculiar sort of faint dimple on its surface (on the rare occasions when he did not overlook it altogether) but to the pilot, that was an italicized passage; indeed it was more than that, it was a legend of the largest capitals with a string of shouting exclamation-points at the end of it, for it meant that a wreck or a rock was buried there that could tear the life out of the strongest vessel that ever floated. It is the faintest and simplest expression the water ever makes, and the most hideous to a pilot's eye. In truth, the passenger who could not read this book saw nothing but all manner of pretty pictures in it, painted by the sun and shaded by the clouds, whereas to the trained eye these were not pictures at all, but the grimmest and most dead-earnest of reading matter.

Now when I had mastered the language of this water and had come to know every trifling feature that bordered the great river as familiarly as I knew the letters of the alphabet, I had made a valuable acquisition. But I had lost something, too. I had lost something which could never be restored to me while I lived. All the grace, the beauty, the poetry, had gone out of the majestic river! I still kept in mind a certain wonderful sunset which I witnessed when steamboating was new to me. A broad expanse of the river was turned to blood; in the middle distance the red hue brightened into gold, through which a solitary log came floating, black and conspicuous; in one place a long, slanting mark was broken by boiling, tumbling rings, that were as many-tinted as an opal; where the ruddy' flush was faintest was a smooth spot that was covered with graceful circles and radiating lines, ever so delicately traced; the shore on our left was densely wooded and the somber shadow that fell from this forest was broken in one place by a long, ruffled trail that shone like silver; and high above the forest wall a clean-stemmed dead tree waved a single leafy bough that glowed like a flame in the unobstructed splendor that was flowing from the sun. There were graceful curves, reflected images, woody heights: soft distances, and over the whole scene, far and near, the dissolving lights drifted steadily, enriching it every passing moment with new marvels of coloring.

I stood like one bewitched. I drank it in, in a speechless rapture. The world was new to me and I had never seen anything like this at home. But as I have said, a day came when I began to cease from noting the glories and the charms which the moon and the sun and the twilight wrought upon the river's face; another day came when I ceased altogether to note them. Then, if that sunset scene had been repeated, I should have looked upon it without rapture, and should have commented upon it inwardly after this fashion: "This sun means that we are going to have wind tomorrow; that floating log means that the river is rising, small thanks to it; that slanting mark on the water refers to a bluff reef which is going to kill somebody's steamboat one of these nights, if it keeps on stretching out like that; those tumbling 'boils' show a dissolving bar and a changing channel there; the lines and circles in the slick water over yonder are a warning that that troublesome place is shoaling up dangerously; that silver streak in the shadow of the forest is the 'break' from a new snag and he has located himself in the very place he could have found to fish for steamboats; that tall dead tree, with a single living branch, is not going to last long, and then

how is a body ever going to get through this blind place at night without the friendly old landmark?"

No, the romance and beauty were all gone from the river. All the value any feature of it had for me now was the amount of usefulness it could furnish toward compassing the safe piloting of a steamboat. Since those days, I have pitied doctors from my heart. What does the lovely flush in a beauty's cheek mean to a doctor but a "break" that ripples above some deadly disease? Are not all her visible charms sown thick with what are to him the signs and symbols of hidden decay? Does he ever see her beauty at all, or doesn't he simply view her professionally and comment upon her unwholesome condition all to himself? And doesn't he sometimes wonder whether he has gained most or lost most by learning his trade?

Total words: 944 words  
Total reading time\_\_\_\_\_

## Exercises

### I. Reading Comprehension

**Directions:** *Choose the best answer.*

1. The river in time is compared to a book
  - A. written in a dead language for the author
  - B. with a voice for the passenger
  - C. likely to be understood clearly by the passenger
  - D. telling the author everything about itself
2. The book of the river is so interesting that
  - A. most pages of it are full of interest
  - B. you can leave only one page unread without loss
  - C. you couldn't find higher enjoyment in other things than in it
  - D. it renews its story every other day
3. The small swirl on the river's surface means
  - A. an attraction for the pilot
  - B. a wreck or a rock was buried there for the pilot
  - C. a legend of the largest capitals for the passenger
  - D. a hideous thing for the passenger
4. When the author can "read" the river, he thinks
  - A. he can appreciate the river better
  - B. he can stand watching it like one bewitched
  - C. he can not remember the beauty of the river when it was new to him
  - D. he lost the graceful and poetical river forever
5. When the sunset scene is repeated upon the river's face, it
  - A. still arouses the author's rapture
  - B. now means for the author that the river is rising
  - C. now means for the author that it is going to rain tomorrow
  - D. now means for the author that we are going to have wind tomorrow
6. When the author becomes a real pilot, he can
  - A. turn every small feature into the letter of the alphabet
  - B. note everything as new to him as before
  - C. can not see the sunset upon the river

- D. turn the aesthetic value of the feature of the river into that of usefulness
7. The author pities doctors from his heart because
- they can not judge that the beauty is ill from her cheek
  - they take the flush in a beauty's cheek for the sign of disease
  - they lost their appreciation by learning their trade.
  - they only care about the health of the beauty
8. Through the young steamboat pilot's reading the river, the author implies
- how changeable the river is .
  - how dangerous the navigation on the river is
  - the pilot loses his sense of the river's beauty
  - knowledge both enlarges our understanding and diminishes our sense of beauty

## II. Vocabulary

**Directions:** Fill in each blank with the appropriate form of the word given in the brackets.

- She's moved to another job, it's a great \_\_\_\_\_ to our firm. (lose)
- I didn't get much \_\_\_\_\_ out of that book. (enjoy)
- The material is as \_\_\_\_\_ as a sponge. (absorb)
- Sun, wind, and waves are \_\_\_\_\_ sources of energy. (new)
- His \_\_\_\_\_ with the rules impressed us all. (familiar)
- This painting is my latest \_\_\_\_\_. (acquire)
- These new curtains will \_\_\_\_\_ up the room. (bright)

## III. Cloze

**Directions:** Read the following passage and decide on the most appropriate word from among the four choices given.

I spent a hallucinatory weekend, staring at faces I'd cut out of woman's magazines, either from the beauty page or from the ads—all this season's faces. I stuck twenty or thirty faces on the wall and tried to \_1\_ from the evidence before me (a) what women's faces \_2\_ be looking like now; and (b) why. It was something of an exercise in pure form, because the magazine models' faces \_3\_ exactly the face in the street—not low-style, do-it-yourself assemblages, but more a platonic, ideal face. Further, they reflect, as well as the mood of the moment, what the manufacturers are trying to push this year. Nevertheless, the zeitgeist (时代精神) works through the manufacturers, too. They do not understand their own imagery, \_4\_ more than the consumer who demonstrates it does. I am still working on the nature of the imagery of cosmetics. I think it scares me.

Construing the imagery was an unnerving experience because all the models appeared to be staring straight at me with \_5\_ heavy, static quality of being there that it was difficult to escape the feeling they were accusing me \_6\_ something. (How rarely women look one another \_7\_.) Only two of the faces \_8\_ anything like smiles, and only one is showing a hint of her teeth. This season's is not an extravert face. Because there is not \_9\_ to smile about this season? Surely. It is a bland, hard, bright face; it is also curiously familiar, \_10\_ I have never seen it before.

1. A. work out    B. check out    C. turn out    D. break out

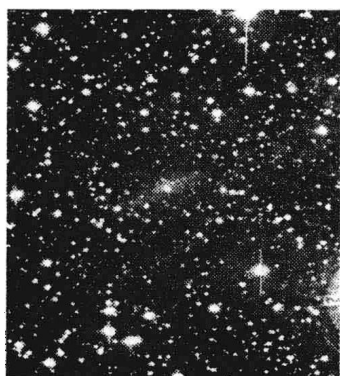
- |                    |               |                    |                |
|--------------------|---------------|--------------------|----------------|
| 2. A. are meant to | B. mean to    | C. are supposed to | D. suppose to  |
| 3. A. are          | B. weren't    | C. aren't          | D. were        |
| 4. A. much         | B. a bit      | C. not             | D. any         |
| 5. A. such         | B. such a     | C. so              | D. so a        |
| 6. A. of           | B. for        | C. with            | D. about       |
| 7. A. in the eyes  | B. in the eye | C. at the eye      | D. at the eyes |
| 8. A. carry        | B. take       | C. show            | D. wear        |
| 9. A. much         | B. many       | C. more            | D. something   |
| 10. A. because     | B. though     | C. if              | D. so          |

## Section B

**Directions:** *Preview this part before you come to class.*

### Text

#### The Corner of the Eye



There are some things that human beings can see only out of the corner of the eye. The niftiest examples of this gift, familiar to all children, are small, faint stars. When you look straight at one such star, it vanishes; when you move your eyes to stare into the space nearby, it reappears. If you pick two faint stars, side by side, and focus on one of the pair, it disappears and now you can see the other in the corner of your eye, and you can move your eyes back and forth, turning off the star in the center of your retina and switching the other one on. There is a physiological explanation for the phenomenon: we have more rods, the cells we use for light perception, at the periphery of our retinas, more cones, for perceiving color, at the center.

Something like this happens in music. You cannot really hear certain sequences of notes in a Bach fugue unless at the same time there are other notes being sounded, dominating the field. The real meaning in music comes from tones only audible in the corner of the mind.

I used to worry that computers would become so powerful and sophisticated as to take the place of human minds. The notion of Artificial Intelligence used to scare me half to death. Already, a large enough machine can do all sorts of intelligent things beyond our capacities: calculate in a split second the answers to mathematical problems requiring years for a human brain, draw accurate pictures from memory, even manufacture successions of sounds with a disarming resemblance to real music. Computers can translate textbooks; write dissertations of their own for doctorates, even speak in machine-tooled, inhuman phonemes any words read off from a printed page. They can communicate with one another, holding consultations and committee meetings of their own in networks around the earth.

Computers can make errors, of course, and do so all the time in small, irritating ways, but the mistakes can be fixed and nearly always are. In this respect they are fundamentally inhuman, and here is the relaxing thought: computers will not take over the world, they cannot replace us, because they

are not designed, as we are, for ambiguity.

Imagine the predicament faced by a computer programmed to make language, not the interesting communication in sounds made by vervets or in symbols by brilliant chimpanzee prodigies, but real human talk. The grammar would not be too difficult, and there would be no problem in constructing a vocabulary of etymons, the original, pure, unambiguous words used to name real things. The impossibility would come in making the necessary mistakes we humans make with words instinctively, intuitively, as we build our kinds of language, changing the meanings to imply quite different things, constructing and elaborating the varieties of ambiguity without which speech can never become human speech.

Look at the record of language if you want to glimpse the special qualities of the human mind that lie beyond the reach of any machine. Take, for example, the metaphors we use in everyday speech to tell ourselves who we are, where we live, and where we come from.

The earth is a good place to begin. The word "earth" is used to name the ground we walk on, the soil in which we grow plants or dig clams, and the planet itself; we also use it to describe all of humanity. ("the whole earth responds to the beauty of a child," we say to each other).

The earliest word for earth in our language was the Indo-European root *dhghem*, and look what we did with it. We turned it, by adding suffixes, into humus in Latin; today we call the complex polymers that hold fertile soil together "humic" acids, and somehow or other the same root became "humility." With another suffix the word became "human." Did the earth become human, or did the human emerge from the earth? One answer may lie in that nice cognate word "humble." "Humane" was built on, extending the meaning of both the earth and ourselves. In ancient Hebrew, *adamha* was the word for earth, *adam* for man. What computer could run itself through such manipulations as those?

We came at the same system of defining ourselves from the other direction. The word *wiros* was the first root for man; it took us in our vanity on to "virile" and "virtue," but also turned itself into the Germanic word *weraldh*, meaning the life of man, and thence in English to our word "world."

There is a deep hunch in this kind of etymology. The world of man derives from this planet, shares origin with the life of the soil, lives in humility with all the rest of life. I cannot imagine programming a computer to think up an idea like that, not a twentieth-century computer, anyway.

The world began with what it is now the fashion to call the "Big Bang." Characteristically, we have assigned the wrong words for the very beginning of the earth and ourselves, in order to evade another term that would cause this century embarrassment. It could not, of course, have been a bang of any sort, with no atmosphere to conduct the waves of sound, and no ears. It was something else, occurring in the most absolute silence we can imagine. It was the Great Light.

We say it had been chaos before, but it was not the kind of place we use the word "chaos" for today, things tumbling over each other and bumping around. Chaos did not have that meaning in Greek; it simply meant empty.

We took it, in our words, from chaos to cosmos, a word that simply meant order, cosmetic. We perceived the order in surprise, and our cosmologists and

physicists continue to find new and astonishing aspects of the order. We made up the word "universe" from the whole affair, meaning literally turning everything into one thing. We used to say it was a miracle, and we still permit ourselves to refer to the whole universe as a marvel, holding in our unconscious minds the original root meaning of these two words, miracle and marvel—from the ancient root word *smei*, signifying a smile. It immensely pleases a human being to see something never seen before, even more to learn something never known before most of all to think something never thought before. The rings of Saturn are the latest surprise. All my physicist friends are enchanted by this phenomenon, marveling at the small violations of the laws of planetary mechanics, shocked by the unaccountable braids and spokes stuck there among the rings like graffiti. It is nice for physicists to see something new and inexplicable; it means that the laws of nature are once again about to be amended by a new footnote.

The greatest surprise of all lies within our own local, suburban solar system. It is not Mars; Mars was surprising in its way but not flabbergasting; it was a disappointment not to find evidences of life, and there was some sadness in the pictures sent back to earth from the Mars Lander, that lonely long-legged apparatus poking about with its jointed arm, picking up sample after sample of the barren Mars soil, looking for any flicker of life and finding none; the only sign of life on Mars was the Lander itself, an extension of the human mind all the way from earth to Mars, totally alone.

Nor is Saturn the great surprise, nor Jupiter, nor Venus, nor Mercury, nor any of the glimpses of the others.

The overwhelming astonishment, the queerest structure we know about so far in the whole universe, the greatest of all cosmological scientific puzzles, confounding all our efforts to comprehend it, is the earth. We are only now beginning to appreciate how strange and splendid it is, how it catches the breath, the loveliest object afloat around the sun, enclosed in its own blue bubble of atmosphere, manufacturing and breathing its own oxygen, fixing its own nitrogen from the air into its own soil, generating its own weather at the surface of its rain forests, constructing its own carapace from living parts: chalk cliffs, coral reefs, old fossils from earlier forms of life now covered by layers of new life meshed together around the globe, Troy upon Troy.

Seen from the right distance, from the corner of the eye of an extra-terrestrial visitor, it must surely seem a single creature, clinging to the round warm stone, turning in the sun.

Total words: 1430 words  
Total reading time\_\_\_\_\_

## Reading Comprehension

**Directions:** *Decide whether each of the following statements is true or false.*

1. \_\_\_\_\_ That we can see some things out of the corner of the eye can be physiologically explained.
2. \_\_\_\_\_ The notion of Artificial Intelligence is now scaring the author.
3. \_\_\_\_\_ Computers will not please human beings just because they can not deal with ambiguity.

4. \_\_\_\_\_ Computers are unable to construct a vocabulary of etymons.
5. \_\_\_\_\_ The word " earth " derives from the Indo-European root.
6. \_\_\_\_\_ Chaos means things tumbling over each other and bumping around in Greek.
7. \_\_\_\_\_ Human beings will be immensely pleased to learn something unknown before.
8. \_\_\_\_\_ The most astonishing and strange thing for human beings so far in the whole universe is the sun.
9. \_\_\_\_\_ The corner of eye is metaphorically the special ability of observation human beings exclusively have.

## **Section C**

**Directions:** *The passages in this section are meant to be read through quickly. Try to finish them within 8 minutes. Do not preview.*

**Questions 1 to 4 are based on the following passage.**

1. According to this article, fashion is an absurdity in terms of
  - A. economy
  - B. morals
  - C. social moral
  - D. aesthetics
2. To a woman, a dress is
  - A. a symbol of an important event in her life
  - B. as meaningful as an official decoration is to a man
  - C. infinitely more important than a jewel
  - D. both A and B
3. A gown embroidered with gold and stars is
  - A. offered as a temptation to every novice entering the convent
  - B. said to be the strongest temptation St. Catherine faced before she took her final vows
  - C. the dream of every woman
  - D. worn by novices when they take their vows
4. According to the article, woman's absorption in clothes
  - A. constitutes a great danger to society
  - B. indirectly discourages participation in more worthwhile projects
  - C. is a source of constant dissatisfaction to a woman
  - D. saves society from more dangerous evils than those it causes

Wholly aside from aesthetic and moral considerations, fashion is an economic absurdity, and there is little to be said in its favor. Nevertheless, we can appreciate the wisdom in Gina Lombroso's belief that the enormous stress which women lay on everything pertaining to clothes and the art of personal adornment is connected with the tendency to crystallize sentiment into an object. Woman symbolizes every important event in her life by a special dress; and a jewel or a beautiful gown means to a woman what an official decoration means to a man.

"The temptation of dress is the last step in the ceremony to which the novice has to submit before entering the cloister. The memory of the gown which she

too might have worn was the strongest temptation that assailed St. Catherine before she took her solemn vows—a gown, embroidered with gold and stars, like those her sisters had worn, which her grandchildren would have gazed at with eyes filled with wonder and admiration”

“If a woman’s clothes cost the family and society a little time, money, and activity, they allow woman, independent of lies and calumnies, to triumph and come to the fore outside of man’s world and competition. They allow woman to satisfy her desire to be the first in the most varied fields by giving her the illusion that she is first, and at the same time enabling her rival to have the same illusion. Clothes absorb some of woman’s activity which might otherwise be diverted to more or less worth-while ends; they give woman real satisfaction, a satisfaction complete in itself, and independent of others, and ... they constitute a safety valve which saves society from much greater and more dangerous evils than those which they cause.

The aptness of these observations lies in the emphasis on clothes which are really beautiful and distinctive. But fashion is not primarily concerned with beauty; and fashion connotes conformity, not the individuality so cherished by our society and so artfully suggested by the copywriters. Many people who rigorously follow fashions believe they are following their own inclinations; they are unaware of the primitive, tribal compulsion; and this is true of fashions in manners, morals, and literature, as well as in clothes.

**Questions 5 to 7 are based on the following passage.**

5. The first paragraph is

- A. part of a book on scientific aesthetics
- B. part of a aesthetic textbook
- C. a footnote in a physics textbook
- D. part of a lecture

6. Richard Feynman thinks

- A. science strips nature of her beauty
- B. poems strips nature of her beauty
- C. knowledge promotes the appreciation of nature
- D. knowledge lessens the awe of nature

7. According to Richard Feynman, art and theoretical physics

- A. share something in common
- B. do not share anything in common at all
- C. share the same anticipation
- D. do not share the same anticipation

“Poets say science takes away from the beauty of the stars—mere globs of gas atoms. Nothing is ‘mere’. I too can see the stars on a desert night, and feel them. But do I see less or more? The vastness of the heavens stretches my imagination—stuck on this carrousel, my little eye can catch one-million-year-old light ... For far more marvelous is the truth than any artists of the past imagined! Why do the poets of the present not speak of it? What men are poets who can speak of Jupiter if he were like a man, but if he is an immense spinning sphere of methane and ammonia must be silent?”

This poetic paragraph appears as a footnote in, of all places, a physics textbook: *The Feynman Lectures on Physics* by Nobel laureate Richard



Feynman. Like so many others of his kind, Feynman scorns the suggestion that science strips nature of her beauty, leaving only a naked set of equations. Knowledge of nature, he thinks, deepens the awe, enhance the appreciation. But Feynman has also been known to remark that the only quality art and theoretical physics have in common is the joyful anticipation that artists and physicists alike feel when they contemplate a blank piece of paper.

**Questions 8 to 10 are based on the following passage.**

8.The author thinks that

- A. each one of us is an artist
- B. a lot of people have no ability to understand well
- C. some of us become great artists
- D. a lot of people can not create well

9.Today life is

- A. simple
- B. not varied
- C. not pressing
- D. is permeated by art

10.It is true that

- A. art is a luxury
- B. art is a monopoly of wealth
- C. art needs concentration
- D. art needs museums

We are all potential artists—almost all of us. There are but a few who seem entirely wanting in capacity for understanding or creating; many have considerable ability; a few become great artists. It is a matter of degree. Art and the way of art exist for most of us not only exist but permeate all life, today as well as yesterday. Today life is most complex and its activities and contacts, however much they differ in number and breadth with the individual, are varied and pressing. With this immediate present we are concerned primarily.

A current opinion, far too common, holds that art is a luxury, a monopoly of wealth, a matter of museums, something to be indulged in only in one's leisure, and quite inessential to and divorced from one's daily activities. How far from the truth! It is true that to understand a great painting one must look at it long and contemplatively; that to understand a sonata one must hear it, undistractedly, many times. Few poems reveal all their beauty and meaning in one reading. Real understanding requires concentration of eye or ear, feelings, and intelligence. Granted, however, that great art is relatively rare and requires contemplation and leisure for its true appreciation, still art and a way of art permeate the world in which we live.

### **Question for consideration:**

- 1.The author of *The Corner of the Eye* ranges widely in subject matter here. Analyze the essay to discover the connection (some of which are implicit) among the subjects. How would you summarize his central point?
- 2.The author refers to "special qualities of human mind that lie beyond the reach of any machine." What are the differences for the author between the human mind and computers?
- 3.As computers have become increasingly sophisticated, have these "special qualities" been more nearly approached?