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全国专业技术人员职称外语等级考试用书

附送 CD-ROM 辅导光盘

ENGLISH



# 职称英语

## (理工类)

人事部人事考试中心 组编  
国家外国专家局培训中心

辽宁大学出版社

全国专业技术人员职称外语等级考试用书

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图书在版编目 (CIP) 数据

职称英语 2005·理工类/人事部人事考试中心、国家外国专家局培训中心组编. —沈阳: 辽宁大学出版社, 2004. 12

ISBN 7-5610-4715-0

I. 职... II. ①人... ②国... III. 英语—职称—资格考核—教材 IV. H31

中国版本图书馆 CIP 数据核字 (2004) 第 108253 号

本书零售电话: (010) 63184323 63184324

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责任编辑: 王本浩 田东琰 责任校对: 金 云

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辽 宁 大 学 出 版 社 出 版

地址: 沈阳市皇姑区崇山中路 66 号 邮编: 110036

联系电话: 024-86864613 [http: // www. lnupress. com. cn](http://www.lnupress.com.cn)

Email: [mailer@lnupress.com.cn](mailto:mailer@lnupress.com.cn)

丹东印刷有限责任公司印刷 辽宁大学出版社发行

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幅面尺寸: 185mm×260mm 印张: 25. 25

字数: 600 千字

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2004 年 12 月第 1 版 2004 年 12 月第 1 次印刷

印数: 1~100 000 定价: 42. 00 元

# 前 言

为帮助广大专业技术人员学习英语，熟悉全国职称英语等级考试方法，我们根据人事部专业技术人员管理司审定的《全国专业技术人员职称英语等级考试大纲》，组织编写了2005年版《职称英语》考试用书。该书主要内容有职称英语等级考试介绍、解题方法、按大纲题型编写的学习材料以及2004年度全国职称英语等级考试试题分析等。结合当今世界科学技术、经济的发展和哲学、社会科学的进步，对用书相当一部分内容进行了更新，在2004年版《职称英语》的基础上进行了较大修改。

根据考生反馈意见，我们对文章的难易度做了标注。未加符号标注的文章相当于C级；标有“\*”号的文章相当于B级；标有“+”号的文章相当于A级。考生可根据自己所报考的级别和水平阅读相应的文章。为便于学习，随书赠送《全国专业技术人员职称英语等级考试辅导光盘（CD-ROM）》。

《职称英语》等级考试用书分为综合类、理工类、卫生类三个分册，供考生选用。本书综合类主编方立、何兆熊，理工类主编张彦斌、戴炜华，卫生类主编曹精华、邱陶生。参加编写的还有韩宝成、吕乐、于海涛等同志。值此《职称英语》出版之际，我们向参加本书编写、审定的专家表示衷心感谢。

由于时间紧迫，书中难免有缺点、错误，恳请专家、学者及使用本书的广大专业技术人员批评指正，以便再版时修订。

人事部人事考试中心  
国家外国专家局培训中心  
2004年10月

# 目 录

前言 .....	1
职称英语等级考试介绍及解题方法 .....	1

## 第一部分 词汇选项

词汇学习 1 .....	29
词汇学习 2 .....	30
词汇学习 3 .....	31
词汇学习 4 .....	32
词汇学习 5 .....	33
词汇学习 6 .....	34
词汇学习 7 .....	35
词汇学习 8 .....	36
词汇学习 9 .....	38
词汇学习 10 .....	39
答案与题解 .....	40

## 第二部分 阅读判断

第一篇 Inventor of LED .....	57
第二篇 El Nino .....	58
第三篇 Smoking .....	60
第四篇 Engineering Ethics .....	62
第五篇 Rescue Platform .....	63
第六篇 Micro-chip Research Center Created .....	65
第七篇 The Cold Places .....	67
第八篇 Easy Learning .....	69
第九篇 Dangers Await Babies with Altitude .....	71
第十篇 Inhalable Water Droplets .....	73
* 第十一篇 Fermi Problem .....	75
* 第十二篇 Tanning Parlors Take Heat .....	77
+ 第十三篇 Crypto .....	79
+ 第十四篇 Biodiesel .....	82

+ 第十五篇	A Dog's Dilemma .....	83
--------	-----------------------	----

### 第三部分 概括大意和完成句子

第一篇	More Than 8 Hours Sleep Too Much of a Good Thing .....	86
第二篇	Soot and Snow: a Hot Combination .....	88
第三篇	Icy Microbes .....	90
第四篇	Hurricanes .....	92
第五篇	Carl Sagan .....	94
第六篇	How We Form First Impression .....	96
第七篇	Screen Test .....	98
第八篇	The Mir Space Station .....	100
第九篇	More Rural Research Is Needed .....	102
第十篇	Volts from the Sky .....	105
* 第十一篇	Geology and Health .....	107
* 第十二篇	A Strong Greenhouse Gas .....	109
+ 第十三篇	Blasts from the Past .....	111
+ 第十四篇	The Magic Io Personal Digital Pen .....	114
+ 第十五篇	Intelligence: a Changed View .....	116

### 第四部分 阅读理解

第一篇	Ford Abandons Electric Vehicles .....	119
第二篇	Will Quality Eat up the U. S. Lead in Software? .....	121
第三篇	How Animals Keep Warm .....	123
第四篇	Pushbike Peril .....	126
第五篇	Late-night Drinking .....	128
第六篇	Live with Computer .....	130
第七篇	Electronic Mail (E-mail) .....	133
第八篇	Eiffel Is an Eyeful .....	136
第九篇	Egypt Felled by Famine .....	139
第十篇	Young Female Chimps Outlearn Their Brothers .....	141
第十一篇	The Net Cost of Making a Name for Yourself .....	143
第十二篇	Florida Hit by Cold Air Mass .....	145
第十三篇	Adaptation of Living Things .....	148
第十四篇	Cousteau Remembered .....	150
第十五篇	Winged Robot Learns to Fly .....	153
第十六篇	Japanese Drilling into Core of Earth .....	155

第十七篇	Urban Rainforest .....	157
第十八篇	Spacing in Animals .....	159
第十九篇	Prolonging Human Life .....	162
第二十篇	Hacking .....	164
第二十一篇	The Gene Industry .....	167
第二十二篇	Snowflakes .....	169
第二十三篇	Powering a City? It's a Breeze .....	171
第二十四篇	Underground Coal Fires - a Looming Catastrophe .....	174
第二十五篇	Eat to Live .....	176
第二十六篇	Male and Female Pilots Cause Accidents Differently .....	178
第二十七篇	Driven to Distraction .....	181
第二十八篇	Sleep Lets Brain File Memories .....	183
第二十九篇	Food Fright .....	186
第三十篇	Digital Realm .....	188
* 第三十一篇	Credit Card Only Works When Spoken to .....	191
* 第三十二篇	Pool Watch .....	193
* 第三十三篇	Star Quality .....	196
* 第三十四篇	Don't Count on Dung .....	198
* 第三十五篇	Single-parent Kids Do Best .....	200
* 第三十六篇	Kasparov; Chess Computers Beatable... For Now .....	203
* 第三十七篇	"Don't Drink Alone" Gets New Meaning .....	205
* 第三十八篇	Sauna .....	207
* 第三十九篇	Clone Farm .....	210
* 第四十篇	Air Pollution Cloud Measured on Both Sides of Pacific .....	212
+ 第四十一篇	A Phone That Knows You're Busy .....	214
+ 第四十二篇	Controlling Robots with the Mind .....	217
+ 第四十三篇	Forecasting Methods .....	219
- 第四十四篇	Defending the Theory of Evolution Still Seems Needed .....	221
+ 第四十五篇	Thirsty in Karachi .....	224
+ 第四十六篇	Can Buildings Be Designed to Resist Terrorist Attack? .....	227
+ 第四十七篇	U. S. Marks 175 Locomotive Years .....	229
- 第四十八篇	Shrinking Water Supply Poses Threat to Peace .....	232
+ 第四十九篇	Retinal Prosthesis Help the Blind Regain Eyesight .....	234
+ 第五十篇	Ebbysmeyer - King of Currents .....	236

## 第五部分 补全短文

第一篇	Mobile Phones .....	240
-----	---------------------	-----

第二篇	The World's Longest Bridge .....	241
第三篇	Reinventing the Table .....	243
第四篇	Don't Rely on Plankton to Save the Planet .....	244
第五篇	Tests Show Women Suited for Space Travel .....	245
第六篇	Dung to Death .....	247
第七篇	Looking to the Future .....	248
第八篇	Watching Microcurrents Flow .....	250
第九篇	Stonehenge .....	252
第十篇	High Dive .....	253
* 第十一篇	Agitated Sunspot Cause Trouble .....	255
* 第十二篇	Ants as a Barometer of Ecological Change .....	256
* 第十三篇	Sleeping Giant .....	258
* 第十四篇	Robotic Highway Cones .....	259
* 第十五篇	Einstein Named "Person of the Century" .....	261

## 第六部分 完形填空

第一篇	Captain Cook Arrow Legend .....	263
第二篇	Water .....	265
第三篇	One Good Reason to Let Smallpox Live .....	267
第四篇	Save Energy at Home .....	269
第五篇	Singing Alarms Could Save the Blind .....	271
第六篇	Car Thieves Could Be Stopped Remotely .....	273
第七篇	Squishy Cellphones Add a Buzz to Calls .....	275
第八篇	A Biological Clock .....	277
第九篇	Wonder Webs .....	280
第十篇	Less Is More .....	282
* 第十一篇	China to Help Europe Develop GPS Rival .....	284
* 第十二篇	Dark Forces Dominate Universe .....	286
* 第十三篇	Making the Leap .....	288
* 第十四篇	Earth's Inner Core .....	290
* 第十五篇	Crashed Cars to Text Message for Help .....	293
2004 年职称英语等级考试试题、答案及题解 .....		296
附录 .....		342



# 职称英语等级考试介绍及解题方法

## 一、职称英语等级考试介绍

### 1. 概述

全国专业技术人员职称英语等级考试是由国家人事部组织实施的一项外语考试，它根据英语在不同专业领域活动中的应用特点，结合专业技术人员掌握和应用英语的实际情况，对申报不同级别职称的专业技术人员的英语水平提出了不同的要求。该考试根据专业技术人员使用英语的实际情况，把考试的重点放在了阅读理解上面。

全国专业技术人员职称英语等级考试共分三个专业类别：综合类、理工类、卫生类。每个专业类别的考试各分A、B、C三个等级。每个级别的试卷内容，除综合类外，普通英语和专业英语题目各占50%。三个等级考试的总分各为100分，考试时间均为2小时。

### 2. 职称英语等级考试的要求

全国专业技术人员职称英语等级考试重点考查应试者的阅读理解能力。考试总的评价是：申报A级的人员在两小时内应完成3 000词左右的阅读任务，并能正确理解所读材料的内容；申报B级的人员在两小时内应完成2 600词左右的阅读任务，并能正确理解所读材料的内容；申报C级的人员在两小时内应完成2 200词左右的阅读任务，并能正确理解所读材料的内容。

为达到上述目标，考试对应试者的英语词汇量、英语语法知识和阅读理解能力的要求分别如下：

#### 2.1 词汇量

考试所涉及的词汇和短语主要依据本大纲所附词汇表。对申报不同级别的应试者要求掌握的词汇量不等：

- 申报A级的人员应认知6 000个左右的单词和一定数量的短语；
- 申报B级的人员应认知5 000个左右的单词和一定数量的短语；
- 申报C级的人员应认知4 000个左右的单词和一定数量的短语。

需要指出的是，职称英语等级考试所涉及的词汇、短语主要根据本考试大纲所附的词汇表，在实际考试中，凡是超出大纲词汇表以外的词汇一般都给出中文意思。

#### 2.2 语法知识

在以往的考试中，最常见的一个测试项目就是对语法知识的考查。全国职称英语等级考试中是否也考语法呢？大纲明确指出：考试重点是考查应试者的阅读理解能力。不直接考语法。所谓不直接考语法，就是不像其他类型的考试那样要求考生做与语法有关的多项选择题、语法改错题，分析主谓宾等题目。不直接考语法，并不等于说可以不懂语法，语法知识不重要，阅读理解必须运用语法知识辨认出正确的语法关系，不懂语法，不论词汇量有多大都是毫无意义的。职称英语等级考试要求应试者必须懂得英语基本语法知识，这些语法知识可概述如下：

- 英语句子的基本语序及其意义;
- 英语句子的结构和常用句型;
- 动词的各种时、体及其意义;
- 各种从句的构成和意义;
- 句子中词语的所指、省略、替代、重复、以及句子之间意义的关系等。

### 2.3 阅读理解能力

前面我们已经提到,职称英语等级考试的测试重点是考察应试者的阅读理解能力。它要求应试者能综合运用英语语言知识和阅读技能来理解本专业的或一般内容的英语书面材料。具体来讲,阅读能力主要包括下列几个方面:

1. 掌握所读材料的主旨和大意;
2. 了解阐述主旨的事实和细节;
3. 利用上下文猜测某些词汇和短语的意义;
4. 既理解个别句子的意义,也理解上下文之间的意义关系;
5. 根据所读材料进行判断和推论;
6. 领会作者的观点、意图和态度。

### 3. 考试内容与试卷结构

A、B、C三个等级的考试各由6个部分组成,每个级别的考试题型和题量均相同,但不同级别考试总的阅读量及难易程度不同。考试主要考查应试者理解书面英语的能力。以下是每个部分的测试点、题型、题量介绍。

#### 第1部分:词汇选项(第1~15题,每题1分,共15分)

考查应试者理解在一定语境中单词或短语意义的能力。本部分为15个句子,每个句子中均有1个词或短语画有底横线,要求应试者从每个句子后面所给的4个选项中选择1个与画线部分意义最相近的词或短语。

#### 第2部分:阅读判断(第16~22题,每题1分,共7分)

考查应试者识别和判断文章所提供的信息的能力。本部分为1篇300~450词的短文,根据短文列出7个句子,有的句子提供的是正确信息,有的句子提供的是错误信息,有的句子的信息在短文中并未直接或间接提及。要求应试者根据短文的内容对每个句子做出判断。

#### 第3部分:概括大意与完成句子(第23~30题,每题1分,共8分)

考查应试者把握文章段落大意及细节的能力。本部分为1篇300~450词的短文,有2项测试任务:(1)短文后有6个段落小标题,要求应试者根据文章的内容为其中指定的4个段落各选择一个正确的小标题;(2)短文后有4个不完整的句子,要求应试者在所提供的6个选项中选择4个正确选项分别完成每个句子。

#### 第4部分:阅读理解(第31~45题,每题3分,共45分)

考查应试者对文章主旨和细节信息的理解能力。本部分为3篇文章,每篇300~450词,每篇文章后有5道题。要求应试者根据文章的内容,从每题所给的4个选项中选择1个最佳答案。

#### 第5部分:补全短文(第46~50题,每题2分,共10分)

考查应试者把握文章结构、掌握作者思路的能力。本部分为1篇300~450词的短文,文中有5处空白,文章后面有6组文字,其中5组取自文章本身。要求应试者根据文章的内容选择5组文字,将其放回相应位置,以恢复文章原貌。

#### 第6部分:完形填空(第51~65题,每题1分,共15分)

考查应试者正确把握文章内容,以及在一定语境中准确使用词语的能力。本部分为1

篇 300~450 词的短文，文中有 15 处空白，每处空白给出 4 个选项，要求应试者根据短文的内容从 4 个选项中选择 1 个最佳答案。

## 二、阅读理解能力的考核目标和常见的题型

专业技术人员以英语为工具，主要通过阅读获取相关学科和专业的信息，因此，全国专业技术职称英语等级考试也主要是考阅读理解。从考试题型来看，主要是多项选择题。该题型在职称英语等级考试中占 15 题，45 分（占总分的 45%）。另外，全国专业技术职称英语等级考试中还采用了阅读判断、概括大意与完成句子、补全短文和选择填空等题型，它们实质上也是考核阅读能力的题型。由此可见，为了通过全国专业技术职称英语等级考试，必须掌握最基本的阅读技能，努力提高阅读理解能力。

全国职称英语等级考试大纲就阅读理解能力的考核目标作了如下规定：

读者应能综合运用英语语言知识和阅读技能来理解本专业的或一般内容的英语书面材料。阅读能力主要包括下列几个方面：

1. 掌握所读材料的主旨和大意；
2. 了解阐述主旨的事实和细节；
3. 利用上下文猜测某些词汇和短语的意义；
4. 既理解个别句子的意义，也理解上下文之间的意义关系；
5. 根据所读材料进行判断和推论；
6. 领会作者的观点、意图和态度。

根据考试大纲规定的考核目标，我们归纳出相应的六种阅读理解题的类型，并具体地探讨如何答好这些阅读理解题。

### 1. 掌握所读材料的主旨和大意

掌握所读材料的主旨和大意是正确理解全文的关键。对主题思想的提问是阅读理解测试的必考题。但提问方式及用词都有差异，这类题常见提问方式可归纳如下：

1. The main idea of this passage is \_\_\_\_\_.
2. This passage tells us \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Which of the following statements best expresses the main idea of the passage?
4. Which of the following sentences best summarizes the author's main point?
5. Which of the following best states the theme of the passage?
6. The subject matter of this selection is \_\_\_\_\_.
7. The passage mainly discusses \_\_\_\_\_.
8. This passage illustrates \_\_\_\_\_.
9. This paragraph centers / focuses on \_\_\_\_\_.
10. This passage mainly deals with \_\_\_\_\_.
11. This passage is chiefly concerned with \_\_\_\_\_.
12. The author's purpose in writing this passage is \_\_\_\_\_.
13. What is the passage mainly about?
14. What is the best title of the passage?
15. The major point discussed in the passage is \_\_\_\_\_.

解答这一类题目的基本方法如下：

A. 找出主题句。首先要读标题，因为标题往往是主题句中的核心词或概括性的词。抓住全文中心思想的最快捷的途径就是找出主题句。主题句一般位于文章或段落的开始，然后围绕主题展开论述。因为许多作者喜欢采用从一般到个别的论证或叙述方式，即演绎法（deduction）。这是一种很常见的文章或段落的写作形式。若作者采用归纳法（induction），即从个别到一般来论证或叙述，主题句就会位于段末。除此之外，主题句还有可能位于段落的中间。找到主题句后，就应以它为标准，在解题时，凡是与主题句意思最接近的选项必然是正确的答案。

#### 例 1

In rock music there is a distinct and almost overwhelming beat. No single beat is characteristic of the music today. But each song has an easily recognizable rhythm. As you listen to a song, your foot usually starts to pick up the beat. Before long, your entire body seems to be moving with it. Your head pounds with the beat, and there is no room for thought. Only the surge of the music is important. In its own way, rock music is as dominant as the rock Gibraltar. Its message is an evergrowing emotional one.

在这一段文章中 “In rock music there is a distinct and almost overwhelming beat.” 为主题句。beat 则是句子的信息核心。该词在第 2、4、6 句里重复出现，而第 3 句中的 “rhythm”（节奏）跟 “beat”（强烈的节奏）意思基本一致，这就保证了主题平稳而持续的发展。请注意：第 8、9 句作者重申并总结了主题句，而不是说段末是主题句。

#### 例 2

The vegetable and fruit and flower merchants are surrounded by baskets of purple eggplants, green peppers, strings of tiny silvery onions, heads of bitter Indian spinach, and a dozen Indian vegetables for which I don't even know the English names. I had forgotten about the profusion of fruit in India — it is only during the brief intense summer that you see much variety of fruit in Moscow. In Russia, as winter approaches all vegetables except for potatoes and the pervasive cabbage in soup seem to disappear from the menus.

主题句在中间的第二句 “I had forgotten about the profusion of fruit in India — it is only during the brief intense summer that you see much variety of fruit in Moscow.”

#### 例 3

People live in cities today think that meat is something that comes wrapped in cellophane from the supermarket, potatoes come by the pound in plastic or paper bags, and feather grows in hats. The city dwellers' views are quite different from the views of their ancestors, who knew that meat is hunted down in the forest, potatoes are planted and weeded, and only birds can produce feathers. Yet, whether people today realize it or not, they are still as dependent on animals and plants for their existence as their ancestors were.

主题句为最后一句 “Yet, whether people today realize it or not, they are still as dependent on animals and plants for their existence as their ancestors were.”

以上为了叙述的方便并考虑到篇幅的限制，只选单段短文为例。实际上阅读理解题中大部分是多段短文。但主题句一般出现在起始段。

B. 概括和归纳出主题思想。实际上, 在阅读理解测试部分有的文章是没有主题句的。这是由于文章的体裁不同或是由于阅读的短文是从篇幅较长的文章中节选的。这时就要靠读者自己进行概括或归纳隐含的主题思想了。概括主题可以从归纳每段的要点开始(大部分阅读理解短文都是由数段组成), 最后将各段要点集中概括并归纳出全文的主题思想。下面不妨考察几个例子:

例 4

A bus driver must answer questions while guiding a bus through heavy traffic. All day long, the driver answers the same questions without becoming angry. Every few minutes a bus driver has to ask passengers to step to the rear of the bus. In spite of traffic snarls and thoughtless passengers who cause delays, a bus driver is expected to cover his or her route on schedule.

这一段的隐含主题句可概括为 “Driving a bus is hard work.”

例 5

A green I-538 form is used by international students in order to obtain permission from the Immigration and Naturalization Service to transfer from one university to another in the United States. If you are planning to transfer, remember that you must obtain the permission before leaving the university where you are currently studying. You must complete the form I-538, have it signed by the foreign student advisor, and submit it to the District Office of the Immigration and Naturalization Service together with the form I-20 from the new school and the small, white form I-94 that was affixed to your passport when you entered the country.

Submitting the signed I-538 and other documents does not insure permission to transfer. Only an official of Immigration can decide each case. Students who have not completed one term of study at the school that issued them their first I-20 are not advised to file for permission to transfer until they have completed one term.

这篇短文的隐含主题句可归纳为 “What should an international student do, if he or she wants to transfer from one university to another in the United States.”

## 2. 了解阐述主旨的事实和细节

为了准确理解每篇文章或每段文章的中心思想, 我们必须找到与中心思想有关的事实和细节。一个好的作者必然会引用事实、或分析原因、或对比事物间的关系等以论证自己的论点。常用以提问这类事实和细节的问题有两种。一种是要求找出文章中的重要事实或细节, 这些常与 who, when, where, which 或 why 有关。另一种问题是辨认哪些细节在文章中没被提及。这些问题常有 except, not (mentioned/ true), least 等。例如:

1. What causes \_\_\_\_\_?
2. Some people do *sth.* because \_\_\_\_\_.
3. *Sb.* is ... because \_\_\_\_\_.
4. Why does the author mention ...?
5. Which of the following best characterizes the main feature of ...?
6. Where in the passage does the author describe...?
7. Which of the following does the author want to illustrate in discussing ...?
8. What time does the writer think is \_\_\_\_\_?

9. What does the author pay least attention to?
10. Which of the following is not a result of \_\_\_\_\_?
11. All of the following may be ... except \_\_\_\_\_.
12. Which of the following is not mentioned?
13. Which of the following statements is true?
14. The author states all of the items listed except \_\_\_\_\_.

为了正确回答这一类题目，读者往往要采用各种阅读方法和解题技巧，也就是综合解法。在通读全文、掌握文章的中心大意的基础上，首先要仔细看懂问题，明确问的是什么，然后按照题意进行寻读，找到正确答案的根据。

### 例 1

Ours has become a society of employees. A hundred years or so ago only one out of every five Americans at work was employed, i.e., worked for somebody else. Today only one out of five is not employed but working for himself. And when fifty years ago "being employed" meant working as a factory laborer or as a farmhand, the employee of today is increasingly a middle-class person with a substantial formal education, holding a professional or management job requiring intellectual and technical skills. Indeed, two things have characterized American society during these last fifty years: middle-class and upper-class employees have been the fastest-growing groups in our working population —growing so fast that the industrial worker, that oldest child of the Industrial Revolution, has been losing in numerical importance despite the expansion of industrial production.

Yet you will find little if anything written on what it is to be an employee. You can find a great deal of very dubious advice on how to get a job or how to get a promotion. You can also find a good deal of work in a chosen field, whether it will be the mechanist's trade or bookkeeping. Every one of these trades requires different skills, sets different standards, and requires a different preparation. Yet they all have employee-ship in common. And increasingly, especially in the large business or in government, employee-ship is more important to success than the special professional knowledge or skill. Certainly more people fail because they do not know the requirements of being an employee than because they do not adequately possess the skills of their trade; the higher you climb the ladder, the more you get into administrative or executive work, the greater the emphasis on ability to work within the organization rather than on technical abilities or professional knowledge.

1. According to the passage, with the development of modern industry, \_\_\_\_\_.
  - A factory laborers will overtake intellectual employees in number
  - B there are as many middle-class employees as factory laborers
  - C employers have attached great importance to factory laborers
  - D the proportion of factory laborers in the total employee population has decreased

本题具体涉及对第一段的中心意思的理解，尤其是对这段最后一句中 *losing in numerical importance* 的确切理解。这一段的大致意思是，当今的社会已经成为一个雇员的社会。大约在 100 年前，5 个美国人中只有 1 个人是被雇佣为别人干活的。今天，5 个人中只有 1 个人是为自己干而不被雇佣的。50 年前，被雇佣就意味着当工厂或农场的劳动力。而今天，越来越多的雇员是接受过正规教育的中产阶层。他们承担了需要智力和技术的职业或管理工作。50 年以来，美国社会的确有两个特点：中层和上层雇员成了工薪队伍中人

数快速增长的一部分——其速度之快使得作为工业革命最早的产物的产业工人在人数上相形见绌，尽管工业生产还在扩大规模。所以选项 D 是正确答案。选项 A 意思与选项 D 正好相反。同样，选项 B 和选项 C 都不对。

2. According to the writer, professional knowledge or skill is \_\_\_\_\_.
- A less important than awareness of being a good employee
  - B as important as the ability to deal with public relations
  - C more important than employer-employee relations
  - D as important as the ability to co-operate with others in the organization

本题考查读者对文章第二段中关于专门知识和技能的重要性的论点的理解。学生可以从最后一句找出正确答案。这一句指出，“人们失败的原因更多的是不具备当雇员的要素，而不是缺乏本行业的专业技能”。因此选项 A 是正确答案。选项 B 说的是公共关系的能力，是误解，因为文章说的是单位内部开展工作的能力，如内部合作的好（the ability to work within the organization）。选项 C 把意思颠倒了。选项 D 说两者同等重要，当然也不对。

### 例 2

To prepare for career in engineering, a student must begin planning in high school. Mathematics and science should form the core curriculum. For example, in a school where sixteen credit hours are required for high school graduation, four should be in mathematics, one each in chemistry, biology, and physics. The remaining credits should include four in English and at least three in the humanities and social sciences. The average entering freshman in engineering should have achieved at least a 2.5 grade point average on a 4.0 scale in his or her high school. Although deficiencies can be corrected during the first year, the student who needs additional work should expect to spend five instead of four years completing a degree.

1. What is the average grade point that an entering freshman in engineering should have achieved in his or her high school?  
答案：2.5.（看文章的第五句）
2. When should a student begin planning for a career in engineering?  
答案：In high school.（看文章的第一句）
3. In normal situations, how many years are needed for a student to complete a degree?  
答案：Four.（看文章最后一句）
4. How many credits are required for a high school diploma?  
答案：Sixteen.（看文章第三句）
5. How many credits need a student have in English?  
答案：Four.（看文章第四句）

### 3. 根据上下文判断某些词汇和短语的意义

在阅读理解测试中必然要考查对词或词组的意思的理解。这也是测试考生阅读能力的一种方法。在完整的语篇中，单词和词组的意义总是受特定的情景、上下文所限制的，因此可以根据上下文，并利用所掌握的句法、构词法和词汇等知识确定它们的意义。掌握这一基本技能不仅能帮助读者从词或词组的多种义项中选择符合上下文的解释，而且往往还

能推测某些生词的大致意思。常见的这类题型有：

1. The word "... " in line ... refers to \_\_\_\_\_.
2. The expression "... " (line..., paragraph ...) is closest in meaning to \_\_\_\_\_.
3. In line..., the word "... " most probably means \_\_\_\_\_.
4. In line... the word "... " could best be replaced by \_\_\_\_\_.
5. By "... " the author means \_\_\_\_\_.
6. The word "... ", as used by the author, most nearly means \_\_\_\_\_.
7. In this passage, the word "... " means \_\_\_\_\_.
8. "... " in the context of the passage refers to \_\_\_\_\_.
9. "... ", as used in the passage, can best be defined as \_\_\_\_\_.

#### 例 1

Perhaps the most merciless robber of sleep, researchers say, is the complexity of the day. Whenever pressures from work, family, friends and community mount, many people consider sleep the least expensive item on his program. "In our society, you're considered dynamic if you say you only need 5.5 hours' sleep. If you've got to get 8.5 hours, people think you lack drive and ambition."

To determine the consequences of sleep deficit, researchers have put subjects through a set of psychological and performance tests requiring them, for instance, to add columns of numbers or recall a passage read to them only minutes earlier. "We've found that if you're in sleep deficit, performance suffers," says Dr. David. "Short-term memory is weakened, as are abilities to make decisions and to concentrate."

1. The word "subjects" in line 6 refers to \_\_\_\_\_.  
A the performance tests used in the study of sleep deficit  
B special branches of knowledge that are being studied  
C people whose behavior or reactions are being studied  
D the psychological consequences of sleep deficit

本题考了一个熟悉的词 subject。它是一个多义词，可以表示“题目”、“科目”等。但这些义项在这里都不合适。要确定它的意思，最关键的是要准确弄清它所在句子前后部分的意思和关系。这句话前一部分说，要确定睡眠不足引起的后果，研究人员让 subjects 通过一系列的心理和能力的测验，要求 them 将几栏数字加起来或回忆几分钟前所听到过的文章。所以，这里 subjects 是人，是“正在被研究的对象”。选项 C 是正确答案。

#### 例 2

Labor's concern over automation arises from uncertainty about the effects on employment, and fears of major changes in jobs. In the main, labor has taken the view that resistance to technical change is unfruitful. Eventually, the result of automation may well be an increase in employment, since it is expected that vast industries will grow up around manufacturing, maintaining, and repairing automation equipment. The interest of labor lies in bringing about the transition with a minimum of inconvenience and distress to the workers involved. Also, union spokesmen emphasize that the benefit of the increased production and lower costs made possible by automation should be shared by workers in the form of higher wages, more leisure, and improved living standards.



To protect the interests of their members in the era of automation, unions have adopted a number of new policies. One of these is the promotion of supplementary unemployment benefit plans. It is emphasized that since the employer involved in such a plan has a direct financial interest in preventing unemployment, he will have a strong drive for planning new installations so as to cause the least possible problems in jobs and job assignments. Some unions are working for dismissal pay agreements, requiring that permanently dismissed workers be paid a sum of money based on length of service. Another approach is the idea of the "improvement factor", which calls for wage increases based on increases in productivity. It is possible, however, that labor will rely mainly on reduction in working hours in order to gain a full share in the fruits of automation.

1. The idea of the "improvement factor" ( line 7, paragraph 2) implies roughly \_\_\_\_\_.  
A wages should be paid on the basis of length of service  
B the benefit of the increased production and lower costs should be shared by workers  
C supplementary unemployment benefit plans should be promoted  
D the transition to automation should be brought about with the minimum of inconvenience and distress to workers

本题要求学生根据上下文理解 improvement factor (增值因素) 的含义。在文章的第二段第七行, 提出“增值因素”是要求随着生产率提高, 工资也要相应地提高; 而生产率的提高就是增加生产降低成本 (第一段最后一句)。因而选项 B 是正确答案。选项 A, 把解雇金协议(dismissal pay agreements), 即根据服务期长短给长期解雇者一笔钱 (第二段第四句), 与“增值因素”的内容混淆起来, 说明有时文章和题目并不难, 但粗心大意会使你答错题。选项 C 是讲另一种劳工利益保护措施的, 即失业者补助金计划; 而选项 D 是讲工人们对于自动化带来的种种影响所关切的问题 (第一段第六行)。

### 例 3

Before the nineteenth century, scientists with an interest in the sea were few and far between. Certainly Newton considered some theoretical aspects of it in his writings, but he was reluctant to go to sea to further his work.

For most people the sea was remote, and with the exception of early intercontinental travelers or others who earned a living from the sea, there was little reason to ask many questions about it, let alone to ask what lay beneath the surface. The first time that the question "What is at the bottom of the oceans?" had to be answered with any commercial consequence was when the laying of a telegraph cable from Europe to America was proposed. The engineers had to know the depth profile of the route to estimate the length of cable that had to be manufactured.

It was to Maury of the US Navy that the Atlantic Telegraph Company turned, in 1853, for information on this matter. In the 1840s, Maury had been responsible for encouraging voyages during which soundings were taken to investigate the depths of the North Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. Later, some of his findings aroused much popular interest in his book *The Physical Geography of the Sea*.

The cable was laid, but not until 1866 was the connection made permanent and reliable. At the early attempts, the cable failed and when it was taken out for repairs it was found to be covered in living growths, a fact which defied contemporary scientific opinion that there was no life in the deeper parts of the sea.