

STEPS TO ENGLISH READING

英 语 阅 读 进 阶

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Passage 1

Three men once went hunting bears. They spent the night in a cabin. Each was boasting how good a hunter he was.

Early in the next morning one of them slipped quietly out of the cabin. Soon he met a huge, hungry-looking bear. For a moment he just stood there. Then he dropped his gun. He ran to the cabin with the bear after him. He opened the door. The bear lunged at him. The hunter dodged and the bear fell through the open door.

Thinking fast, the hunter shut the door from the outside, shouting, "There's the first one, boys. You skin him. I'll go and get another."

1. All three men thought they were
 - A. sound sleepers.
 - B. fast runners.
 - ☒ C. good hunters.
2. The man who slipped out early probably
 - ☒ A. hoped to shoot the first bear.
 - B. felt too hungry to sleep.
 - ☒ C. wanted to return home.
3. What did the bear do second?
 - A. It fell through the cabin door.
 - ☒ B. It lunged at the hunter.
 - ☒ C. It chased the hunter.
4. At the end of the story the cabin held
 - A. three boys.
 - B. a hunter and a bear.
 - ☒ C. two men and a bear.

Passage 2

Frostbite is the freezing of a part of the body. Often the nose, ears, cheeks, fingers, or toes freeze first. Tired or old people are more likely to be frostbitten.

Just before frostbite sets in, the skin may be pink. Then it changes to white or yellow. Often there is no pain, just numbness.

A person with frostbite must get indoors quickly. The frozen part of the body should be put in warm water. Or the part can be wrapped in a blanket. Fingers or toes that are frostbitten

should be wiggled once they are warm. If blisters form, they should not be rubbed.

1. A sign of frostbite is a
A. yellow skin. B. white skin. ☒ C. either A or B.
2. People with frostbite often have no feeling of
☒ A. pain. B. tiredness. C. numbness.
3. The last paragraph tells us
A. what frostbite does.
B. where frostbite starts.
☒ C. how to treat frostbite.
4. Parts blistered by frostbite should not be
A. wrapped in blankets.
☒ B. rubbed.
C. placed in warm water.

Passage 3

The term best man came from Scotland. It was first used in the 1700s. But the custom of having a best man at a wedding goes back much further. It is thought to have started in the days of marriage by capture. A man might seize the bride of his choice and carry her off by force. He would take a faithful friend with him to help fight off the attacks of the girl's family.

Then, as now, bridesmaids were female friends of the bride. They used to help, or pretend to help, to keep the bride from being carried off by the groom and his best man.

1. The custom of having a best man began
A. before the term was used.
☒ B. in the days of marriage by capture.
C. after the 1700s.
☒ D. both A and B.
2. What did the groom probably do last?
A. He asked a friend to go with him.
B. He chose a bride.
☒ C. He escaped with his bride.
D. He went with his friend to the bride's home.
3. The story suggests that the bride's family tried to
A. prepare a good wedding feast.
☒ B. keep the groom from capturing the bride.
C. help the groom and best man escape.

- D. steal the best man's money.
4. Sometimes the bridesmaids didn't try very hard to
- ☒ A. protect the bride. B. be on time.
- C. march in step. D. ~~make the marriage.~~

Passage 4

Once two boys made up their minds ^{to} play a trick on Charles Darwin, the famous scientist. With great care they glued together parts of several insects. They used the wings of a butterfly, the head of a bee and the legs of a grasshopper. At last the strange creature was ready. They took it to the great man. "What kind of bug is this?" They asked him.

"Did it ^{hum} when you caught it?" Darwin asked them.

"Yes," said the boys, feeling sure they had fooled him.

"That's just as I thought," Darwin said. "It's a humbug."

1. What did the boys do last?
☒ A. They made a strange creature.
☒ B. They went to see Darwin. ✓
☒ C. They thought of a trick.
2. The creature had
☒ A. butterfly wings. ✓
B. a grasshopper's head.
C. both A and B.
3. Darwin's question made the boys think
☒ A. they had fooled him. ✓
B. the insect was real.
C. he was angry with them.
4. The last paragraph shows that Darwin
☒ A. was too clever for the boys' trick. ✓
B. had seen the insect before.
C. liked the sound the insect made.

Passage 5

Ben Jonson is one of the few men ever to be buried standing up.

As the story goes, King Charles I once made him a promise. The king told the great writer

that he would be buried in England's famous Westminster Abbey. But that wasn't all. Jonson could choose any place he liked for his grave.

Jonson died in 1637. Then it was found that the spot he had picked was already filled. The ground space left in it was just eighteen inches in square. But Charles kept his word. He had Jonson's coffin placed on its end in the small space. In that way it would just fit in.

1. What probably happened first?
 - A. Jonson picked a place in the Abbey.
 - B. Jonson died.
 - ☒ C. Jonson had Charles's promise.
 - D. Jonson told the king of his choice.
2. Charles found out that the place was filled after
 - ☒ A. Jonson's death.
 - B. Jonson's burial.
 - C. the reading of Jonson's will.
 - D. 1638.
3. The story shows that Charles tried to
 - A. rule Britain well.
 - ☒ B. keep his promises.
 - C. learn about art.
 - D. write poems and stories.
4. The writer doesn't tell us
 - A. who Jonson was.
 - ☒ B. where the story happened.
 - C. when Jonson died.
 - ☒ D. how Jonson's grave was marked.

Passage 6

People in India, Africa, and Malaysia like the mongoose. It is small—about sixteen inches long—and fierce. But it is easily tamed and makes a good pet.

The mongoose is useful, too. It kills poisonous snakes. At first, the mongoose stays out of the reach of the snake. This angers the snake. The snake strikes again and again. At last it tires. Then the mongoose jumps swiftly. It kills the snake by biting it on the back of the head. Then it eats the snake. The mongoose also kills rats and other creatures harmful to man.

1. A mongoose makes a good pet because it is
 - A. small and fierce.
 - ☒ B. easily tamed.
 - C. found in India.
2. The mongoose is useful because it
 - A. eats snakes.
 - ☒ B. kills rats.
 - C. both A and B.

3. What happens last?
- A. The snake strikes.
 - B. The snake gets angry.
 - C. ☒ The mongoose bites the snake.
4. People like the mongoose because it
- A. eats insects.
 - B. ☒ kills harmful creatures.
 - C. both A and B.

Passage 7

One town of eleven hundred people took part in an experiment run by a watch company. The firm wanted to learn how much people needed clocks and watches. For two days and nights no one used a timepiece. The people "parked" their watches. All public clocks were covered with plastic or cardboard. No church bells chimed. And the fire whistle that usually blew at noon was silent.

A blast on the fire whistle marked the end of the experiment. The experts talked to 167 townsfolk. The people said they had become fretful and nervous when they didn't know the real (clock) time. Many weren't sure whether they were hungry or not.

1. Church bells were not allowed to ring because
- A. ☒ they could chime the hours.
 - B. they might awaken people.
 - C. ☒ the project had to be silent.
 - D. the people were nervous.
2. The signal that ended the experiment was
- A. a church bell ringing.
 - B. ☒ a whistle blast.
 - C. the town clock chiming.
 - D. the removal of the covers.
3. After the experiment the experts questioned
- A. everyone taking part.
 - B. ☒ a certain number of people.
 - C. those who had to work.
 - D. workers on an eight-hour shift.
4. Living without clocks had made the people
- A. ☒ fretful and nervous.
 - B. hungry and thirsty.
 - C. eager to buy watches.
 - D. early for work.

Passage 8

The young Chinese girl mixed her bread dough and left it in the sun to rise. Then off she went for a walk with her boy friend, an Italian sailor. When they returned they saw that the dough had risen too much. It hung over the edge of the dish in strings, hardened by the sun. Fearing his loved one would be punished, the sailor gathered up the signs of her neglect.

Back at his ship he gave the pieces of dough to the cook, who added them to the soup. Everyone thought the result was delicious—even the captain, Marco Polo. And when Polo and his men left China in A. D. 1292 to return to Italy, they took with them news of the wonderful new food—macaroni. At least that's how the story goes.

1. The second thing the girl did was
 - ☒ A. go walking with a sailor.
 - ☒ B. leave her dough in the sun. ✓
 - C. find her dough had hardened.
 - D. mix her dough.
2. The dough would probably have made good bread if the girl had
 - A. mixed it more carefully.
 - B. let it rise longer.
 - C. put it in a smaller dish.
 - ☒ D. returned sooner. ✓
3. The sailor gathered up the dough in an effort to
 - ☒ A. protect the girl. ✓
 - B. help the cook.
 - C. please the captain.
 - D. invent a new food.
4. The first to eat the new food were
 - ☒ A. the girl and the sailor. ✓
 - B. the girl's family.
 - C. Marco Polo and his men. ✓
 - D. the Chinese sailors.

Passage 9

Small children often laugh at a lame or blind person, or at someone who isn't dressed as well as they are. But as they grow up, they learn not to hurt people's feelings by laughing at their problems. They learn to laugh at other things. Most important, they learn to laugh at themselves.

Suppose you're playing a game. You make a silly mistake and lose. Do you become angry?

Or can you laugh at yourself and hope to do better next time? Suppose you're at a special dinner. You accidentally spill some food. Why keep worrying about how clumsy you look? Why not laugh it off and enjoy yourself anyway? If you can, it's a good sign you've really grown up.

1. This article is mostly about
 - A. why laughter is good for your body.
 - ☒ B. what you should laugh at.
 - C. when babies learn to laugh.
 - D. where you may laugh.
2. The writer says small children laugh at people who
 - ☒ A. have problems.
 - B. spill food.
 - C. dress well.
 - D. play games.
3. The writer shows how laughter could help you not to
 - ☒ A. make a mistake.
 - B. lose a game.
 - ☒ C. become angry.
 - D. try again.
4. If you find a new skill hard to learn, you should probably
 - ☒ A. laugh at your own slowness.
 - B. keep trying till you learn it.
 - C. give up and never try it again.
 - D. both A and B.

Passage 10

Doughnuts were once just fried, round cakes. The first doughnuts with holes were probably made in the United States.

People in Rockport, Maine, give the credit to a sea captain from their area. The captain was eating a fried cake at sea one stormy night. When he needed both hands to steer, he rammed the cake over a spoke of the ship's helm. He liked the result. He asked the cook to start making cakes with holes already in them.

In Plymouth, Massachusetts, people tell a different story. One day a local pioneer woman was frying cakes. As she dropped one into the hot fat, a stray arrow shot by a hunter pierced its center. This, they say, was the first holed doughnut.

1. This article was written to tell
 - A. who made the first doughnuts.
 - B. how to make good doughnuts.
 - C. why doughnuts are round.
 - ☒ D. how doughnuts came to have holes.

2. The captain needed both hands because
 - A. the cake was so big.
 - ☒ B. there was a storm.
 - C. the ship was sinking.
 - D. he was frying cakes.
3. What happened last?
 - ☒ A. The arrow pierced the cake.
 - B. The hunter shot the arrow.
 - C. The woman made the dough.
 - D. The woman heated the fat.
4. In both the Rockport and Plymouth stories, holed doughnuts were
 - A. eaten by sailors.
 - ☒ B. made by accident.
 - C. pierced with spokes.
 - D. boiled in water.

Passage 11

Few people are surprised when governments care for animals in zoos. But the presence of other animals on a government's payroll may cause wonder.

Some animals can be said to work for their keep. Cats on the staff of Britain's Post Office Department and France's National Printing Office earn their pay. They kill the rats and mice that gnaw at and destroy paper.

Ravens and pigeons seem unlikely workers. Old tales explain why they are cared for. Legend said that six raven must be kept at the Tower of London; if not, the British Empire would fall. The Empire has changed, but the ravens remain. The Barbary apes at Gibraltar are also linked with an old tale; if the apes leave the Rock, the British will go.

1. This story gives reasons for a government's caring for animals in
 - A. zoos.
 - B. national parks.
 - C. game preserves.
 - ☒ D. none of the above.
2. Cats work where
 - ☒ A. paper might be destroyed.
 - B. crops might be eaten.
 - C. children might be bitten.
 - D. paintings might be destroyed.
3. An old tale about the Tower of London tells why
 - A. six cats are cared for.
 - ☒ B. six ravens are cared for.
 - C. eight ravens are cared for.
 - D. ravens attack pigeons.
4. The author mentions another tale about the apes
 - A. in the Tower of London.
 - ☒ B. throughout the British Empire.
 - C. at the Rock of Gibraltar.
 - D. in Britain.

Passage 12

The people of Saskatoon wanted the 1971 Canada Winter Games to be held in their city. But they had a problem. Saskatoon has never been considered a good place to ski. For skiing, you need slopes. And Saskatoon sits in the middle of a prairie.

How do you think the people solved their problem? They built a mountain—from the ground up! When finished, it stood 300 feet high. A T-bar was set up to take skiers to the top. From there they could ski down the quarter-mile main run or the 50-metre ski jump.

And so athletes from all over Canada went to Saskatoon to take part in the games. They swam. They played badminton and other indoor games. They boxed and wrestled. And they skied!

1. The people built a mountain mainly because they
 - A. thought it would make the area more beautiful.
 - B. wanted to go mountain-climbing.
 - C. hoped to teach their children to ski.
 - D. needed slopes for the Winter Games.
2. The writer probably thinks the idea of building a mountain was
 - A. silly.
 - B. unimaginable.
 - C. puzzling.
 - D. dull.
3. Skiers could use the mountain for
 - A. downhill skiing.
 - B. ski jump.
 - C. cross-country skiing.
 - D. both A or B.
4. Besides skiing, sports events at the Winter Games included
 - A. boxing and wrestling.
 - B. swimming and polo.
 - C. boating and fishing.
 - D. baseball and soccer.

Passage 13

Coral reefs are formed by millions of tiny animals called corals. Corals secrete limestone, which hardens into cuplike shapes that stick together. As the animals die, younger corals attach themselves to the old cups. In this way the reef is built up.

Sometimes corals form odd shapes. Organpipe coral looks like the pipes of an organ. Staghorn coral looks like antlers. And brain coral looks like the human brain.

Precious corals are found in parts of the Mediterranean Sea and in the Sea of Japan. They are valuable as well as beautiful, and their bright red cores are used for jewelry.

The most famous coral reef in the world is Australia's Great Barrier Reef. It is about twenty to thirty miles from shore and more than twelve hundred miles long.

1. What happens first?
 - A. The corals die.
 - B. The corals secrete limestone. ✓
 - C. The reef builds up.
 - D. Younger corals attach themselves.
2. Fan coral probably
 - A. waves in the water.
 - B. is used to make fans.
 - C. looks like a fan. ✓
 - D. all of the above.
3. Precious corals are valuable probably because they
 - A. have bright red cores. ✓
 - B. are found in the Mediterranean.
 - C. have unusual shapes.
 - D. look like the human brain.
4. The reef is probably famous because of its
 - A. shape.
 - B. length.
 - C. location.
 - D. both B and C. ✓

Passage 14

The lotus is a kind of water lily. It grows in many lands. At night it closes. It sinks down in the water. At dawn it rises to face the new day.

From early times the lotus has held deep meaning. The Egyptians of long ago noticed its pattern of sinking and rising again. They saw it as a sign of life after death. The Maya Indians of America had a type of lotus too. To them it was the sign for Earth.

To those of the Buddhist faith, the lotus stands for Buddha. They say a lotus sprang up to tell of his birth. The lotus has meaning for Hindus too—since the god Brahma was born in a lotus bloom.

1. This article mainly tells what the lotus
 - A. stands for. ✓
 - B. smells like.
 - C. gives to the soil.
 - D. is used for.
2. The lotus made the Egyptians think of someone's
 - A. going for a swim.
 - B. living again after death. ✓
 - C. gaining new knowledge.
 - D. walking in his sleep.
3. Both the Egyptians and the Maya Indians
 - A. thought of lotus as having a supernatural significance. ✓
 - B. lived in the same country.
 - C. took the lotus as a sign for Earth.
 - D. all of the above.

4. The Buddhist beliefs about the meaning of the lotus
- A. began long ago.
 - B. are still held today.
 - C. are now forgotten.
 - D. both A and B. ✓

Passage 15

At the southern (tip) of Japan, cherry trees burst into bloom at the end of March. Later they begin to bloom in other parts of the country—first on the southern and then on the northern islands.

Most cherry trees in Japan are of the Somei-Yoshino type, known for its brief blooming period. The pink blossoms last ten days at the most. They cover the whole tree with their beauty. But even a soft breeze will shake them from the branches. At times, cherry trees are lashed by storms. Then the blooms fall quickly to the ground to form a wet carpet of petals.

The people of Japan, who have a great feeling for beauty, love the cherry blossoms. It is with a sense of sadness that they watch them fall.

1. The first paragraph suggests that
 - A. Japan's cherry trees grow nearly all over the country.
 - B. Japan's cherry trees bloom every year.
 - C. Cherry trees bloom all at once throughout the country.
 - D. both A and B. ✓
2. Northern Japanese cherry trees bloom
 - A. during February.
 - B. during March.
 - C. at the end of March.
 - D. after the end of March. ✓
3. The main idea of the second paragraph is that Japanese cherry blossoms
 - A. are the favorite flower of Japan.
 - B. have a short span of life. ✓
 - C. cover the whole cherry tree.
 - D. may be destroyed by rain.
4. When the blossoms fall, the Japanese feel sorry because they
 - A. hate to see such beauty end. ✓
 - B. know there will be no cherries.
 - C. feel this is a sign of bad luck.
 - D. know winter is near.

Passage 16

A hermit ~~can~~ that has found an empty shell for its new home may share its dwelling. It

chooses a sea anemone to settle on top of the shell. This flowerlike animal's usual home is on rock.

The sea anemone gains by the partnership. As it rides on the shell, it has a better chance of getting food. Pieces of food torn by the crab as it dines may also reach the anemone's mouth.

The crab profits in its turn. Its enemies find the crab harder to see and to attack. Around the anemone's mouth are tiny arms called tentacles. These shoot out threads that poison and even kill.

A hermit crab sometimes becomes a "twogun" wanderer. It carries an anemone on each claw of its first pair of legs.

1. The crab's partner lives
 - A. inside the shell.
 - B. on top of the shell.
 - C. on a nearby rock.
 - D. none of the above.
2. The crab gains because it is
 - A. better hidden from its enemies.
 - B. protected by the anemone's tentacles.
 - C. both A and B. ✓
 - D. neither A nor B.
3. A "two-gun" crab is protected by
 - A. two anemones settled on its shell.
 - B. an anemone on each foreclaw.
 - C. an anemone on each of its hindmost pair of legs.
 - D. two guns.
4. In the crab-anemone relationship, the two animals
 - A. both profit while living together. ✓
 - B. work together only now and then.
 - C. try to harm each other.
 - D. each use tentacles against enemies.

Passage 17

The tune for "London Bridge is falling down" has some new words. American children have sung "London Bridge is going up". Stone by stone—10,246 in all—the bridge across the Thames was taken down. At Lake Havasu City in Arizona it was rebuilt. Water from the Colorado River flows under its arches.

The old words were never true of the bridge that has crossed the ocean. They described the bridge that it replaced in 1831. Old London Bridge, opened in 1209, often needed repairs. Ice caused much damage. Fire razed buildings on the bridge. But it was used for more than six hun-

dred years. Then, like the bridge that replaced it, it became unable to handle the growing traffic of London.

1. The bridge was taken apart
 - A. arch by arch.
 - B. stone by stone.
 - C. yard by yard.
 - D. none of the above.
2. The similar bridge may now be seen in
 - A. Alabama.
 - B. Arkansas.
 - C. Arizona.
 - D. Colorado.
3. The article suggests that one danger to the bridge was
 - A. the weight of the buildings on it.
 - B. tugs hitting the stonework.
 - C. trains crossing it.
 - D. ice.
4. The two bridges were alike in
 - A. falling down.
 - B. becoming unable to handle growing traffic.
 - C. being in use for more than 400 years.
 - D. being sold to an American buyer.

Passage 18

A photograph taken in the Arctic shows a polar bear that is sitting on snow with a paw shading its eyes. But the polar bear, like most mammals, has another protection against the glare of sun shining on snow. Each eye has a third eyelid. These eyelids act as built-in sunglasses.

A mammal's third eyelid is a thin, movable film or membrane. It can spread to cover most of the eyeball. Like the upper and lower eyelids, the membrane can protect the eye from dirt and other harmful materials as well as from too much light.

Man's third eyelid has largely disappeared. Its only traces are in the inner corner of the eye. There, a tiny fold of wet skin and a small, pinkish blob are all that remain of this membrane.

1. The first sentence is meant to show that polar bears
 - A. do not like being photographed.
 - B. protect their eyes against bright sunlight.
 - C. are not found in the Antarctic.
 - D. have a third eyelid in each eye.
2. The third eyelids act as sunglasses when they
 - A. keep water out of a mammal's eyes.
 - B. make objects look smaller.

- C. make objects look larger.
 - D. shade the eyes against glare.
3. On a day without sunshine, the membrane would
- A. spread to cover most of the eyeball.
 - B. cover very little of the eyeball.
 - C. keep changing in its spread.
 - D. become thicker.
4. The only traces of man's third eyelid are found
- A. below the upper eyelid.
 - B. below the lower eyelid.
 - C. in the inner corner of the eye.
 - D. in the outer corner of the eye.

Passage 19

Warm water freezes more quickly than cold. Sir Francis Bacon said that almost four hundred years ago. But few people believed him—till 1970. In that year Canadian scientist George Kell proved the English scholar was right. Dr. Kell filled an open pail with cold water. He filled another with warm water. He exposed both to the same low temperature. The warm water froze first.

The lack of covers on the pails was the secret. Some of the warm water changed to vapor. It evaporated into the air. This meant that less of the warm water was left to freeze. And so the warm water froze faster than the cold water—even though it had a greater temperature drop to make.

1. Sir Francis Bacon was
- A. an American experimenter.
 - B. a Canadian scientist.
 - C. an English scholar.
 - D. an Australian writer.
2. Most people didn't believe Bacon because warm water is
- A. somewhat heavier than cold water.
 - B. able to flow faster than cold water.
 - C. further from freezing temperature than cold water.
 - D. quicker to evaporate than cold water.
3. The cold water froze more slowly because
- A. salt was added to it.
 - B. its pail was smaller.

- C. there was more of it left.
 - D. the air near it was moving.
4. When the water was frozen, one of the pails must have had
- A. less ice in it than the other.
 - B. more salt in it than the other.
 - C. icicles hanging from the rim.
 - D. waves on the surface of the ice.

Passage 20

Along the coast of Kelantan in Malaysia, men and monkeys have been working partners for countless years. The monkeys help their owners by gathering nuts from coconut palms.

The coconut monkey is the species called the pig-tailed macaque, berok in Malay. Most working monkeys have been captured in the jungle when a few months old. They must be trained for their task. They learn how to twist a coconut free, first while on the ground and then up in a tree. Next they learn the difference between ripe and unripe nuts, again first on the ground and then in a tree. In lessons that follow they climb higher trees. Their last lesson is on jumping from one tree to another.

No man can work as fast as a trained berok, and few men work so eagerly.

- 1. Most working monkeys spent the first months of their lives
 - A. in the jungle.
 - B. in a zoo.
 - C. on a coconut plantation.
 - D. in their masters' houses.
- 2. Their training begins with lessons on
 - A. climbing coconut palms.
 - B. carrying coconuts.
 - C. tossing coconuts down.
 - D. twisting coconuts free.
- 3. Monkeys are taught the difference between
 - A. kinds of palm trees.
 - B. ripe and unripe coconuts.
 - C. heavy and light coconuts.
 - D. all of the above.
- 4. The article does not say that beroks
 - A. have helped men for a long time.
 - B. do their work eagerly.
 - C. are very fast workers.
 - D. may obey words of command.