

大学英语四、六级标准考试参考用书

# 大学英语阅读理解

(第一册)

王 媛 主编

COLLEGE

ENGLISH

READING

COMPREHENSION

北京理工大学出版社

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## 内 容 简 介

《大学英语阅读理解》是按照理工科本科及文理科本科两种《大学英语教学大纲》对培养学生在大学学习各个阶段（一至六级）的阅读能力提出的定性和定量要求而编写的阅读教材。全书共六册，大体上适应于一至六级的教学要求而分册的，便于教学使用。

本书为第一册，共精选短文40篇。每篇文章之后，编写了注释、常用习语、理解练习和词汇练习，书末附有练习答案。书中所选的文章均来自英、美原文书刊，题材广泛，语言规范，具有知识性、科学性和趣味性。读者通过这套教材的阅读训练，不仅可以提高阅读理解能力，还可广泛了解国外的社会、文化知识和风土人情。因此本书可作为高等学校本科生的阅读教材，也适合于研究生及其他英语爱好者阅读。

### 大学英语阅读理解（第一册）

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## 前 言

国家教委颁布的理工科本科和文理科本科两种《大学英语教学大纲》中，对学生在大学学习各个阶段（一至六级）的阅读能力提出了定性和定量的要求。学生们欲达到《大纲》中规定的对阅读能力的具体要求，则必须具备快速阅读能力和正确理解能力。阅读理解（Reading Comprehension）不仅是培养学生通过阅读获取信息能力的一种方法，而且也是对学生的英语词汇、语法、文化背景知识和分析问题能力的一种综合测试手段。

我们编写这套《大学英语阅读理解》（College English Reading Comprehension），其目的就是培养学生提高阅读速度，增强阅读理解能力，并可广泛了解国外的社会、文化知识和风土人情。

本书所选的文章均来自英美原文书刊，题材广泛，语言规范，具有知识性、科学性和趣味性。

这套阅读材料既可作为理工科和文理科本科生的阅读教材，也适合于研究生以及准备参加国家英语水平考试和美国托福考试的各类人员阅读。

全书共六册，大体上适应于《大纲》中一至六级的教学要求而分册的。本书为第一册，共选短文40篇。每篇文章之后，编写了注释（Notes to the Passage）、常用习语（Useful Expressions）、理解练习（Comprehension）和词汇练习（Vocabulary）。注释部分主要是对短文中的关键词语、某些应该特别注意的语法现象，以及重要的地名和世界名人加以注解；常用习语同时用英、汉两种文字注解，其目的在于帮助读者准确地理解其含义，辨认和提高灵活运用英语同义习语的能力。

书末附有各项练习答案，供读者参考。

本书的初稿承蒙在我校外语系工作的美国专家Donald Jenkins  
审阅，在编写过程中，还得到了我校外语系许多老师的热情支持  
与帮助，在此向他们表示衷心的感谢。

由于我们水平有限，书中难免会出现一些缺点和错误，我们  
恳切希望读者提出宝贵意见。

编 者

1990年5月

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## Passage 1

### THE GIFT OF LANGUAGE

Can you imagine how a rabbit is running into its hole? You will say, "What has this to do with language?"

When a rabbit sees something dangerous, it runs away. Its tail, which is white, moves up and down as it runs. The other  
5 rabbits see this white tail moving up and down, and they run too. They know that there is danger. The rabbit has told them something without making a sound. It has given them a signal.

Many other animals use this kind of language. When a  
10 cobra<sup>1</sup> is angry, it raises its hood<sup>2</sup> and makes itself look fierce. This warns other animals. When a bee has found some food, it goes back to its home. It cannot tell the other bees where the food is by speaking to them, but it does a little dance in the air. This tells the bees where the food is.

15 Some animals say things by making sounds. A dog barks, for instance, when a stranger comes near. A cat purrs<sup>3</sup> when pleased. Some birds make several different sounds, each with its own meaning. Sometimes we human beings speak in the same way. We make sounds like "Oh!" or "Ah!" when we are  
20 frightened or pleased or when we drop something on our toes!

But we have something that no animal has—a large number of words which have the meanings of things, actions, feelings or



ideas. We are able to give each other information, to tell or inform other people what is in our mind or how we feel. By  
25 writing words down we can remember things that have happened, or send messages to people far away. No animal can do this. No animal has the wonderful power of language.

No one knows how man learned to make words. Perhaps he began by making sounds like those made by animals. Perhaps he grunted like a pig when he lifted something heavy. Perhaps he made sounds like those he heard all round him—water splashing, bees humming, a stone falling to the ground. Somehow he learned to make words. As the centuries went by, he made more and more new words. This is what we mean by  
35 language.

People living in different countries made different kinds of words. Today there are about fifteen hundred different languages in the world. Each contains many thousands of words. A very large English dictionary, for example, contains  
40 four or five hundred thousand words. But we do not need all these. To read this book you need to know only about two thousand words. Before you leave school you will learn only a few thousand more.

The words you know are called your vocabulary. You  
45 should try to make your vocabulary bigger. Read as many books as you can. There are plenty of books written in easy English for you to read. You will enjoy them. When you meet a new word, find it in your dictionary. Your dictionary is your most useful book.

## Notes to the Passage

1. **cobra:** 眼镜蛇
2. **hood:** 眼镜蛇的头和颈部
3. **purr:** (猫等)感到愉快时发出低而持续的声音

## Useful Expressions

1. **have (sth) to do with...:** have some connection with... 与... 有关
2. **human being:** a man, woman or a child, not an animal 人
3. **(time) go by:** pass (in time) (时间)过去
4. **plenty of...:** a large quantity or number of... 大量

## Comprehension

Select the answer which is most accurate according to the information given in the passage.

1. Which of the following does the passage mainly talk about?
  - a) Animals are able to warn other animals of danger.
  - b) Animals communicate with each other by making sounds.
  - c) Animals as well as human beings have power of language.
  - d) It is important to learn as many English words as possible.
2. According to the passage, how many kinds of language are used by animals?
  - a) One.
  - b) Two.
  - c) Three.
  - d) Four.
3. A rabbit uses its tail to \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a) help it to run fast
  - b) show how it feels

- c) move up and down
- d) tell other rabbits about danger
- 4. Several different sounds can be made by a \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a) bird     b) bee     c) cobra     d) pig
- 5. A very large English dictionary might contain \_\_\_\_\_ words.
  - a) 500     b) 1,500     c) 5,000     d) 500,000
- 6. The number of different languages spoken is about \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a) 150     b) 1,500     c) 5,000     d) 15,000
- 7. Which of the following is NOT mentioned in the passage?
  - a) A cat can show its feeling by making a kind of sound.
  - b) A bee hums, but a pig grunts.
  - c) Many animals tell each other something by giving a signal.
  - d) The words we use today were invented many centuries ago.
- 8. Paragraph Two implies that \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a) a rabbit has a white tail
  - b) a rabbit can use its tail as a signal
  - c) a rabbit runs away when it sees something dangerous
  - d) a rabbit is not a brave animal

## Vocabulary

Choose the definition which best fits these words or phrases as they are used in the passage.

- 1. *gift* (the title)
  - a) present     b) power     c) cleverness     d) powder
- 2. *fierce* (line 10)
  - a) cruel     b) powerful     c) strong     d) mild
- 3. *for instance* (line 16)
  - a) always     b) sometimes

- c) in many cases                      d) for example
4. *inform* (line 24)
- a) say                                      b) tell
- c) be aware of                          d) write a letter to
5. *messages* (line 26)
- a) spoken language                      b) written words
- c) information                          d) letters
6. "*those*" refers to (line 29)
- a) words      b) animals      c) sounds      d) men

## Passage 2

### THE THOUSAND AND ONE NIGHTS

There was once a King of Persia<sup>1</sup> who had a beautiful wife. He loved her very much, but she was a wicked<sup>2</sup> woman. When the King discovered her wickedness, he killed her. He decided that all women were wicked and that he would punish them.

- 5 He gave orders that he was to be given a new wife every day.<sup>3</sup> After one day's marriage he would cut off her head and marry again. This went on for some time and all the people of the country were very unhappy.

- Now the King had a Chief Minister whom he loved. The  
10 Chief Minister had two beautiful daughters. The elder of the two had read many books and knew all the stories of the world. She decided that she would try to cure the King of his madness.

She went to her father and said, "Father, I want to marry the King. Please go and tell him."

- 15 Her father was horrified and tried to persuade her to change her mind but she would not. She was determined. "I shall marry him," she said, "and perhaps I can make him stop this mad murder. If not, I shall die myself."

- The King was delighted when the Chief Minister told him,  
20 and the marriage took place at once. After the wedding, the new Queen said, "If I am going to die tomorrow, please let me have my sister with me for a short time, so that I may say good-bye."

The King agreed and the sister came. The Queen had told her sister about the plan and she knew what to do. She waited for  
20 night-time.

The King tried to sleep but he could not. Seeing this, the sister said to the Queen, "The King cannot sleep. Why don't you tell us one of your stories?"

The Queen said, "No, the King may not want to listen."  
25 But the King said, "Yes, tell us a story."

So the Queen began. It was a very exciting story, and when she reached the most exciting part of all she stopped.

"Go on," said the King.

"It's time to stop now," said the Queen. "What a pity that  
30 I am going to be killed tomorrow. The next part of the story is even more exciting."

The King thought, "There is no need to kill her tomorrow. I will wait until the day after, and then I can hear the end of the story."

35 But the second night, the Queen finished the story and began another, and again she stopped at a very exciting place. Again her life was saved. On the third night the same thing happened.

This went on night after night until they had been married  
40 a whole year, and a beautiful son was born to the Queen. The King now loved his wife and understood that there were good and bad women just as there were good and bad men. He was ashamed of his actions and he killed no more women, and he and his wife lived peacefully together.

## Notes to the Passage

1. **Persia:** 波斯 (现称 Iran 伊朗)
2. **wicked:** 坏的, 邪恶的
3. ...**that he was to be given a new wife...**:  
(=that he must be given a new wife...)

## Useful Expressions

1. **cut off:** remove by cutting 砍掉
2. **cure...of...:** bring health to sb in place of disease or illness  
治好...的病
3. **change one's mind:** form a new and different intention,  
opinion, or desire 改变主意
4. **(be) ashamed of...:** feeling shame, guilt or sorrow (because  
of sthdone) 对...感到惭愧, 害臊

## Comprehension

Select the answer which is most accurate according to the information given in the passage.

1. The King killed each wife because \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a) he was a wicked king
  - b) his first wife was beautiful
  - c) he loved his first wife
  - d) he thought all women were evil
2. The Chief Minister's elder daughter decided to marry the King because \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a) the King loved the Chief Minister

- b) she loved her father
  - c) she loved the King
  - d) she wanted to cure the King
3. Which of the following best describes how the Chief Minister felt?
- a) Shocked and frightened.
  - b) Sad and unhappy.
  - c) Pleased and delighted.
  - d) Very proud.
4. The new Queen wanted her sister to be with her so that her sister could \_\_\_\_\_.
- a) ask the Queen to tell them a story
  - b) tell stories to the King
  - c) help the King to go to sleep
  - d) stop the King from killing the Queen
5. The Queen stopped because \_\_\_\_\_.
- a) it was time to sleep
  - b) she was going to die the next day
  - c) she wanted to continue the next night
  - d) there was no need to go on
6. On the second night the Queen \_\_\_\_\_.
- a) finished the second story
  - b) did not finish the first story
  - c) began the second story
  - d) began the third story
7. The King did not kill the Queen the next day because \_\_\_\_\_.
- a) she was the daughter of his Chief Minister
  - b) she was so beautiful
  - c) he loved her very much
  - d) he wanted to know the end of the exciting story
8. Which of the following is NOT true?



- a) The King was sorry that he had killed so many women.
- b) At first the King did not want to listen to a story.
- c) After the King's first wife was killed, a wedding took place every day.
- d) The new Queen cured the King of his madness by telling him exciting stories.

## Vocabulary

Choose the definition which best fits these words as they are used in the passage.

1. *decided* (line 3)

- a) determined
- b) concluded
- c) chose
- d) settled

2. *horrified* (line 15)

- a) terrible
- b) unhappy
- c) calm
- d) shocked

3. *persuade* (line 15)

- a) force
- b) make
- c) convince
- d) cause by reasoning

4. *determined* (line 16)

- a) firm
- b) strong
- c) hesitating
- d) insistent

5. *delighted* (line 19)

- a) satisfied
- b) interested
- c) very glad
- d) very sad

6. *peacefully* (line 44)

- a) with no war
- b) without any trouble
- c) in peace-time
- d) with love of peace