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# 英语阅读进阶

STEPS TO ENGLISH READING

400篇

科学普及出版社

H1219.4  
298

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(1)

(京)新登字 026 号

图书在版编目 (CIP) 数据

英语阅读进阶 (1) =STEPS TO ENGLISH READING (1)

/林祖安等主编. —北京: 科学普及出版社, 1993. 7

ISBN 7-110-02917-4

I. 英…

II. 林…

III. 英语—高等教育—自学参考资料

IV. H31-42

2542/24

科学普及出版社出版

北京海淀区白石桥路 32 号 邮政编码: 100081

新华书店北京发行所发行 各地新华书店经售

中国科学院印刷厂印刷

※

开本: 787×1092 毫米 1/16 印张: 6.5 字数: 195 千字

1993 年 9 月第 1 版 1993 年 9 月第 1 次印刷

印数: 1—2 800 册 定价: 5.40 元

ISBN 7-110-02917-4/G · 899

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# 前 言

## (Preface)

国家教委颁布的《大学英语教学大纲》把培养学生具有较强的阅读能力和以英语为工具，获取专业所需要的信息作为大学英语教学和学习的主要目的，全国大学英语四级统考也体现了这一要求和目的，试题中阅读理解部分的信息量最多，占试题总分比例最大（40%），每题的分值最高（2%），由此可见，在大学英语教学和学习中提高学生的英语阅读能力，搞好阅读理解部分的教学工作有着极为重要的现实意义。应从入校起就给予足够的重视。

多年来，编者和广大学生在英语教学和学习实践中感到迫切需要一套与学期对应，与学生英语阅读水平提高过程相适应的大学英语短文阅读教材。编者正是基于以上对《大纲》的认识和理解以及考虑到这一目的和需要，组织了全国一些高校有丰富教学经验的教师一起每册编写了100篇英语阅读短文，每篇短文之后配有阅读理解测试题，均以 **Multiple Choice** 形式出现，每册后附有参考答案。四册共编英语阅读短文400篇，每册为一个梯度，分别适用于英语1~4级的大学生阅读。所编400篇短文题材广泛，风格各异，可读性强，其中不少为大学生欢迎之作。

在编写过程中，编者根据需要对一些短文进行了适当删节或改写，对短文后的大部分测试题也进行了重新设计或编配。另外，编者在教材中有意没采用单元式编排，目的是可使教师和学生不受单元限制，自由选读，灵活使用，既可作课上阅读教材，亦可为课下学生自我训练之用。我们相信通过阅读这四册共400篇短文，将会对学生阅读能力（阅读速度和理解准确率）的提高和加强起到十分显著的作用；阅读者也定会在英语学习和英语四级统考中取得理想的进步和成绩。

但由于时间仓促，编者水平有限，书中定有瑕疵之处，恳求英语界专家同仁和学生在使用中提出宝贵意见和批评，我们在此先致谢意。

本教材在编写和出版过程中，曾得到了诸多同仁和朋友的真诚帮助，特别是 William Hazzison 教授在百忙中抽时审阅了1—4册的全部书稿，并提出了很多宝贵意见，时值本教材出版之际，谨向他们并出版社的有关同志表示衷心的感谢。

编 者

1992年6月

## Passage 1

A boy once sent his girl friend five walnuts for her birthday. She was rather disappointed with the gift. She gave the nuts to her mother, who put them in a bowl with many other walnuts.

Later that day the girl's boy friend came to visit. He asked her what she had done with his gift. Then he told her that he had placed a diamond ring inside one of the walnuts. How foolish the girl felt! She got the bowl of walnuts. Then she and the boy cracked walnuts till they found the one that had the ring in it.

1. This story happened on  
A. Christmas Day.      B. New Year's Day.      C. a girl's birthday.
2. The writer did not tell us the  
A. people's names.      B. girl's feelings.  
C. number of nuts the girl received.
3. The girl gave the nuts away because  
A. her mother needed them.      B. she did not value them.  
C. they weren't ripe.
4. The girl felt foolish when  
A. the gift arrived.      B. the boy arrived.      C. she heard about the ring.
5. The ring was hard to find because the nuts  
A. all looked the same.      B. had all been eaten.  
C. could not be cracked.
6. Which happened first?  
A. The girl put the ring on.      B. The mother took the nuts.  
C. The boy put the ring in the nut.

## Passage 2

Skis have been used in Scandinavia for 4500 years. In order to move across snow-covered land in winter the people there had to have skis. Skiing was never thought of as a sport, but now it is the best known winter sport. For most people skiing means going down mountain slopes, but the Scandinavians still enjoy cross-country skiing, and ski-jumping in fact began before downhill runs. Downhill skiing is rather tiring if you have to walk up the mountain again on your skis. Life was made much easier for skiers when ski-lifts were invented.

Skiing is now a big tourist business, not only in countries like Switzerland and Austria but also in some South American countries, Japan and many other places. Many more people ski these days because there are cheap organised holidays at skiing centres. For a fixed price the tourist gets a "package" holiday which includes all travel, hotel and meals—and sometimes skiing classes, ski-lifts and the hire of skis. Beginners can enjoy skiing from almost the first day, but for anyone thinking of a skiing holiday, two points are worth remembering. The first is training. In many countries there are special practice slopes, with "snow" made of nylon bristles. Starting to use the right muscles before leaving home can be a great help. The second is insurance. Breaking a bone in a foreign country can be very expensive, and it is best to insure against this.

1. People did not think of skiing as a sport because
 

A. no people used to ski.	B. it was very old.
C. it was not very well known.	D. skiing was a need.
2. After ski-lifts were invented skiers did not have to
 

A. walk up mountains.	B. travel cross-country.
C. do downhill skiing.	D. do ski-jumping.
3. Skiing is now a big tourist business in
 

A. Switzerland and Austria.	B. South American countries.
C. Japan and many other places.	D. all of the above.
4. \_\_\_\_\_ people ski these days because there are cheap organized holidays at skiing centres.
 

A. Few	B. Many more	C. Some	D. A few
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### Passage 3

A house-hunting hermit crab is a peaceful creature. It does not drive another animal out of its home. Instead, the crab looks for an empty shell. Often it is the shell left by a snail.

The crab chooses its home carefully. With its claws, it turns the shell over to inspect it. Then the crab backs into the shell, checking it for size and shape. If the shell is uncomfortable, the hunt goes on. But if the shell is a proper fit, the crab settles in. Its next move will be when it has grown too big for its hardwalled home.

1. The crab in this story is
 

A. mouse-hunting.	B. house-hunting.	C. building its shell.
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2. It is called a "peaceful creature" because it
 

A. drives other animals away.	B. likes to live alone.
C. does not fight to get a shell.	
3. The crab often chooses the shell left by

- A. a clam.                      B. an oyster.                      C. a snail.
4. The crab uses its claws to  
 A. turn the shell over.                       B. back into the shell.                      C. clean inside the shell.
5. To check for a proper fit, the crab  
 A. turns the shell over.                       B. backs into the shell.  
 C. puts its claws inside the shell.
6. On its next move, the crab will be looking for a  
 A. larger shell.                      B. smaller shell.                      C. shell of the same size.

*gesture*

### Passage 4

The earth is made up of seven layers. The top layer of the earth is called the earth crust, which is divided into seven sections. These sections are called plates. When two plates push against each other or the two plates rub against each other, an earthquake will occur. An earthquake causes the ground above the plate to shake. The shaking is caused by the motion of two plates. Earthquakes are likely to happen at the boundary of the earth's plates, each of which is about 70km thick. Let's have a look at the general boundary of one of the seven major plates. Take, the North America plate, for example. The west boundary of this plate is the west coast of North America, and the east boundary of this plate is through the middle of the Atlantic Ocean. That is, this plate takes shape from the west coast of North America to the middle of the Atlantic Ocean.

1. What do we call the top layer of the earth?  
 A. The crust.                      B. The ground.                      C. The plate.                      D. The boundary.
2. How many major sections is the earth's crust divided into?  
 A. Three.                      B. Two.                       C. Seven.                      D. Twelve.
3. Where is an earthquake likely to happen?  
 A. At the west coast of North America.  
 B. At the place where two plates may push against each other.  
 C. At the middle of the Atlantic Ocean.  
 D. At the centre of the Pacific Ocean.
4. From the passage we can see that the passage mainly talks about  
 A. the earth.                       B. how the earth is composed.  
 C. the earthquake.                      D. the boundary of the plates.

## Passage 5

A flag is more than a piece of cloth. It stands for a nation's people—their land, history, and ideals. Iceland's flag, for instance, stands for features of the land. Red is for the fire of Iceland's volcanoes. White is for ice. Blue is for the mountains. On India's flag, the blue wheel stands for peace and progress. The white stripe behind it is for truth. The black stripe on the flag of Malawi stands for the Negro people of that African land. The red stripe represents the blood they shed to free themselves from foreign rule.

When the people of any nation see their flag flying, they feel proud. They love and honor the flag as the symbol of their country.

1. The flag of Iceland is  
A. red and white.                      B. blue and green.  
C. black, white, and red.            D.  red, white, and blue.
2. The white stripe on India's flag stands for  
A. ice and mountains.                B. peace and progress.  
C. waterfalls.                          D.  truth.
3. India's flag stands mostly for the  
A. features of the land.                B. riches of the soil.  
C.  ideals of the people.                D.  history of the country.
4. Of the flags the writer mentions, Malawi's flag is the only one that has a  
A. green bar.            B.  black stripe.            C. blue wheel.            D. red cross.
5. The red on Malawi's flag reminds the people of  
A. the many volcanoes in their land.  
B. the beauty of their countryside.  
C.  their fight for freedom.  
D. their need to make progress.
6. The writer says that when people see their flag they feel  
A. peace.            B.  pride.            C. love.            D.  both B and C.

## Passage 6

This is how ping-pong is often played today and this is how it started as a friendly game, played for fun without worrying very much about rules. No one knows who invented it. One story is that it started when two students at Cambridge University began knocking a cork to each



1. According to the article, films showed horses
  - A. jumping off cliffs.
  - B. falling head over heels.
  - C. overturning a coach carrying passengers.
  - D. being injured in battle.
2. The wire device used in many such scenes was the
  - A. Running W.
  - B. Running Y.
  - C. Running Z.
  - D. None of the above.
3. Fine wires had to be used so that
  - A. they would break easily.
  - B. film viewers would not see them.
  - C. the horse could gallop some distance. ✓
  - D. the cost of the wire would be low.
4. The horse was tripped as soon as
  - A. it began to gallop.
  - B. the log was pulled out of the ground.
  - C. the rider pulled the reins tight.
  - D. the wires became tight.
5. The second way of tripping a horse used a
  - A. greased platform.
  - B. hidden net.
  - C. hidden pit. ✓
  - D. wire stretched between two posts.
6. Humane societies list a film as unacceptable to let people know that
  - A. animals in it have been mistreated.
  - B. there are too many battle scenes.
  - C. the film has been approved.
  - D. both A and B.

## Passage 8

Many American women are earning money outside their homes today. Among women who are eighteen to sixty-four years old, fifty percent have jobs.

In general, working women have had more education than those who stay at home. Of those who work, thirty-two per cent have attended college, compared with twenty per cent of those who do not have jobs.

Among women with jobs, eight out of ten drive a car to work, and eight per cent took a vacation away from home during the past year. Much of their travelling was by air.

These figures come from a report which was written for advertisers. The report give advertisers a new picture of women today. For instance, it tells advertisers that fifty-one per cent of all American women have traveled by air—along with fifty-nine per cent of all American men.

The lesson for American business is that many women now have other interests in addition to their homes. They like advertisements which show women in offices, planes, and cars.

1. The topic of the passage is
  - A. advertising in the U. S.
  - B. women and advertisements.
  - C. women in the U. S. A.
  - D. the changing society.
2. The passage mainly
  - A. is about women problems in the U. S. A.
  - B. describes the situation of women in the U. S. today.
  - C. criticizes women for their activities outside their homes.
  - D. demonstrates how to advertise these days.
3. Which of the following can't be inferred from the passage?
  - A. More men have traveled by air than women in America.
  - B. Most women with jobs have cars of their own.
  - C. Among women with jobs a greater half have gone through college education.
  - D. Planes, offices and cars used to be thought of as belonging to men only.
4. From the passage we can say that
  - A. in the past women only stayed inside their homes.
  - B. the figures we read are official and dependable.
  - C. there are as many car owners as vacation goes among American working women during the past year.
  - D. every woman in the U. S. has a new picture today.

## Passage 9

Coral polyps are tiny animals. They live in warm salt water. Millions of them build islands. They also build ridges called reefs.

The polyps deposit limestone. It remains when the polyps die. Younger polyps fasten themselves to it.

Some men say that reefs in the Pacific are now in danger. The enemy is another sea animal, the crown-of-thorns starfish. These starfish, which feed on polyps, have grown in number. Divers have gone down to kill them.

Other men think the harm done by the starfish will not last. But they do see another danger. Man is once more meddling with nature.

1. Coral islands and reefs are built in
  - A. cold fresh water.
  - B. warm salt water.
  - C. cold oceans.
2. Coral polyps deposit

- A. sandstone.                      B. granite.                      C. limestone.
3. The reefs now in danger are in the  
 A. Pacific.                      B. Atlantic.                      C. Indian Ocean.
4. The animals feeding on coral polyps are  
 A. five-fingered starfish.                      B. crown-of-thorns starfish.  
 C. bird-foot starfish.
5. The author does not say that  
 A. the starfish have grown in number.  
 B. divers have gone down to kill them.  
 C. the divers use syringes of formalin.
6. The end of the article mentions a danger from  
 A. the death of the polyps.  
 B. man's meddling with nature.  
 C. men using crowbars to hunt for shells in coral.

### Passage 10

Why does pouring hot water over a tight jar lid will loosen it?

Hot water makes the metal of the jar expand; this makes the cover loose.

Most objects expand when heated because they are made of molecules that are in constant motion. Heat makes molecules move faster. The hotter molecules become, the faster they move and the more space they need.

This explains why we hear a click as we travel by train, or a gentle thump (撞击) as we drive on a concrete (混凝土) highway. The clicks and thumps tell us that we are passing over expansion joints put in to allow room for the metal rail and the concrete to expand. These joints prevent the rails and the road from buckling (弯曲) as they expand under the hot sun. Like the molecules of the jar lid, the molecules of these materials need more space when they are hot.

1. Pouring hot water over a jar lid will  
 A. loosen it.                       B. make the jar expand.  
 C. not affect the lid itself.                      D. tighten it.
2. This happens because the hot water  
 A. causes the jar to grow smaller.  
 B. heats whatever is inside the jar.  
 C. makes the lid slightly larger.  
 D. all of the above.
3. An object is made up of molecules that move  
 A. all the time.

- B. for some time.
  - C. if the object becomes very hot.
  - D. whenever hot water is poured over it.
4. Objects expand when they are hot because hot molecules
- A. move faster.
  - B. move slowly.
  - C. take up more room.
  - D.  both A and C.
5. Expansion joints prevent rails and roads from
- A. being affected by heat or cold.
  - B. breaking in cold weather.
  - C.  buckling in the hot sun.
  - D.  expanding in hot weather.
6. From this selection we can tell that the molecules in a road
- A. are like no other molecules.
  - B. are not much like those in a jar lid.
  - C.  behave like the molecules in rails, lids, and other objects.
  - D. will not expand even in the hot sun.

### Passage 11

There was trouble in Greece. Some Greeks fled to monasteries for safety. Among them were a number of famous chefs.

Living as monks, the chefs were safe. And they could carry on their art. They began to cook for their fellow monks. But there was one thing wrong. The chefs didn't like looking the same as all the other monks. So they asked if they could wear tall white hats instead of the tall black ones Greek monks usually wore.

The idea soon spread. Greek cooks outside the monasteries began wearing tall white chef's hats too. Today chefs all over the world wear them.

1. A chef's art is
- A. painting.
  - B.  sewing.
  - C.  cooking.
2. The chefs in the story went to monasteries to find
- A. food.
  - B.  safety.
  - C. work.
3. At first the chefs dressed like
- A.  the other monks.
  - B. chefs of today.
  - C. Greek soldiers.
4. Then the chefs asked for hats of a different
- A. shape.
  - B.  color.
  - C. both A and B.
5. Use of the new type of hat spread through
- A. Greece only.
  - B. Europe only.
  - C.  the world.

6. From the story we learn that Greek monks

- A. wore black hats.
- B. spent much time in prayer.
- C. both A and B.

## Passage 12

On August 27, 1783, the people of the village of Gonesse, in France, looked up into the sky and saw a strange and terrible animal. It was huge and round and it was floating down from the sky. It landed in a field just outside the village. It was clear to the people of Gonesse that they had to defend themselves. The animal was clearly some kind of terrible "monster". They were afraid of the monster but they were also very brave. They rushed out into the field and attacked the animal with knives and sticks and farming tools. The monster made terrible noises, like an animal that can breathe only with great difficulty. But that was not the worst thing. When the villagers cut into the monster's skin, it gave off a horrible smell. And even after the villagers had cut the thing open, it still moved. Finally, the villagers tied it to a horse. The horse ran through the fields and the monster was torn to pieces.

What was this terrible monster? The answer is that it was one of the first "hot air balloons". Its "skin" was made of silk and a kind of rubber. The terrible smell was the hot air inside the balloon. When the hot air escaped through the cuts in the skin, it also caused the horrible noises.

In 1783 people had never seen anything but birds in the sky. We have come a long way since then. The history of flight and air travel is full of many interesting stories.

1. When the people of the village of Gonesse saw the terrible animal floating down from the sky, they
  - A. rushed into the field and attacked it.
  - B. escaped.
  - C. stayed in their houses.
  - D. only looked at it.
2. The terrible noises were made because the strange thing
  - A. could breathe.
  - B. gave out a blast of air through its skin.
  - C. felt pain when people attacked it.
  - D. was crying for help.
3. The terrible smell was
  - A. the smell of silk and rubber.
  - B. the villagers' breath.
  - C. the smell of blood.
  - D. none of the above.

- A 2
4. The strange and terrible animal seen by the people is
- A. an aeroplane.
  - B. a fierce bird.
  - C. a hot air balloon.
  - D. a terrible monster.

### Passage 13

The llama is a member of the camel family. Like the camel, the llama can live for weeks without a drink of water. Both get enough moisture from the grass, shrubs, and other plants they eat. But unlike the camel, the llama has no hump on its back.

The llama is large and has long, soft hair. It is used as a pack animal in South America because it can carry heavy loads safely over narrow mountain tracks. It is tame, but it can be stubborn and bad-tempered. When angry, it spits. If you see a llama curling its big lips, move away as quickly as you can!

And don't ever overload a llama. If you do, it won't move an inch.

1. Like the camel, the llama
  - A. has a hump on its back.
  - B. can live for weeks without water.
  - C. neither A nor B.
  - D. both A and B.
2. Unlike the llama, the camel
  - A. is stubborn and bad-tempered.
  - B. can live for weeks without water.
  - C. eats grass and shrubs.
  - D. has a hump on its back.
3. Llamas are used as pack animals in
  - A. North America.
  - B. South America.
  - C. Africa.
  - D. Asia.
4. The llama is most useful to man
  - A. in the mountains.
  - B. on the plains.
  - C. by the seashore.
  - D. in the forest.
5. Llamas are used as pack animals because they
  - A. can carry heavy loads.
  - B. are surefooted.
  - C. are tame.
  - D. all of the above.
6. Llamas show they are angry by
  - A. spitting.
  - B. stamping their feet.
  - C. crying loudly.
  - D. running away.

## Passage 14

Surtsey was born in 1963. It was a great event for scientists. They were lucky enough to see the birth of this volcanic island. It began at 7:30 a. m on 14th November. A fishing boat was sailing near Iceland. The boat moved under the captain's feet. He noticed a strange smell. He saw some black smoke. A volcano was erupting. The bottom of the grey Atlantic was open. Red-hot rocks, flames and smoke were rushing up from a split in the sea-bed. The island grew quickly. It was 10 metres high the next day and 60 metres high on 18th November. Scientists flew to Reykjavik to watch. It was very exciting. Smoke and flames were still rushing up. Pieces of red-hot rock were flying into the air and falling into the sea. The sea was boiling and there was a strange light in the sky. Surtsey grew and grew. Then it stopped in June 1967. It was 175 metres high and 2 kilometres long. And life was already coming to Surtsey. Seeds came over the sea. Plants grew. Birds came. Some scientists built a house. They want to learn about this young island. A new island is like a new world.

1. The birth of Surtsey was a(n) \_\_\_\_\_ event for scientists.  
A. large            B. important            C. serious            D. famous
2. Surtsey grew out of  
A. the smoke and flames of the volcano.  
B. the red-hot rock that came from the volcano.  
C. the middle of the earth near the sea.  
D. an island near Reykjavik in Iceland.
3. The scientists who flew to Reykjavik were very excited because  
A. the volcano began on 14th November 1963 and there were a lot of flames.  
B. they did not stop until June 1967.  
C. they were able to watch the birth of a volcanic island.  
D. they were staying until the volcano grew into an island.
4. The volcanic island grew quickly and was 175 metres high about \_\_\_\_\_ years after.  
A. one            B. five            C. four            D. seven

## Passage 15

Dear Sir,

I read your story (of the 4th February) about the cost of living in the country rather than the town, and I agree with most of the points that you made. My husband and I lived in the middle of