

计时英语

TIMED READING

北京邮电学院外语系 译



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北京邮电学院出版社

计 时 英 语 (一)

Timed Reading

北京邮电学院外语系译

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前 言

《计时英语》一书共四册共收集短文 500 篇。每篇大约 500 词，每篇后均附有 10 道多项选择题，以检查在单位时间内的阅读效果。书后附有每篇短文的中文译文，可以帮助读者正确理解全文。

本书选材广泛，涉及面宽，内容新颖，文章短小精悍。短文均接近于大学英语四级、六级统考，EPT 考试及 TOEFL 或 GRE 等考试阅读理解题的题材及深度。本书全套无难度差异，可单独使用，也可全套使用。通过阅读实践，可以丰富知识面，全面培养阅读速度，提高阅读技能。对参加各种应试，大有裨益。

参加第一册编译工作的同志依次是：卢志鸿(1~20 篇)、黄世珍(21~40 篇)、阎国斌(41~60 篇)、王笑施(61~80 篇)、郑素花(81~100 篇)、石小娣(101~110 篇, 121~125 篇)、田力平(111~120 篇)。

译 者

1993 年 1 月

Introduction to the Student

These *Timed Readings* are designed to help you become a faster and better reader. As you progress through the book, you will find yourself growing in reading speed and comprehension. You will be challenged to increase your reading rate while maintaining a high level of comprehension.

Reading, like most things, improves with practice. If you practice improving your reading speed, you will improve. As you will see, the rewards of improved reading speed will be well worth your time and effort.

Why Read Faster?

The quick and simple answer is that faster readers are better readers. Does this statement surprise you? You might think that fast readers would miss something and their comprehension might suffer. This is not true, for two reasons:







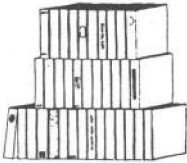
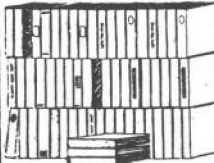
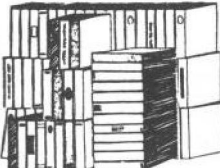
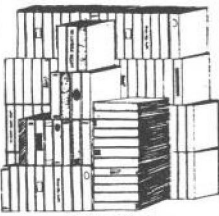
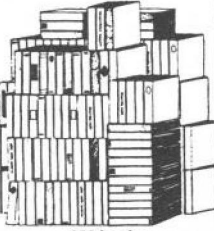
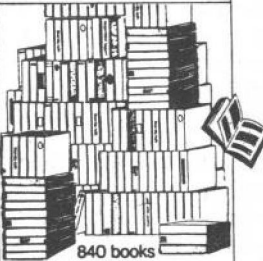
1. Faster readers comprehend faster. When you read faster, the writer's message is coming to you faster and makes sense sooner. Ideas are interconnected. The writer's thoughts are all tied together, each one leading to the next. The more quickly you can see how ideas are related to each other, the more quickly you can comprehend the meaning of what you are reading.

2. Faster readers concentrate better. Concentration is essential for comprehension. If your mind is wandering you can't understand what you are reading. A lack of concentration causes you to re-read, sometimes over and over, in order to comprehend. Faster readers concentrate better because there's less time for distractions to interfere. Comprehension, in turn, contributes to concentration. If you are concentrating and comprehending, you will not become distracted.

Want to Read More?

Do you wish that you could read more? (or, at least, would you like to do your required reading in less time?) Faster reading will help.

The illustration on the next page shows the number of books someone might read over a period of ten years. Let's see what faster reading could do for you. Look at the stack of books read by a slow reader and the stack

	Slow Reader (150 words per minute)	Fair Reader (250 words per minute)	Good Reader (350 words per minute)
1 WEEK	 3/4 book	 1 1/4 books	 1 3/4 books
1 MONTH	 3 books	 5 books	 7 books
1 YEAR	 36 books	 60 books	 84 books
10 YEARS	 360 books	 600 books	 840 books

read by a good reader. (We show a speed of 350 words a minute for our "good" reader, but many fast readers can more than double that speed.) Let's say, however, that you are now reading at a rate of 150 words a minute. The illustration shows you reading 36 books a year. By increasing your reading speed to 250 words a minute, you could increase the number of books to 60 a year.

We have arrived at these numbers by assuming that the readers in our illustration read for one hour a day, six days a week, and that an average book is about 72,000 words long. Many people do not read that much, but they might if they could learn to read better and faster.

Faster reading doesn't take time, it saves time!

How to Use This Book

[illegible]

By Sun and Stars

1 Learn the Four Steps Study and learn the four steps to follow to become a better and faster reader. The steps are covered on pages 9, 10, 11, and 12.

2 Preview Turn to the selection you are going to read and wait for the instructor's signal to preview. Your instructor will allow 30 seconds for previewing.

3 **Begin reading** When your instructor gives you the signal, begin reading. Read at a slightly faster-than-normal speed. Read well enough so that you will be able to answer questions about what you have read.

4 Record your time When you finish reading, look at the blackboard and note your reading time. Your reading time will be the lowest time remaining on the board, or the next number to be erased. Write this time at the bottom of the page on the line labeled **Reading Time**.

Reading Test

1. A. Continue upward of the last little distance that leads to the top of the hill.
B. A little way up.
C. A little way down.
D. A little way across.

2. A. An easy, gentle slope.
B. A steep, rocky slope.
C. A steep, rocky slope.
D. A steep, rocky slope.

3. The appearance of the last few feet of the hill is described by:
A. a gentle slope.
B. a steep, rocky slope.
C. a steep, rocky slope.
D. a steep, rocky slope.

4. The author says that the last few feet of the hill are:
A. a gentle slope.
B. a steep, rocky slope.
C. a steep, rocky slope.
D. a steep, rocky slope.

5. The author says that the last few feet of the hill are:
A. a gentle slope.
B. a steep, rocky slope.
C. a steep, rocky slope.
D. a steep, rocky slope.

6. The author says that the last few feet of the hill are:
A. a gentle slope.
B. a steep, rocky slope.
C. a steep, rocky slope.
D. a steep, rocky slope.

7. The author says that the last few feet of the hill are:
A. a gentle slope.
B. a steep, rocky slope.
C. a steep, rocky slope.
D. a steep, rocky slope.

8. The author says that the last few feet of the hill are:
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C. a steep, rocky slope.
D. a steep, rocky slope.

9. The author says that the last few feet of the hill are:
A. a gentle slope.
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C. a steep, rocky slope.
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10. The author says that the last few feet of the hill are:
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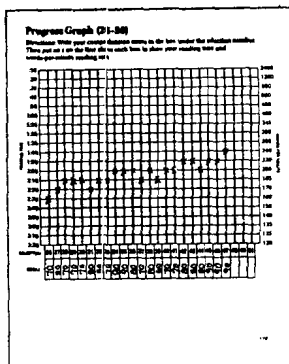
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5 Answer the questions
Answer the ten questions on the next page. There are five fact questions and five thought questions. Pick the best answer to each question and put an x in the box beside it.

6 Correct your answers
Using the Answer Key on pages 116 and 117, correct your work. Circle your wrong answers and put an x in the box you should have marked. Score 10 points for each correct answer. Write your score at the bottom of the page on the line labeled Comprehension Score.

7 Fill in the progress graph
 Enter your score and
 plot your reading time on
 the graph on page 118 or
 119. The right-hand side of
 the graph shows your
 words-per-minute reading
 speed. Write this number
 at the bottom of the page
 on the line labeled Words
 per Minute.



Instructions for the Pacing Drills

From time to time your instructor may wish to conduct pacing drills using *Timed Readings*. For this work you need to use the **Pacing Dots** printed in the margins of your book pages. The dots will help you regulate your reading speed to match the pace set by your instructor or announced on the reading cassette tape.

You will be reading at the correct pace if you are at the dot when your instructor says "Mark" or when you hear a tone on the tape. If you are ahead of the pace, read a little more slowly; if you are behind the pace, increase your reading speed. Try to match the pace exactly.

Follow these steps.

Step 1: Record the pace. At the bottom of the page, write on the line labeled *Words per Minute* the rate announced by the instructor or by the speaker on the tape.

Step 2: Begin reading. Wait for the signal to begin reading. Read at a slightly faster-than-normal speed. You will not know how on-target your pace is until you hear your instructor say "Mark" or until you hear the first tone on the tape. After a little practice you will be able to select an appropriate starting speed most of the time.

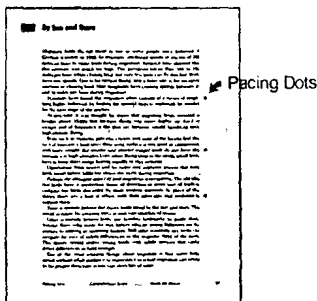
Step 3: Adjust your pace. As you read, try to match the pace set by the instructor or the tape. Read more slowly or more quickly as necessary. You should be reading the line beside the dot when you hear the pacing signal. The pacing sounds may distract you at first. Don't worry about it. Keep reading and your concentration will return.

Step 4: Stop and answer questions. Stop reading when you are told to, even if you have not finished the selection. Answer the questions right away. Correct your work and record your score on the line *Comprehension Score*. Strive to maintain 80 percent comprehension on each drill as you gradually increase your pace.

Step 5: Fill in the pacing graph. Transfer your words-per-minute rate to the box labeled *Pace* on the pacing graph on page 120. Then plot your comprehension score on the line above the box.

These pacing drills are designed to help you become a more flexible reader. They encourage you to "break out" of a pattern of reading everything at the same speed.

The drills help in other ways, too. Sometimes in a reading program you reach a certain level and bog down. You don't seem able to move on and progress. The pacing drills will help you to work your way out of such slumps and get your reading program moving again.



Steps to Faster Reading

STEP 1: PREVIEW

When you read, do you start in with the first word, or do you look over the whole selection for a moment? Good readers preview the selection first—this helps to make them good, and fast, readers.

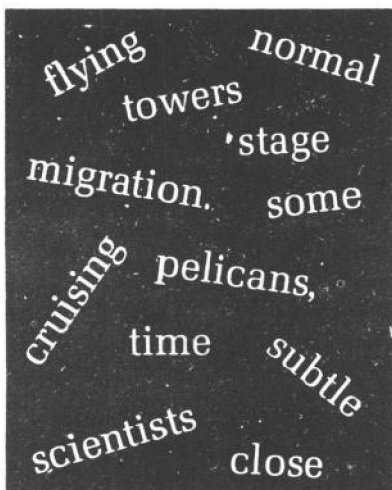
1. Read the Title. The first thing to do when previewing is to read the title of the selection. Titles are designed not only to announce the subject, but also to make the reader think. What can you learn from the title? What thoughts does it bring to mind? What do you already know about this subject?

2. Read the Opening Paragraph. If the first paragraph is long, read the first sentence or two instead. The first paragraph is the writer's opportunity to greet the reader. He may have something to tell you about what is to come. Some writers announce what they hope to tell you in the selection. Some writers tell why they are writing. Some writers just try to get the reader's attention—they may ask a provocative question.

3. Read the Closing Paragraph. If the last paragraph is long, read just the final line or two. The closing paragraph is the writer's last chance to talk to his reader. He may have something important to say at the end. Some writers repeat the main idea once more. Some writers draw a conclusion: this is what they have been leading up to. Some writers summarize their thoughts; they tie all the facts together.

4. Glance Through. Scan the selection quickly to see what else you can pick up. Discover whatever you can to help you read the selection. Are there names, dates, numbers? If so, you may have to read more slowly. Are there colorful adjectives? The selection might be light and fairly easy to read. Is the selection informative, containing a lot of facts, or conversational, an informal discussion with the reader?

[illegible]



Steps to Faster Reading

STEP 2: READ FOR MEANING

When you read, do you just see words? Are you so occupied reading words that you sometimes fail to get the meaning? Good readers see beyond the words—they read for meaning. This makes them faster readers.

1. Build Concentration. You cannot read with understanding if you are not concentrating. Every reader's mind wanders occasionally; it is not a cause for alarm. When you discover that your thoughts have strayed, correct the situation right away. The longer you wait, the harder it becomes. Avoid distractions and distracting situations. Outside noises and activities will compete for your attention if you let them. Keep the preview information in mind as you read. This will help to focus your attention on the selection.

2. Read in Thought Groups. Individual words do not tell us much. They must be combined with other words in order to yield meaning. To obtain meaning from the printed page, therefore, the reader should see the words in meaningful combinations. If you see only a word at a time (called word-by-word reading), your comprehension suffers along with your speed. To improve both speed and comprehension, try to group the words into phrases which have a natural relationship to each other. For practice, you might want to read aloud, trying to speak the words in meaningful combinations.

3. Question the Author. To sustain the pace you have set for yourself, and to maintain a high level of comprehension, question the writer as you read. Continually ask yourself such questions as, "What does this mean? What is he saying now? How can I use this information?" Questions like these help you to concentrate fully on the selection.

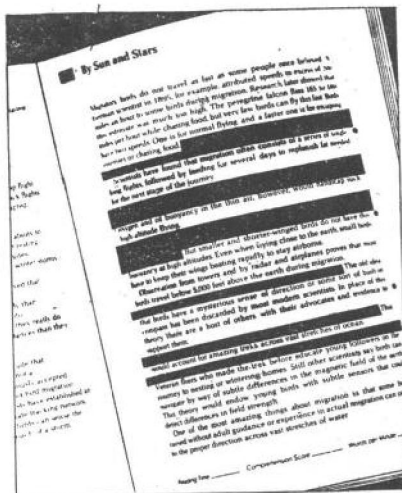
Steps to Faster Reading

STEP 3: GRASP PARAGRAPH SENSE

The paragraph is the basic unit of meaning. If you can discover quickly and understand the main point of each paragraph, you can comprehend the author's message. Good readers know how to find the main ideas of paragraphs quickly. This helps to make them faster readers.

1. Find the Topic Sentence. The topic sentence, the sentence containing the main idea, is often the first sentence of a paragraph. It is followed by other sentences which support, develop, or explain the main idea. Sometimes a topic sentence comes at the end of a paragraph. When it does, the supporting details come first, building the base for the topic sentence. Some paragraphs do not have a topic sentence. Such paragraphs usually create a mood or feeling, rather than present information.

2. Understand Paragraph Structure. Every well-written paragraph has purpose. The purpose may be to inform, define, explain, persuade, compare or contrast, illustrate, and so on. The purpose should always relate to the main idea and expand on it. As you read each paragraph, see how the body of the paragraph is used to tell you more about the main idea or topic sentence. Read the supporting details intelligently, recognizing that what you are reading is all designed to develop the single main idea.



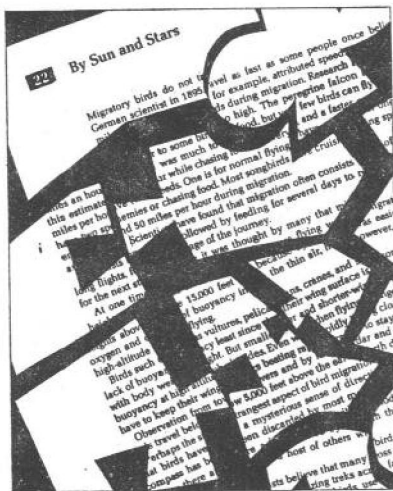
Steps to Faster Reading

STEP 4: ORGANIZE FACTS

When you read, do you tend to see a lot of facts without any apparent connection or relationship? Understanding how the facts all fit together to deliver the author's message is, after all, the reason for reading. Good readers organize facts as they read. This helps them to read rapidly and well.

1. Discover the Writer's Plan. Look for a clue or signal word early in the article which might reveal the author's structure. Every writer has a plan or outline which he follows. If the reader can discover his method of organization, he has the key to understanding the message. Sometimes the author gives you obvious signals. If he says, "There are three reasons . . ." the wise reader looks for a listing of the three items. Other less obvious signal words such as moreover, otherwise, consequently all tell the reader the direction the writer's message will take.

2. Relate as You Read. As you read the selection, keep the information learned during the preview in mind. See how the ideas you are reading all fit into place. Consciously strive to relate what you are reading to the title. See how the author is carrying through in his attempt to piece together a meaningful message. As you discover the relationship among the ideas, the message comes through quickly and clearly.



Ludwig van Beethoven was one of the greatest composers who ever lived. He taught people that they could be freer when they wrote music. Before his time, music was composed for a special purpose. Often it was church music. Or, music was written to entertain at parties and dances. Beethoven did not think that music needed to have a practical use. He thought people should listen to music just for itself.

Beethoven was born in Germany in 1770. He was a very musical child. The boy learned to play the violin and the piano. But he was not happy at home. His mother died when he was in his teens. After that, his father was often drunk and bad-tempered. Beethoven became a tutor in a rich family. He was glad to get a job. His student's mother was very kind to the young teacher. She helped him meet many famous musicians. One of these was Mozart. Mozart heard the boy play the piano. He said, "That boy will give the world something worth listening to."

In a few years, Beethoven was ready to leave his teaching job. He went to the city of Vienna. There he wrote a lot of music. Some people who heard his music did not like it. They thought it was too loud and forceful. But soon most people came to admire his work.

When Beethoven was in his twenties, he began to go deaf. The deafness changed his behavior. He became withdrawn and moody. His friends found him hard to be around. But he kept composing even when he lost all his hearing. The music he heard was in his head.

Beethoven died when he was 57 years old. Most of his friends and family had deserted him. This had caused Beethoven a great deal of grief. But at least he had had his music. He had composed over a hundred pieces. His music spanned two stages of music history. His early music was more formal. It followed certain steps and patterns. But his later music changed. That style is now called romantic music. This type of music is written to stir the listener's feelings. Sometimes a piece tells a story. Beethoven learned to use music, not words, for the story. This romantic style changed the way people thought about music. Many later composers gained new ideas from Beethoven's musical discoveries.

Recalling Facts

1. Beethoven was born in
 - ☐ a. France.
 - ☒ b. Germany.
 - ☐ c. England.
2. The boy got a job as a
 - ☐ a. violinist.
 - ☐ b. singer.
 - ☒ c. tutor.
3. When Beethoven was in his twenties, he began to go
 - ☒ a. deaf.
 - ☐ b. blind.
 - ☐ c. crazy.
4. During his life, Beethoven composed
 - ☐ a. only a few pieces.
 - ☐ b. five hundred pieces.
 - ☒ c. over a hundred pieces.
5. Beethoven's later style is now called
 - ☐ a. baroque music.
 - ☒ b. romantic music.
 - ☐ c. country music.

Understanding the Passage

6. The young Beethoven
 - ☒ a. was very talented.
 - ☐ b. did not get along with his mother.
 - ☐ c. played the trumpet.
7. Beethoven's father
 - ☐ a. begged him not to leave home.
 - ☐ b. died when Beethoven was in his teens.
 - ☒ c. was not kind to his son.
8. Mozart apparently thought that Beethoven
 - ☐ a. had a bad temper.
 - ☐ b. should stop playing the piano.
 - ☒ c. would become famous.
9. Beethoven's deafness made him
 - ☐ a. stop writing music.
 - ☒ b. difficult to socialize with.
 - ☐ c. talk very loudly.
10. Beethoven's music
 - ☐ a. changed the way later composers thought.
 - ☐ b. is unimportant in today's music world.
 - ☒ c. ended the romantic era of music.