

4 大学英语阶梯阅读



薛琛 主编
南开大学出版社

Graded College English Reading BOOK FOUR



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第四册

(5—6 级)

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前 言

本系列读物以提高学生的阅读能力为目的,从而促进他们在听、说、写各方面的发展。读者对象为高等院校研究生、本科生、专科生以及英语自学者。本读物共分四册,与目前大学英语分级教学密切配合。

国家教委颁发的《大学英语教学大纲》指出:大学英语教学的目的是培养学生具有较强的阅读能力、一定的听的能力以及初步的写和说的能力。显然,“培养学生具有较强的阅读能力”是第一层次的要求。在英语教学的实践中,我们也深深感到要培养学生听说读写四方面的技能,提高学生的阅读能力是关键。

从目前大学生英语学习的情况来看,普遍存在的问题是词汇量小,阅读速度慢,阅读理解能力不够理想,写作方面的困难也就更加突出。在全国大学英语四级、六级统考中,也再次反映了这些问题。我们认为,切实可行的解决办法就是让学生大量地阅读,通过阅读,丰富学生的文化背景知识,扩大他们的知识面,增加词汇量,以此提高阅读速度和理解力。“读书破万卷,下笔如有神”。我们相信,通过大量的阅读,学生的写作能力也一定会相应地提高。

本系列读物与高等院校学生从大学英语一级到六级的学习相呼应,在各级的学习阶段中,为他们提供内容新颖、体裁

多样、具有现代语言规范和特点的课外读物。将英语的阅读部分从“习题集”这类书籍中分离出来,将它独立成书,并与英语一至六级的教学程序互相承接,相得益彰;同时,也避免了一般英语读物文艺性过强的倾向,代之以更广博的内容,增补大量当代世界各个领域的新知识,是我们一次认真的尝试,也是广大学生热切的呼声。为帮助学生更好地对课文进行理解、消化和吸收,我们适当地对每篇读物加以注释,并密切结合各级学生的学习要求,配备了多种形式的练习。为便于学生的自学,我们在书后附了练习的答案。

《大学英语阶梯阅读》的编写安排如下:

册次	级别	词汇量	对应年级
1	1、2	2500-3000	大学一年级
2	3	3000-3500	大学二年级第一学期
3	4	3500-4500	大学二年级第二学期
4	5、6	4500-6000	大学高年级及研究生

本系列读物由南开大学外文系英语教研室徐齐平教授审定。

鉴于编者水平有限,在选材、注释等方面难免存在不少缺点和问题,请读者批评指正。

编者

一九九〇年十月

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1. WOMEN VS. MEN IN THE WORK FORCE

- 1 The road signs have been changed—no longer “Men at Work” but “People Working.” Every occupation recorded by the Census Bureau, up to and including stevedores and boilermakers, lists women as well as men. Forty-four percent of all employed Americans are women. What’s more, the percentage continues to rise, which poses a sobering question: Are the gains being made by women in the workplace coming at the expense of men?
- 2 On the face of it, the answer is clear. Unless total employment in the nation expands more rapidly than it has, some substantial number of men are going to continue to lose out in the job race to women. But the process by which the change is taking place is complex, and the explanation goes beyond the political and legal pressures that are part of women’s campaign for equal rights.
- 3 There have been changes in the character of work that have encouraged the hiring of women. In the insurance industry, for example, the positions of adjusters and examiners were once largely held by men, who went out and inspected dented fenders. Today, the work consists mainly of sitting at a computer terminal, entering insurance claims. Women now hold 65 percent of these jobs, up from 27 percent in 1970. In general, women are filling the new, lower-paying jobs in offices and the service industry.
- 4 Some jobs that were once all-male preserves changed with the introduction of modern equipment. That happened in the meatpacking industry, where automatic machines for moving sides of beef have eased the need for so much heaving and hoisting. Since 1970, the proportion of packinghouse butchers

who are women has increased by more than one-third.

- 5 Among the most vivid cases of displacement are those in the upper reaches of the work place. The proportion of women among graduate students has been increasing dramatically, providing stiff competition for young men who, a generation earlier, might have been all but certain of executive or professional careers. Between 1960 and 1983, the male proportion among lawyers declined from 98 percent to 85 percent. Over the same period of time, the percentage of men in advertising fell from 86 percent to 52 percent; in banking and financial management, it went from 91 percent to 61 percent.

- 6 Of course, discrimination against women continues. Moreover, only rarely is there a one-for-one substitution, the discharge of a man so that a woman can be hired to take his place. Yet the trend toward the displacement of male workers goes on. According to the United States Labor Department, two-thirds of the growth in the labor force between now and 1995 will be accounted for by women; by that year, the department expects, only 65 percent of men aged 55 to 64 will be in the labor force.

- 7 In a nation that prides itself on a commitment to equality of opportunity, women's progress in workplace can only be seen as inevitable and fair. That should not, however, blind us to the major impact this change will have, not only in terms of jobs but in terms of the society as a whole, unsettling the balance of relationships in the family and raising new problems concerning male self-esteem.

- 8 Where have the new jobs for women come from? As it happened, while women were arriving at new insights about what they wanted to do with their lives, the economy was undergoing basic changes. Great gains were being made in productivity, largely because machines were replacing workers in the manufacturing sector. In a single decade, for example, *Du Pont*¹ doubled its capacity to produce synthetic fibers without sub-

stantially adding to its work force. Union Pacific now carries 40 percent more freight with half as many workers as it did 20 years ago. The jobs that have disappeared in these and other heavy-duty industries were held mainly by men. And the new jobs that have come along are being taken mainly by women.

- 9 While cutting blue-collar employment, few companies have reduced their overall work force. Instead, they have devised new office positions, especially to cope with the so-called "information explosion." Companies have also moved more strongly into the service sector, producing new jobs in fields from fastfood outlets to computer consulting firms. Thus Pillsbury² bought (and beefed up³) Burger King⁴. RCA⁵ went into the car-rental business by taking over Hertz⁶.
- 10 Many of the new occupations, for example, call for a relatively high level of literacy, in both language and numbers. This is the case, not only with office work, but also across a range of responsibilities from taking airline reservations to monitoring hospital intensive-care units.
- 11 At almost every level, the call is for more literate employees. And, for the first time in our history, women are clearly emerging as better educated than men. A recent United States Department of Education study of high school seniors showed that girls spend more time than boys doing homework—and, as a group, get higher grades. Girls are more apt to graduate from high school, which today is a requirement even for most semiskilled jobs; boys who dropped out of school could once expect to find such work, but no longer.
- 12 Most studies suggest that when women and men do the same job and have the same experience or seniority, pay rates tend to be similar. Most of the dollar differences stem from the fact that women tend to be more recent entrants and have fewer years on the job. Whether women embarking upon a career will attain pay equality with men rests on at least two

factors. First, will most of them continue full time at their jobs after they have children? A break in their employment, or a decision to work part time, will slow raises and promotions—as it would for a man. Second, will male-dominated companies elevate women to higher-paid jobs at the same rate they elevate men? In some fields, this has clearly not happened. Many women, for example, have committed their lives to teaching careers, yet relatively few become principals or superintendents of school systems.

- 13 There is another reason why women as a group earn so much less than men. The real upsurge in employment has been among married women, most of whom have children. Over half of them are now working, compared with 20 percent a generation ago. By and large, they tend to enter occupations where women predominate and the pay is lower than in male-dominated fields. Moreover, most married women work only part time or only part of the year. Because their salaries are not their family's sole source of income, they may be more likely to consider factors apart from pay in deciding what jobs to take—a work site close to home, for example, or a prompt quitting time if they have children in school. Working wives earn, on the average, only \$ 430 for every \$ 1,000 made by their husbands.

From *New York Times*, 1984

Notes

1. Du Pont; a chemical company whose full name is E. I. du Pont de Nemours and Company, founded on the Brandywine near Wilmington in 1802
2. Pillsbury; a baked goods company
3. beef up; to strengthen
4. Burger King; a fast-food restaurant. Burger stands for hamburger.

5. R C A; Radio Corporation of America
6. Hertz; a car rental company

Exercises

I . Comprehension Check

Read the following statements and decide whether they are true or false.

1. Women in the workplace are now more or less equal to men. ☐
2. The process of hiring women is rather complex. ☐
3. Large companies are readjusting working conditions to encourage women to join the labor force. ☐
4. Modern technology has not helped women get jobs. ☐
5. The society's perception concerning work done by men has not changed. ☐
6. The number of women in executive or professional careers is increasing dramatically. ☐
7. Displacement of male workers is a temporary trend. ☐
8. Many large companies have changed their job patterns by cutting blue-collar employment and producing more service jobs. ☐
9. According to the writer, women's good looks and pleasant personality help them get better jobs. ☐
10. Literacy has become less and less important for job candidates. ☐

II . Vocabulary Development

Use the expressions taken from the reading passage to complete the following sentences.

on the face of it	to be apt to
at the expense of	to embark upon
to lose out	to call for
to beef up	to drop out

to take over

to account for

1. Do you know why so many young people _____ of school after the first year?
2. More and more women are _____ top management careers as a result of the Women's Movement.
3. Martha's struggle to obtain the position of president was _____ her marriage and personal relationships.
4. It is believed that women are generally _____ learn a new language more easily than men.
5. Smith became a millionaire by gradually _____ small businesses in the neighborhood.
6. _____, many women benefited from the Women's Movement; today, however, many people wonder if all the changes have been good for us.
7. This recipe _____ a pound of butter; that's a lot, isn't it?
8. As more industries become automated, men will probably continue to _____ to women, who will be at the receiving end of newly created jobs.
9. Women will _____ a large proportion of the growth in the labor force over the next decade.
10. Some labor experts think the government should _____ its efforts to wipe out discrimination.

III. Error Correction

Directions: This part consists of a short passage. In this passage, there are altogether 10 mistakes, one in each numbered line. You may have to change a word, add a word or delete a word. If you change a word, cross it out and write the correct word in the corresponding blank. If you add a word, put an insertion mark (^) in the right place and write the missing word

in the blank. If you delete a word, cross it out and put a slash (/) in the blank.

Example:

Television is rapidly becoming the literatures of our ~~periods~~. Many of the arguments ~~having~~ used for the study of literature as a school subject are valid for ~~A~~ study of television.

1. time

2. /

3. the

Dear Ms Kit,

I'm going to give a dinner party next month for some Canada friends. I want my guests to enjoy themselves and to feel comfort. What's the secret of giving a successful party?

1. _____

2. _____

Worried

Dear Worried,

Cook something that let you spend time with your guests. If a guest offers to help you in the kitchen, receive the offer. Before serving dinner, while your guests make small talk in the living room, offer them drink. Those who drink alcohol might like liquor or wine, but be sure provide soft drinks for people who don't. On the dinner table, let your guests serve themselves. Offer them second serving, but don't ask more than once or twice. Perhaps the most important rule for all is to be natural. Have good time in a pleasant atmosphere.

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

9. _____

10. _____

Etty Kit

IV . Writing

There are many things to think about when choosing a job. For example, salary? outside or in an office? working hours? traveling the world? length of holidays? physical or mental work? working at the weekend?

Using these ideas, describe and contrast these two jobs (doctor and airline pilot). Explain which you would prefer and why.

Write a three-paragraph composition in about 150 words.

2. ANALOGY AND MEMORY

- 1 When a person draws an analogy, he or she observes similarities between two things, and usually goes on to suggest that the thing which is familiar can help explain the one which is not or is only partly understood. As in forms logic, there is often also the inference that the similarities noted imply other probable similarities.
- 2 Scientists have often described organic processes by means of analogy. Some analogies are useful and accurate as far as they go. For example, the comparison of the heart with a pump or of the kidney with a filter has helped illustrate the nature and function of these organs. However, analogies that have been proposed to explain the nervous system have been less successful. One aspect of analogies is that they are limited by the scientific understanding of the time. The mind cannot be compared to a computer, for instance, until there is a computer.
- 3 Several analogies have been used to explain human memory, the construct used to account for the way experiences at one point in time influence behavior at a later point in time. Plato (425-348 BC), for example, suggested that memory was analogous to the impression of messages on wax writing tablets. For Plato, writing on the tablet represented learning something new, the tablet itself was the memory store, and reading the tablets later was analogous to trying to recall the stored information. Like the writing on a wax surface, with the passing of time, memories became less clear. Unfortunately, Plato's analogy misses an important characteristic of memory, namely that it is selective. By way of contrast, one always has access to the information on the tablet, unless all or part of it is destroyed.

- 4 Another analogy is of memory and a hologram. A hologram is a device which stores a three dimensional record of a scene using photography with a laser light. Even if part of the holographic plate is missing, it is possible to reconstruct the image with the parts of the plate that remain. Experiences or knowledge can also be recalled using incomplete memories. Other analogies involve artificial methods of storing information, too. The comparison of the mind to a computer is attractive because it emphasizes the ability of human memory to recall information quickly, but the same objections stated above with regard to Plato's hypothesis apply here.
- 5 Gregg¹ (1975) has compared memory to the functioning of a tape recorder. The latter records sound waves, coded as magnetic patterns on tape, and stores them over time. The information recorded can be decoded, without destroying the tape, for later use. Gregg points out, however, that the analogy is too simple. Human memory is far more sophisticated than the workings of a tape recorder. It does not simply record passing events passively, for instance; unlike the machine, it is dynamic, capable of selecting which information it will store, and of arranging the storage system in more than just a simple linear fashion.
- 6 Blakemore² (1977) has noted that the discovery of DNA (dioxynucleic acid), the molecule that carries genetic information, has provided scientists with another source of analogy to describe memory. This analogy proposes that each experience results in the synthesis of specific chemical molecules in the brain and the formation of new molecules. These synthesized molecules represent memories. This description of memory would provide both the physical substrate (the synthesized molecule) and the nature of the code (the specific shape of the molecule).
- 7 However attractive a given analogy may appear, it is important to recognize the limited function of analogies in science in

general. As used in science, they are generally substitutes for understanding, models that guide research, not genuine explanations of phenomena. They are useful if they provoke investigations designed to establish differences between the things compared, dangerous if they promote complacent acceptance of two things which are really different as the same.

From *Reading English for Academic Study*, 1980

Notes

1. Gregg, V. Gregg is the author of *Human Memory*, published in London, 1975.
2. Blakemore, C. Blakemore is the author of "The Unsolved Marvel of Memory" in *New York Times Magazine*, 1977.

Exercises

I. Comprehension Check

Read the following statements and decide whether they are true or false.

1. Analogies sometimes imply similarities between the things compared other than those referred to explicitly. T
2. The analogies between the heart and a pump and the kidney and a filter are considered valid by the writer. T
3. The way experiences affect later behavior is one definition of memory.
4. Plato's analogy captured all the essential characteristics of human memory.
5. The hologram analogy is better than Plato's since it includes the known capacity of memory for recovering missing information. T
6. The writer thinks the analogy with a computer is an improvement over the wax tablet and hologram examples. T