

最新版 精编英语 阅读理解

修订本

220篇

北京大学 石春祯教授 编著



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(修订本)

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修订说明

(代前言)

英语阅读理解能力是研究生入学英语考试考查的一项最重要的内容。阅读理解部分试题的分数占总分的 40%，阅读理解部分得分的高低对研究生入学英语考试总成绩的影响最大。

本书共选编英语阅读理解文章 220 篇。文章体裁以议论文和说明文为主；文章题材主要涉及科普、经济、社会生活、教育、人的生理和心理等方面。

本书每篇文章后都附有四道阅读理解题。这些题目以深层次问题为主，主要涉及文章的主旨和大意、作者的观点和态度、根据文章的思路进行判断、推理和引申等。文章和题目的难度至少等于或略高于研究生入学考试英语阅读理解部分试题的难度。

本书自去年出版以来，一直深受广大读者的喜欢。看到本书对读者学习英语，尤其对提高英语阅读理解能力有所帮助，本人感到十分欣慰。听到许多读者对本书提出的各种宝贵建议，本人表示万分感激。

本书本次修订的基本原则是为读者着想，进一步方便读者学习使用，使读者尽快提高英语阅读理解能力。本书对第一版中选编的 220 篇文章的篇目和排列次序作了较大调整，并对其中的 80 篇文章增加了词汇表和详细注释。修订后的本书共分两大部分，现分别介绍如下：

第一部分共 16 单元，总计 80 篇文章。每单元的五篇文章后列有该单元按文章次序编排的词汇表。为了节约篇幅，便于读者使用，本书词汇表只收录超纲词（指《研究生入学考试英语考试大纲》规定以外的词）。每单元后还附有该单元每篇文章的注释。注释分为文章注释和答案注释两部分。文章注释部分对原文中的部分难句（句尾有数字序号标示的句子）进行了句法分析，并给出了汉语译文。使用这一部分时，读者不仅可以检验对原文理解的准确性，而且可以把注释的句子作为英译汉练习素材使用，以便提高英译汉的能力，达到一书多用之目的。

第二部分共 28 单元，总计 140 篇文章。供读者做阅读理解练习使用。

本书最后附有按字母次序排列的第一部分文章的词汇总表。其中，只收录超纲词汇，共计 943 个。

本书不仅试图为读者提高应试英语阅读理解能力提供练习素材,而且文章选材涉及的面相当广泛,希望在扩充知识方面对读者能有一定益处。

本书可供准备参加研究生入学考试的读者使用。由于本书中每个单元的五篇文章都相当于一次正式考题中阅读理解试题的阅读量,因此,凡读者每读完一个单元并做完相应的试题,就相当于做一次全真模拟试卷的阅读理解部分。如果考生能把本书的 220 篇阅读理解文章全部读完,不仅可以大幅度提高研究生入学英语考试的成绩,也会大幅度提高自己的英语阅读水平。

本书也可用作英语阅读教材,供大学英语四级以上水平的读者使用,或供那些对提高英语阅读理解能力感兴趣的读者使用。

石春祯
2000年3月15日于北京·大学燕北园

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PART ONE

(UNIT 1—UNIT 16)

UNIT 1

Passage 1-1

The announcement in February 1997 of the birth of a sheep named Dolly, an exact genetic replica of its mother, sparked a worldwide debate over the moral and medical implications of cloning. Several U.S. states and European countries have banned the cloning of human beings, yet South Korean scientists claimed last month that they had already taken the first step.

Overlooked in the arguments about the morality of artificially reproducing life is the fact that, at present, cloning is a very inefficient procedure.^① The incidence of death among fetuses and offspring produced by cloning is much higher than it is through natural reproduction—roughly 10 times as high as normal before birth and three times as high after birth in our studies at Roslin.^② Distressing enough for those working with animals, these failure rates surely render unthinkable the notion of applying such treatment to humans.

Even if the technique were perfected, however, we must ask ourselves what practical value whole-being cloning might have. What exactly would be the difference between a “cloned” baby and a child born naturally—and why would we want one?

The cloned child would be a genetically identical twin of the original, and thus physically very similar—far more similar than a natural parent and child. Human personality, however, emerges from both the effects of the genes we inherit (nature) and environmental factors (nurture). The two clones would develop distinct personalities, just as twins develop unique identities. And because the copy would often be born in a different family, cloned twins would be less alike in personality than natural identical twins.

Why “copy” people in the first place? Couples unable to have children might choose to have a copy of one of them rather than accept the intrusion of genes from a donor. My wife and I have two children of our own and an adopted child, but I find it helpful to consider what might have happened in my own marriage if a copy of me had been made to overcome infertility. My wife and I met in high school. How would she react to a physical copy of the young man she fell in love with? How would any of us find living with ourselves? Surely the older clone—I, in this case—would believe that he understood how the copy should behave and so be even more likely than the average father to impose expectations upon his child.^③ Above all, how would a teenager cope with looking at me, a balding, aging man, and seeing the physical future ahead of him?

Each of us can imagine hypothetical families created by the introduction of a cloned child—a

copy of one partner in a homosexual relationship or of a single parent, for example.^④ What is missing in all this is consideration of what's in the interests of the cloned child. Because there is no form of infertility that could be overcome only by cloning, I do not find these proposals acceptable. My concerns are not on religious grounds or on the basis of a perceived intrinsic ethical principle. Rather, my judgment is that it would be difficult for families created in this way to provide an appropriate environment for the child.

Cloning is also suggested as a means of bringing back a relative, usually a child, killed tragically. Any parent can understand that wish, but it must first be recognized that the copy would be a new baby and not the lost child. Herein lies the difficulty, for the grieving parents are seeking not a new baby but a return of the dead one. Since the original would be fondly remembered as having particular talents and interests, would not the parent expect the copy to be the same?^⑤ It is possible, however, that the copy would develop quite differently. Is it fair to the new child to place it in a family with such unnatural expectations?

What if the lost child was very young? The shorter the life, the fewer the expectations parents might place on the substitute, right? If a baby dies within a few days of birth and there is no reason to think that death was caused by an inherited defect, would it then be acceptable to make a copy? Is it practical to frame legislation that would prevent copying of adults or older children, but allow copying of infants? At what age would a child be too old to be copied in the event of death?

1. It is implied in the passage that the technology of artificially reproducing life _____.
A. has only negative effects on human beings
B. should not be applied to humans in the near future
C. should be improved because it is very inefficient now
D. has no medical implications at all
2. According to this passage, cloned twins would _____.
A. be far more similar physically than natural twins
B. be less similar physically than natural twins
C. develop similar personalities
D. not be so similar in personality as natural twins
3. The author objects to the idea of human cloning primarily on the basis of _____.
A. his religious beliefs
B. ethical principles that he believes in
C. his practical concerns over the interests of the cloned child
D. his imagination of a family with a cloned child
4. Which of the following might fail to convince the grieving parents that cloning cannot bring back their lost child?
A. The cloned child is a new baby rather than a return of their lost child.
B. The cloned child is physically similar to their lost child.

C. The cloned child doesn't have the particular talents that their lost child had.

D. The cloned child would no doubt develop his distinct personality.

Passage 1-2

Insurance is a method of coping with risk. Its primary function is to substitute certainty for uncertainty as regards the economic cost of loss—producing events. Insurance may be defined more formally as a system under which the insurer, for a consideration usually agreed upon in advance, promises to reimburse the insured or to render services to the insured in the event that certain accidental occurrences result in losses during a given period.^①

Insurance relies heavily on the “law of large numbers.” In large homogeneous populations it is possible to estimate the normal frequency of common events such as deaths and accidents. Losses can be predicted with reasonable accuracy, and this accuracy increases as the size of the group expands. From a theoretical standpoint, it is possible to eliminate all pure risk if an infinitely large group is selected.

From the standpoint of the insurer, an insurable risk must meet the following requirements:

1. The objects to be insured must be numerous enough and homogeneous enough to allow a reasonably close calculation of the probable frequency and severity of losses.

2. The insured objects must not be subject to simultaneous destruction. For example, if all the buildings insured by one insurer are in an area subject to flood, and a flood occurs, the loss to the insurance underwriter may be catastrophic.

3. The possible loss must be accidental in nature, and beyond the control of the insured. If the insured could cause the loss, the element of randomness and predictability would be destroyed.

4. There must be some way to determine whether a loss has occurred and how great that loss is. This is why insurance contracts specify very definitely what events must take place, what constitutes loss, and how it is to be measured.

From the viewpoint of the insured person, an insurable risk is one for which the probability of loss is not so high as to require excessive premiums. What is “excessive” depends on individual circumstances, including the insured's attitude toward risk. At the same time, the potential loss must be severe enough to cause financial hardship if it is not insured against. Insurable risks include losses to property resulting from fire, explosion, windstorm, etc.; losses of life or health; and the legal liability arising out of use of automobiles, occupancy of buildings, employment, or manufacture.^② Uninsurable risks include losses resulting from price changes and competitive conditions in the market. Political risks such as war or currency debasement are usually not insurable by private parties but may be insurable by governmental institutions. Very often contracts can be drawn in such a way that an “uninsurable risk” can be turned into an “insurable” one through restrictions on losses, redefinitions of perils, or other methods.^③

1. The first paragraph is mainly about _____ of insurance.

- A. the primary function
 - B. the primary consideration
 - C. the formal definition
 - D. the chief advantages
2. According to this passage, insurance relies on all of the following, except _____.
- A. the randomness of the potential risk to be insured
 - B. the predictability of the potential risk to be insured
 - C. the absence of predictability of the potential risk to be insured
 - D. the law of large numbers
3. An insurable risk does not include losses resulting from _____.
- A. fire
 - B. theft
 - C. traffic accident
 - D. price fluctuation
4. The primary reason for an individual to insure something is _____.
- A. to make money
 - B. to avoid some potential risk
 - C. to transfer some potential risk to an insurer
 - D. to reduce the huge loss to him resulting from some potential risk

Passage 1-3

It might be supposed that greater efficiency should be achieved if several people collaborate to solve a problem than if only one individual works on it. Such results are by no means invariable.

Although groups often may increase the motivation of their members to deal with problems, there is a counterbalancing need to contend with conflicts arising among members of a group and with efforts to give it coherent direction.^① Problem solving is facilitated by the presence of an effective leader who not only provides direction but permits the orderly, constructive expression of a variety of opinions; much of the leader's effort may be devoted to resolving differences. Success in problem solving also depends on the distribution of ability within a group. Solutions simply may reflect the presence of an outstanding individual who might perform even better by himself.

Although groups may reach a greater number of correct solutions, or may require less time to discover an answer, their net man-hour efficiency is typically lower than that achieved by skilled individuals working alone.

A process called brainstorming has been offered as a method of facilitating the production of new solutions to problems. In brainstorming, a problem is presented to a group of people who then proceed to offer whatever they can think of, regardless of quality and with as few inhibitions as can be managed.^② Theoretically these unrestricted suggestions increase the probability that at least some superior solutions will emerge. Nevertheless, studies show that when individuals work alone under similar conditions, performance tends to proceed more efficiently than it does in groups.

Under special circumstances, however, a group may solve problems more effectively than does a reasonably competent individual. Group members may contribute different (and essential) resources to a solution that no individual can readily achieve alone; such pooling of information and skills can make group achievements superior in dealing with selected problems.^③ Sometimes

social demands may require group agreement on a single alternative, as in formulating national economic or military policies under democratic governments. When only one among several alternative solutions is correct, even if a group requires more time, it has a higher probability of identifying the right one than does an individual alone.^④

One difference between problem solving by a group and by an individual is the relative importance of covert or vicarious processes. The group depends heavily on verbal communication, while the individual, in considerable degree, attacks the problem through implicit, subjective, silent activity.

1. According to this passage, a group _____.
 - A. may require less time to find a solution to a problem than an individual
 - B. tends to spend more time to find a solution to a problem than an individual
 - C. rarely depends on verbal communication in problem solving
 - D. generally achieves a higher net man-hour efficiency in problem solving than does a skilled individual
2. Successful problem solving by a group primarily depends on _____.
 - A. the motivation of its members
 - B. the pooling of information and skills
 - C. the constructive expression of various opinions
 - D. the presence of an effective leader
3. The author believes that a group _____.
 - A. generally solves a problem more efficiently than an individual
 - B. cannot solve a problem so efficiently as an individual
 - C. doesn't necessarily solve a problem more efficiently than an individual
 - D. tends to solve a problem less efficiently than an individual
4. The proper title for this passage should be B.
 - A. Brainstorming
 - B. Thinking in Groups
 - C. Thinking Individually
 - D. Solving Problems Efficiently

Passage 1-4

Biological or organic evolution takes place as a result of the process of natural selection affecting a pool of normal variability within a living population. This genetically based variability principally involves the physical characteristics of the individuals who make up the population, such as size, shape, coloration, or susceptibility to disease. For many years these alone were thought to be the only mechanisms of evolutionary change. Animal behaviour was studied as a discipline on its own, and human behaviour and human cultures were studied similarly in relative isolation. It has come to be realized, however, that behavioral traits in animals and in humans may under certain circumstances have profound effects on breeding patterns, mate selection, and the survival of offspring. If this is the case, then these behavioral and, in man, cultural attributes will affect the

course of organic evolution through their modification of the selective processes operating on the gene pool. The study of these behavioural and cultural effects in relation to evolution has been termed sociobiology.

Most animal behaviour is directed toward the reproductive advantage of the individual. Occasionally among social insects such as ants or bees, however, workers are seen not to take part in reproduction, a behaviour called altruistic with respect to the colony and its future. In other species, different forms of altruistic behaviour can be observed, such as “aunts” sharing the rearing of young; in all cases, such behaviour is paradoxical from the viewpoint of individual selection. It may be, however, that the donor and the recipient of this type of behaviour share a larger number of genes or gene types than previously had been believed, so that the “sacrifice” may help the genes held in common with the recipient to survive and multiply.^① If this is true, then the altruism of close relatives is given purpose and kin selection is an effective strategy.

There are those who believe that these ideas can be transferred from animal behavioral studies to the more complex realm of human behaviour and culture, but the study of sociobiology is not without controversy. For example, the relationships between mothers and infants are strong in all mammals; in some mammals and birds pair-bonding is lifelong, but in others, including primates, are found males with harem groups and altruistic behaviour by “aunts” and “uncles” toward “nephews” and “nieces.”^② If comparisons are made with human kinship systems—the stuff of social anthropology—the typical pattern is that of monogamy (single pair-bond), with less frequency of polygyny (multiple-female, single-male groups) and, occasionally, even polyandry (multiple-male, single-female groups). Unlike the animal system, however, the basis of the human system may be cultural or even economic, and there appears to be no correlation between cultural kinship (i.e., shared behaviour) and genetic kinship (shared genes).

The relationship between organic evolution and cultural evolution is complicated, since each form appears to have differing mechanisms. Culture as a uniquely human attribute seems bound to affect the totality of humanity and through this totality the patterns and results of human reproductive behaviour; this, in turn, must affect the human gene pool and the selective processes that act upon it, which is the essence of human evolution.^③

1. The first paragraph is mainly about _____.
 - A. the effects of behavioral traits on organic evolution
 - B. the effects of cultural attributes on organic evolution
 - C. the profound behavioral and cultural effects on the course of organic evolution
 - D. the study of animal behaviour as a discipline
2. The second paragraph is written to tell us primarily that altruism in animals is _____.
 - A. paradoxical
 - B. beyond comprehension
 - C. advantageous to kin selection
 - D. contrary to the law of natural selection
3. It can be inferred from this passage that culture as a uniquely human attribute _____.
 - A. might produce desired effect on the patterns and results of human reproductive behaviour

- B. has indirect effect on the human gene pool
 - C. has a dual effect on the selection processes that act upon the human gene pool
 - D. has little effect on human evolution
4. The proper title for this passage should be _____.
- A. Culturally Patterned Behaviour and Evolution B. Natural Selection
 - C. Biological Evolution D. Cultural Evolution

Passage 1-5

In the 1970s anthropologists debated whether they should proceed with micro-studies of the city's poor or its recent migrants—an anthropology "in the city," as it was called—or with macro-studies of the city as a whole—an anthropology "of the city."^① Ten years later the debate was resolved by a tide of studies that focused neither at the micro-level nor at the macro-level but rather at the links in between, that is, the webs of cultural, economic, and political relationship binding the shantytown, ghetto, or neighbourhood to the city and even beyond, to the world economy.^②

In urban cultures after the establishment of the capitalist world system these webs consist of the economic, political, and cultural strands linking mass-communications cities in the core with neocolonial cities in the Third World into a world system of unequal political and economic relationships.^③ For precapitalist urban cultures these webs consisted of power and wealth inequalities and cultural domination within the urban culture. These different webs effect variant urban cultural roles and cultural forms.

Urban anthropologists in the 1970s also worried over the contribution their studies of urban cultures would make to the general anthropological concept of culture. Oscar Lewis initiated a debate about the nature of culture when he put forward his notion of an urban "culture of poverty". He believed the culture of poverty socialized the poor into political apathy, immediate gratification, broken families, and passive responses to their economic plight, and he argued that the poor could not lose this debilitating culture even if they ceased to be poor.^④ A massive scholarly critique of the culture of poverty concept also exposed the limitations in the traditional anthropological conception of culture on which it was based. This critique argued that the poor's marginality was not a result of their internalized culture but rather of their abject material conditions given by the world system (as in the case of the shantytown research cited above). In the face of this critique, the traditional notion of culture—that it was a weighty set of traditions compelling individuals to act in certain ways—gave way to a conception of the constant production of cultures (urban or nonurban) through continual human action—people working with their hands and minds—in response to the material conditions of everyday life.^⑤

1. Urban anthropologists in the 1970s _____.
- A. believed that they should study the city at the micro-level
 - B. believed that they should study the city at the macro-level

- C. made tremendous contributions to the general anthropological concept of culture
D. failed to resolve their debate on urban cultures
2. The author thinks that _____.
A. the debate opened by the urban anthropologists in the 1970s came to nothing
B. Oscar Lewis was a pioneer of the traditional notion of culture
C. it is the power and wealth inequality in cities that produced an urban culture of poverty
D. new cultures are being constantly produced through continual human action in the society
3. It is generally believed that the culture of poverty _____.
A. resulted in the poor people's political indifference
B. concept was based on the traditional anthropological conception of culture
C. caused the poor people's passive responses to their miserable condition
D. was deeply rooted in the minds of poor people
4. The proper title for this passage should be _____.
A. An Anthropology in the City B. An Anthropology of the City
C. Cities and Cultures D. The Culture of Poverty

Vocabulary (Unit 1)

Passage 1-1

cloning	<i>n. v.</i>	无性繁殖	克隆	
donor	<i>n.</i>	捐赠人	原料物质	
ethical	<i>adj.</i>	与伦理有关	民族的	民族特有的
fetus	<i>n.</i>	胎儿		
herein	<i>adv.</i>	于此	在这里	
homosexual	<i>adj. n.</i>	同性恋的	同性恋	
hypothetical	<i>adj.</i>	假设的	假定的	爱猜想的
infertility	<i>n.</i>	不生育	不肥沃	不毛
intrinsic	<i>adj.</i>	(指价值、性质)固有的	内在的	本质的
intrusion	<i>n.</i>	闯入	侵扰	
replica	<i>n.</i>	复制品		

Passage 1-2

catastrophic	<i>adj.</i>	悲惨的	灾难的	
debasement	<i>n.</i>	降低	改造	
homogeneous	<i>adj.</i>	同类的	均一的	均匀的
peril	<i>n.</i>	危险		
premium	<i>n.</i>	额外费用	奖金	保险费
reimburse	<i>v.</i>	偿还		
severity	<i>n.</i>	严肃	严格	严重,激烈
underwriter	<i>n.</i>	保险业者	承诺支付者	保险商

Passage 1-3

brainstorm	<i>n. v.</i>	灵机一动	妙主意	脑猝病
counterbalance	<i>vt. n.</i>	使平均	使平衡	弥补
covert	<i>adj.</i>	隐蔽的	偷偷摸摸的	在丈夫保护下的
inhibition	<i>n.</i>	禁止	阻止	压抑
invariable	<i>n. adj.</i>	不变的	永恒的	
vicarious	<i>adj.</i>	代理人的		

Passage 1-4

altruistic	<i>adj.</i>	利他的	无私心的	
coloration	<i>n.</i>	染色	着色	
gene pool	<i>n.</i>	基因库		