



普通高等教育“十一五”国家级规划教材

# 英语阅读技巧与实践

评判性阅读

# BOOK 5

总主编 / 刘学明

本册主编 / 刘金玲

English  
Reading  
Skills  
And  
Practice



湖南师范大学出版社  
HUNAN NORMAL UNIVERSITY PRESS



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English Reading Skills And Practice  
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# 序

黄源深

阅读对于学习语言的重要性是不言而喻的。古人有言，“读书破万卷，下笔如有神”，指的就是阅读对掌握语言、提高写作能力所起的作用。另一说“读万卷书，行万里路”，也包含着类似的意思。至于“青灯黄卷”、“寒窗苦读”，则除了倡导发愤学习，还说明了对大量阅读的重视。

语言学习是相通的。大量阅读对掌握外语也同样重要。阅读有助于培养语感。对一种语言的感受，是建立在对该语言的频繁接触上的。对在母语环境里的外语学习者来说，可以说没有大量阅读就不可能产生对所学外语的语感，而没有语感，则只能得语言之皮毛。大量阅读也有助于增加语汇和表达方式，无论是本国语还是外语，我们所掌握的用以书面传递思想的词汇和句法，大多是通过阅读得来的，书读得越多，掌握的表达方式也越多，表达能力也越强。阅读对写作所起的作用更为直接。通常，写不好的根本原因，除了思想贫乏、逻辑混乱等内在智力因素外，主要还应归结于读得太少，没有从阅读别人的文章中学得自己写作所需的语汇和表达方式。阅读还能丰富我们的文化知识，培根就认定“读书使人充实”，而掌握有关国家的文化背景知识，对外语学习者来说尤为重要。一篇域外的文章，一部外国的小说，都会向我们展示一个新的世界，都有助于我们对语言的了解和领悟。阅读对学习外语的重要性是怎么强调也不会过分的。

如果把英语学习中的阅读分为精读和泛读两类的話，那么现时人们的注意力往往过多地置于精读，而忽略了泛读。精读不能说不重要，古人也有“熟读唐诗三百首，不会吟诗也会吟”之类强调精读之说。问题在于我们大多着眼于试验田式的小块文章上的“精耕细作”（不厌其烦地释义，反反复复地解释语法，不无炫耀地解析词汇，等等），而把“大量阅读”放在极其次要的地位。虽然设有泛读课，但大多泛读不“泛”，阅读量极其有限，说到底不过是精读的变种。尽管对一小篇课文的研读可以把文中的词汇与句式搞得滚瓜烂熟，对英语学习也有所帮



助，尽管这种试验田里的悉心耕耘有着一定的必要性，但我们忽视了将其推向“大田”，即放松了对语言学习至关重要的“大量阅读”，无法获得真正的大面积丰收。小块文章的狭窄语境（加之缺乏重复）限制了学习者对词语的理解和领悟；靠反复诵读而记住的词汇和结构往往难以活用，导致生搬硬套而出错；很小的阅读量当然无法培养语感。其结果，学习者不得不依赖记忆中的语法条条和结构来遣词造句，所得句子也许语法无误，但往往不地道，甚至出现笑话，这应当说是轻视“大量阅读”所造成的恶果。

近几年来，这个问题已引起了部分院校的注意，开始在大量阅读上下工夫，其中我知道比较突出的例子是湖南师范大学外国语学院。他们采取了周密的措施来加强学生的阅读，尤其是课外阅读。说实在的，一种外语光靠课内的几个学时是无论如何也学不好的，必须大力开拓课外空间才行。湖南师范大学外国语学院的老教师们深谙这个道理，并努力付诸实施。他们通过各种途径自筹经费，买来一批批课外读物，年复一年，日积月累，建立了一个初具规模的图书室。每学期之始，教师开出书单，规定学生要读完这些书，并定期用口头和书面（写读书报告）的方式进行检查，检查结果计入成绩，作为学业评估的一个重要部分。几年坚持下来，学生的英语水平大幅度地提高，为其他院校所瞩目。除了因为该校的英语教学管理得当之外，这不能不说是落实大量阅读的一大功绩。

湖南师范大学外国语学院对阅读的重视，还体现在由刘学明教授牵头、有蒋洪新教授等参加，精心编写了一套《英语阅读技巧与实践》的阅读教材，对学生进行较系统的阅读技巧指导，使课内外阅读互相呼应。这套教材针对性强，注重实用，富有特色。它把讲授阅读理论与技巧同大量的阅读实践结合起来，使学生能在有关阅读理论的指导下，通过“大运动量”的阅读训练，掌握“根据上下文判断推理、抓大意、快速阅读”等技巧，达到最终提高阅读能力的目的。全套教材由浅入深，从基本阅读技巧入手，逐步过渡到有相当难度的评判性阅读和鉴赏性阅读，便于学生吸收和掌握。此外，该套教材内容丰富，体裁多样，涉及小说、散文、诗歌等。书中的文章短小精悍，富有时代气息，趣味性强，极具吸引力。总之，这是一套系统性强、富有创意、便于操作、编写得相当出色的教材，特予以推荐。

2000年6月30日

于上海



## 前 言

《英语阅读技巧与实践》是为高等学校英语专业学生编写的一套阅读（以前称为泛读）教材。全套书共7册，既可供英语专业本、专科生使用，也可供教师进修学院、函授大学和夜大的英语专业学员使用。

本套教材依据《高等学校英语专业英语教学大纲》对英语阅读课程的要求编写，其编写的目的是：教给学生阅读理论和技巧，培养他们细致观察语言的能力和假设判断、推理验证等逻辑思维能力；培养他们阅读的兴趣，使他们在较短的时间里尽快扩大词汇量和知识面，提高思想和文化素养，从而提高阅读水平和能力，通过阅读更快更好地获取世界上各国有用的政治、经济、文化和科技等方面的信息，为我国的改革开放和社会主义建设服务。

本套教材的特点是：①编排的独特性。全书以阅读理论和技巧为主线，使学生在理论和技巧的指导下进行实践。②内容的广泛性。书中既有政治、社会、经济、文化、历史、天文、地理、科普、图表等内容，也有小说、诗歌等内容。③选材的知识性。学生在学语言的同时也能学到很多领域方面的知识，扩大视野。④课文的精练性。课文短小精悍，适合于课堂使用，避免文章太



长而使学生产生厌烦情绪，以及过长的 silent reading 而使课堂死气沉沉（长篇阅读在课外阅读中解决）。⑤练习的丰富性。“练习部分”具有很强的针对性和实用性，能牢牢吸引学生的注意力。

第1册为四个单元，集中介绍各种重要的阅读理论和技巧，并在技巧指导下进行实践。在第2~4册中，每册有40个 passages，每篇后注明单词数并配有各种练习，便于学生综合运用各种技巧，进行计时阅读。第5册为评判性阅读，共四个单元。第6册为报刊阅读，共三个单元。第7册为鉴赏性阅读，共三个单元。

使用本套教材前四册时，要求学生不进行预习，否则很多练习（尤其是猜新词和理解练习）将失去意义，而且教师也无法了解学生对技巧的掌握及他们的阅读速度和理解率。

全套书总主编为刘学明教授。第1册和第2册由刘学明教授主编；第3册和第6册由吴丁娥教授主编；第4册和第5册由刘金玲教授主编；第7册由蒋洪新教授和郑燕虹教授主编。

本套教材的编写和出版得到了湖南省教育厅、湖南师范大学、湖南师范大学出版社及湖南师范大学外国语学院等的大力支持，我们深表谢意。全国许多高校的英语阅读课教师对该书提出了很多宝贵意见，我们在此一并表示感谢。

由于水平有限，书中一定会有许多不足之处，敬请广大读者，尤其是使用该书的同行们提出宝贵意见，以便进一步修正。

编 者

2011年5月于湖南师范大学



# CONTENTS

<b>UNIT I Paragraph Analysis .....</b>	<b>1</b>
PART 1 Finding the Topic .....	2
PART 2 From Topic to Main Idea .....	6
PART 3 Sentence Functions .....	17
PART 4 Taking Notes .....	32
 <b>UNIT II Essay Analysis .....</b>	 <b>37</b>
PART 1 How to Analyse an Essay .....	38
PART 2 Sample of Essay Analysis .....	40
PART 3 Passages for Practice .....	48
 <b>UNIT III Critical Reading .....</b>	 <b>59</b>
PART 1 Some Techniques in Assessing an Essay .....	60
PART 2 Argument Assessment .....	80
PART 3 Passages for Practice .....	106
 <b>UNIT IV Comprehensive Exercises .....</b>	 <b>119</b>
PART 1 Paragraph Reading .....	120
PART 2 Passage Reading .....	136
PART 3 For and Against (Passages for Oral and Writing practice) .....	185
 <b>APPENDIX Keys, Notes and New Words .....</b>	 <b>192</b>



## **UNIT I**

### **Paragraph Analysis**



# PART 1

## Finding the Topic

---

### Basic Skills

When you are trying to analyse a paragraph, you should begin finding the topic which can always be found in a well-written paragraph. When we talk about the topic of a paragraph, we usually refer to the subject of it. It has a close connection with the main idea of the paragraph, but it is not necessarily the same thing. The topic is usually what the paragraph is about. It is often the person, place or thing, or event frequently mentioned or referred to in the paragraph, while the main idea is an idea expressed, supported by the sentences in the paragraph. When you are trying to find the topic, you may ask a simple question: Who or what is repeatedly mentioned or referred to in this paragraph? The right answer to the question is the topic of the paragraph.

We can use the following paragraphs to illustrate how this question leads us to the topic.

---

### Samples

#### :::: Sample Paragraph 1

Within cities there are many areas that are poorly served by medical personnel and facilities. However, more people can obtain medical care in central



city areas than in rural areas. There are hundreds of rural counties without a single doctor or clinic. Metropolises have thousands of doctors and clinics. They may not be always located where most of the people live, but in an emergency some form of care is available.

What is the topic of the paragraph?

***Explanation:***

After you finish reading the previous paragraph, you may think that “Urban Medical Care” is the topic of the paragraph. But if you read it again, you will find this topic is too specific. The paragraph does not only deal with the medical care in cities, but also in rural areas. So medical care is the precise topic of the paragraph. It includes medical care both in cities and in rural areas.

**:::: Sample Paragraph 2**

True to character, Charles Lindburgh<sup>①</sup> planned his own burial just a few days before his death from cancer. The decision to plan his own burial was typical of Lindburgh’s personality: he was a man who knew what he wanted and insisted on living according to his beliefs. In 1927 he decided to fly nonstop over the Atlantic. Nobody believed he could do it, but he did, and the news of his flight went around the world. When popular sentiment demanded that Lindburgh return a medal given him by the Nazis, he refused. Considering his past, it’s no surprising that Lindburgh wanted to end his life as he had lived it on his own terms.

What is the topic of the paragraph?

***Explanation:***

If we asked you to give the topic of the previous paragraph, you might answer with the name Charles Lindburgh. But if you read again, you’ll see that this topic is too general. The paragraph does not deal with the many things that might fall under the heading “Charles Lindburgh”, such as his family, hobbies, or illness. Instead, the paragraph is limited to a discussion of Charles Lindburgh’s personality; this is what we call the precise topic of the paragraph. It is neither too general nor too specific. It is precise because it includes everything discussed in the paragraph and excludes everything not discussed.



### :::: Sample Paragraph 3

A bicycle consists of two wheels and a simple steel frame equipped with handles, pedals, cranks, and a saddle. The rider sits on the saddle, grasping the handlebars. The pressure of the rider's foot on the pedals turns the cranks. This action drives a chain over the front and rear sprockets<sup>②</sup>, causing the rear wheel to revolve and setting the bike in motion.

What is the topic of the paragraph?

**Explanation:**

The preceding paragraph talks about riding a bicycle, which is the subject the author repeatedly refers to. We can say then that "Riding a Bicycle" is the precise topic of the paragraph. Notice, however, that this phrase does not appear anywhere in the paragraph. To express the precise topic, we have to provide the phrase ourselves.

---

## Exercises

### Paragraph 1

In 1803, the United States paid France \$15,000,000 for the Louisiana Territory, an area more than four times the size of France. The land which was bought included everything between the Rocky Mountains and the Mississippi River except Texas. The principal port for the second longest river system in the world was located within this territory. Although few realized it at that time, the purchase included the vast forests of Arkansas and Minnesota, the oil deposits of Oklahoma, the cornfields of Iowa, the wheatland of the Dakotas, the copper, silver, and gold of Colorado and Montana, the rice and sugar of Louisiana. Without doubt, the Louisiana purchase was one of the greatest events in the history of the United States. In a single action, a third-class nation doubled its size, united its states and population, and became a great power in the world.

The topic of the paragraph is \_\_\_\_\_.

### Paragraph 2

Over the years many different systems of physical exercise designed to improve the health and appearance of the body have emerged. One of the best



ever to come forth was Hatha Yoga<sup>®</sup>, a form of Yoga consisting of various postures that exercise the entire body.

Facial muscles, for example, can be toned by daily performance of “The Lion”, a posture that imitates the face of a roaring lion<sup>®</sup>. Back muscles can become more flexible by regular practice of “The Cobra”<sup>®</sup>, a posture imitates the arching head of that poisonous snake. “The Crow”<sup>®</sup>, which resembles the headstand is said to improve circulation and relieve tension.

The topic of the paragraph is \_\_\_\_\_.

### Paragraph 3

EcoNet<sup>®</sup> was the first computer network designed for organizations and individuals working on environmental preservation. It is the largest.

EcoNet began in California in 1984 with five computers donated by Apple Computer. It now has more than 2,300 users, most in the United States, and is adding about 170 new users every month. Given the size of the United States, this may appear fairly small group, but it is one with considerable leverage. More than 60 percent of EcoNet’s members are organizations or individuals representing organizations. Indeed, EcoNet’s on-line phone directory, which gives the names and addresses of all the users, reads like a bibliography of the American environment.

The topic of the paragraph is \_\_\_\_\_.



## PART 2

### From Topic to Main Idea

---

#### Basic Skills

The topic of a paragraph, as we discussed in the previous part, is the person, place, thing or event frequently mentioned or referred to in the paragraph. It has a very close connection with the main idea of the paragraph, but they are not the same. The main idea of the paragraph is an idea—the most important idea that is developed or supported by the sentences in the paragraph which centers around the topic. This idea may be contained in a sentence which is the most general and covers the ideas stated by the other sentences in the paragraph. We call this general sentence “topic sentence”. Sometimes, the main idea of the paragraph is not explicitly expressed by any one sentence alone. It is suggested by all the sentences together. We call it unstated main idea. The main idea, however, not like the topic, doesn’t necessarily always exist in every paragraph. In reading practice, we may come across paragraphs that don’t contain the main idea. In this case we can neither find a topic sentence nor an idea that runs through the paragraph. We call this disappearance of the main idea.

#### The Main Idea Contained in a Topic Sentence

If the main idea of a paragraph is explicitly stated in a topic sentence, this topic sentence is more often than not either the first or the last sentence. As main



idea is more frequently found in the first sentence, look for the following three patterns:

a. Statement and examples; Is the first sentence a statement followed by other sentences giving examples supporting that statement? For example:

MacDonald's is having a sales promotion this month. Double cheeseburgers are half price and free Cokes are given every order over five dollars. Besides that, French fries are being sold two orders for the price of one.

b. Statement and reasons; Is the statement in the first sentence followed by reasons that support it? For example:

Turkey vultures are useful animals. Although they are awkward birds on the ground, moving with a shuffling gait, they are most graceful in the air, where they soar for hours looking for food. Turkey vultures eat all kinds of carrion. Their prompt removal of dead animals makes them much appreciated by humankind, especially in tropical countries.

c. Statement and details; Is the statement in the first sentence followed by details that support it? For example:

The panda is a popular animal. Stories about the panda in the Washington Zoo are always front page news and important features on television newscasts. Stuffed pandas are among the most popular toys for children, and panda postcards are always in demand in zoo gift shops.

If these three patterns don't contain the solution to the main idea puzzle, consider the possibility that the main idea is contained in the last sentence, and try out these patterns:

a. Examples and statement; Do the other sentences in the paragraph supply examples that support the statement made in the last sentence?

b. Details and statement; Do the other sentences in the paragraph support the statement in the last sentence?

c. Reasons and statement; Do the other sentences in the paragraph supply reasons that support the statement made in the last sentence?

If the paragraph doesn't conform to any of these patterns, we have to think of another type. Sometimes, however, the main-idea sentence is in the middle of the paragraph. Once you have mastered the two strategies explained above, you can use them to help find this third type of placement of the main idea.

The following are sample paragraphs with main ideas expressed by topic



sentences.

---

## Samples

### :::: Sample Paragraph 1

For a period of about seventy-five years(1765—1840), the Gothic novel<sup>①</sup>, an early relative of the modern horror stories, was popular throughout Europe. Many of the most popular novels, those written by Horence Walpole, Ann Radcliffe, and Monk Lewis were sold by the thousands, quickly translated, and frequently plagiarised. The stories were the object of fascination because they described a world where mysterious happenings were a matter of course, and ghostly, hooded figures flitted through the night. Gothic novels were read and discussed by men and women of the upper classes, and publishers ever alert to ready market, made sure that copies of the books were available at bargain prices. Even the poorest members of the working class could afford to pay a penny to enter the Gothic world of terror, and they paid their pennies in astonishing numbers.

1. Topic: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Topic Sentence: \_\_\_\_\_
3. Main Idea: \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Explanation:**

Read and analyse this paragraph, you'll find that the Gothic novel is the precise topic, the subject to which the author repeatedly refers. The first sentence tells us that the Gothic novel was very popular in Europe in the years between 1765 and 1840. The second, third, fourth, and fifth sentences provide specific examples of the books' popularity. We learn that books from popular authors sold by the thousands and were widely discussed and purchased by the rich and the poor alike. The author returns repeatedly to the idea that the Gothic novels were very popular; this, then, is the main idea of the paragraph. The first sentence which contains the main idea is called "topic sentence".

### :::: Sample Paragraph 2

Prior to his death Julius Caesar had received several warnings that his life





was in danger, but he chose to ignore them because he doubted whether there was anyone in Rome courageous enough to kill Caesar. He had come to think of himself as so important to the world's continued progress and well-being that he could not imagine anyone would dare make an attack on the great Caesar's life. Undoubtedly, his pride and arrogance contributed to his death.

1. Topic: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Topic Sentence: \_\_\_\_\_
3. Main Idea: \_\_\_\_\_

**Explanation:**

Read this paragraph carefully, you'll find that almost every sentence of this paragraph refers to Julius Caesar's pride. So Julius Caesar's pride is the precise topic. The first sentence contains the main idea of the paragraph that because of his pride Julius Caesar ignored the warnings before his death that his life was in danger. The last sentence is the conclusion.

**:::: Sample Paragraph 3**

Three days before Christmas in 1894, Captain Alfred Dreyfus, a Jewish officer in French army, was found guilty of treason and sentenced to life imprisonment on Devil's Island®. In 1906 Dreyfus was completely exonerated; but in those twelve years before Dreyfus was proved innocent, every possible attempt was made to prove him guilty. Key officers in the military gave the newspapers material that supposedly proved Dreyfus's guilt. The newspapers, for their part, printed the stories without questioning their authenticity. Evidence proving Dreyfus innocent was ignored and attempts to open the case were blocked because an examination of Dreyfus case was considered dangerous to the prestige of both the army and the government.

1. Topic: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Topic Sentence: \_\_\_\_\_
3. Main Idea: \_\_\_\_\_

**Explanation:**

After reading this paragraph, you'll find that neither the first nor the last sentence contains the main idea. A careful reader will discover that the idea expressed by the second sentence is supported by the other sentences. So the second sentence is the topic sentence, and the main idea is: In 1906 Dreyfus was