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高等学校教材

COLLEGE ENGLISH

大学英语

快速阅读

FAST READING

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大学英语

快速阅读

第五册

谌馨荪(主编)

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前　言

《大学英语》是根据国家教育委员会审定批准的《大学英语教学大纲(文理科本科用)》编写的一套系列教材，分精读、泛读、听力、快速阅读、语法与练习五种教程。

本教材重视英语语言基础，从各方面保证文、理科的通用性，适用于大学英语基础阶段的教学。

本教材的精读、泛读、快速阅读和听力教程各按分级教学的要求编写六册，每级一册；语法与练习编写四册，供1—4级使用。精读与听力教程均配有教师用书和录音磁带。对低于大纲规定入学要求的学生，另编预备级精读、泛读教程各两册。

上述五种教程根据各自的课型特点自成体系，但又相互配合，形成整体，以贯彻大纲所提出的三个层次的要求："培养学生具有较强的阅读能力、一定的听的能力、初步的写和说的能力。"全套教材由复旦大学、北京大学、华东师范大学、中国人民大学、武汉大学和南京大学合作编写，复旦大学董亚芬教授审订。

大学外语教材编审委员会综合大学英语编审组的全体成员对这套教材的设计与编写自始至终给予关注，分工审阅了全套教材并提出宝贵意见。上海外语教育出版社的编辑同志在付梓前仔细编审，精心设计，给予我们很大帮助和促进。

《大学英语》快速阅读教程由中国人民大学外语系负责编写。谌馨荪教授担任主编，许孟雄教授担任主审，参加本册编写的有余申燕、李守京副教授。

在编写过程中，本教程还承英籍专家 Anthony Ward 审阅，谨此致谢。

本书为快速阅读教程第五册，供大学英语五级学生使用。

由于时间仓促，编者水平与经验有限，教材中不妥之处在所难免，希望广大读者批评指正。

编　者

1991年2月

使 用 说 明

本教程旨在培养学生的正确阅读习惯，提高学生的阅读能力和速度。为保证语言文字的规范化，课文全部选自英、美原著，但有少量删改。选材力求多样化，知识性和趣味性兼顾。

全书共分六册，每册十单元二十课。每篇选文均配有多项选择练习，以测试学生对课文的理解能力。快速阅读主要着眼于培养阅读速度，强调在单位时间内快速获取所需信息，因此每篇材料均略浅于相应的精、泛读课文。篇幅跨度为250—600词左右，生词控制在2%—3%之间。快速阅读的全部教学活动都要求在课内进行。每单元进行一次，每次使用一至两篇，阅读后即做练习，所需时间（包括练习）约十分钟。每次练习后，学生应及时记录阅读和练习所分别占用的时间，供日后进行自我评估。

使用本教程时，应注意下列各点：

1. 为便于教学，本教程印成活页，由教师保管，使用时临时分发。学生不得预习。

2. 阅读时不能查阅词典，如有生词，可根据上下文进行猜测以确定词义。

3. 培养边阅读、边理解、边记忆的良好习惯。读完课文即做练习，做练习时，不再翻阅已读过的课文。

4. 阅读后，由教师收回快速阅读材料和练习，予以批改并记录成绩。

编 者

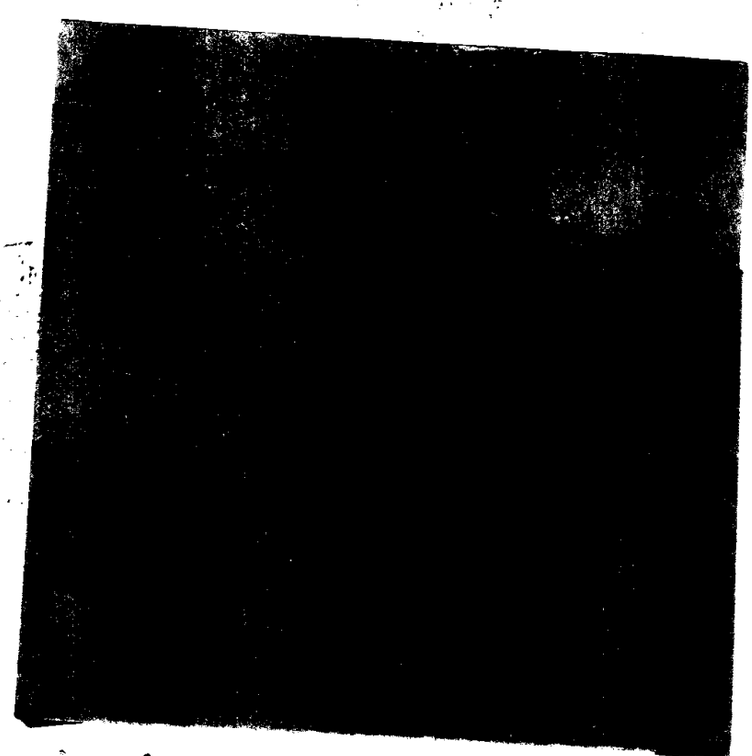
1991年2月

College English

Fast Reading

Book Five

By
Chen Xinsun
with the assistance of
Yu Shenyan
Li Shoujing



Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press

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1. The Standard of Living

The "standard of living" of any country means the average person's share of the goods and services which the country produces. A country's standard of living, therefore, depends first and foremost on its capacity to produce wealth. "Wealth" in this sense is not money, for we do not live on money but on things that money can buy: "goods" such as food and clothing, and "services" such as transport and entertainment.

A country's capacity to produce wealth depends upon many factors, most of which have an effect on one another. Wealth depends to a great extent upon a country's natural resources, such as coal, gold, and other minerals, water supply and so on. Some regions of the world are well supplied with coal and minerals, and have a fertile soil and a favourable climate; other regions possess none of them. The U.S.A. is one of the wealthiest regions of the world because she has vast natural resources within her borders, her soil is fertile, and her climate is varied. The Sahara Desert, on the other hand, is one of the least wealthy.

Next to natural resources comes the ability to turn them to use. Sound and stable political conditions, and freedom from foreign invasion, enable a country to develop its natural resources peacefully and steadily, and to produce more wealth than another country equally well served by nature but less well ordered. Another important factor is the technical efficiency of a country's people. Old countries that have, through many centuries, trained up numerous skilled craftsmen and technicians are better placed to produce wealth than countries whose workers are largely unskilled. Wealth also produces wealth. As a country becomes wealthier, its people have a large margin for saving, and can put their savings into factories and machines which will help workers to turn out more goods in their working day.

A country's standard of living does not only depend upon the wealth that is produced and consumed within its own borders, but also upon what is indirectly produced through international trade. For example, Britain's wealth in foodstuffs and other agricultural products would be much less if she had to depend only on those grown at home. Trade makes it possible for her surplus manufactured goods to be traded abroad for the agricultural products that would otherwise be lacking. A country's wealth is, therefore, much influenced by its manufacturing capacity, provided that other countries can be found ready to accept its manufactures.

To calculate the average standard of living of any country, one divides its "national income" by the number of people in it. Strictly, the term "national income" means the total of goods and services produced for consumption in that country in a year; but such a total cannot be divided unless it is expressed in money.

465 words

1. The Standard of Living

Comprehension Exercise

1. A country's wealth depends upon _____.
   a. its standard of living
   b. its money
   c. its ability to provide goods and services
   d. its ability to provide transport and entertainment

2. The word "foremost" means _____.
   a. firstly
   b. largely
   c. for the most part
   d. most importantly

3. The main idea of the second paragraph is that _____.
   a. the U.S.A. is one of the wealthiest countries in the world
   b. the Sahara Desert is a very poor region
   c. a country's wealth depends on many factors
   d. natural resources are an important factor in the wealth or poverty of a country

4. The third paragraph is mainly about _____.
   a. some other factors that help produce wealth
   b. how wealth produces wealth
   c. peaceful development of a country's natural resources
   d. the importance of the technical efficiency of a country's people

5. The word "margin" in "... a large margin for ..." means _____.
   a. the space at the side of the page
   b. the edge
   c. the amount earned but not needed for living
   d. any money deposited in a savings account

6. Which of the following about Britain's wealth is true according to the passage?
   a. Britain's wealth is entirely produced and consumed within its borders.

b. Britain is more dependent upon trade than any other country in the world.
c. Britain manufactures more than it needs for home consumption.
d. Britain's wealth lies only in what it can manufacture.

2. Descending the Rapids

We had now reached the most dangerous part of the river, for there were here three rapids at no great distance apart which had to be passed. The waters were then low and the rocks numerous, threatening no little danger to the boats. When the water is high, navigation is less difficult, for the difference of level in the rapids becomes much less, and the danger of being driven on to the rocks is also greatly diminished. The increasing roar caused by the falling water warned us of the close proximity of the rapid, though we had heard it a long way back. At the first big fall we unloaded our boat, carrying everything on the men's shoulders along the shore beyond the dangerous part; but we all returned to the boat to make our dash through the foaming waters. For me it was quite a new sensation; and indeed, I felt it was quite possible I might never have the opportunity of narrating it. I had full faith in my Kayans, however, and especially in the expert who wielded the steering paddle at the stern. Drawn up to his fullest height, he looked eagerly for the best passage. This was no easy task, for not only had the steersman to avoid the rocks which were above water, but those just covered by it, which were still more dangerous, capsizing the canoe in an instant. At first the current seemed nothing out of the common, but, as we approached, it increased in force until there seemed almost something uncanny in its overwhelming strength. About fifty or sixty yards(45 or 54m) from the rapid our steersman had already made up his mind as to the line to be followed. His great object was to keep the boat with plenty of way on in the current; for woe betide us if we but swerved an instant—we should have been at once capsized and done for! As we approached the bigger part of the fall the paddlers redoubled their efforts, and our long, light, narrow boat shot like an arrow down the swell, and in an instant was righted in the bubbling waters of the pool beneath, in a cloud of pulverized water which formed a mist-like column around us. I feel that it would be attempting the impossible to endeavour to translate into words the emotions of that moment, which came and went like a flash of lightning!

When we got into the comparatively tranquil waters beyond, our boat was full and would inevitably have sunk but for the rapid and able manner in which the Kayans baled the water out. Some of them jumped overboard to lighten the boat at once.

454 words

2. Descending the Rapids

Comprehension Exercise

1. When is the river particularly dangerous?
   a. When the waters are high.
   b. When the waters are low.
   c. When the roar of the water can be heard.
   d. When the river is in flood.

2. How did the writer and his companions know that they were very close to the rapids?
   a. They saw rocks protruding above the water.
   b. They saw the waters becoming lower.
   c. They saw the falling water.
   d. They heard the increasing roar of the falling water.

3. _____ presented the greatest danger to the steersman.
   a. The swift current
   b. The rocks above the water's surface
   c. The rocks just below the water's surface
   d. The bubbling waters in the pool beneath

4. The writer felt that it would be too difficult to accurately express in words _____.
   a. his fear at hearing the rush of the rapids
   b. the uncanny power of the rushing water
   c. his surprise at having safely travelled through the rapids
   d. his emotions as he passed through the rapids

5. The writer relied on the steersman to get them safely down the rapids because _____.
   a. he was a Kayan
   b. he was tall and could see well
   c. he had steered past the rapids before
   d. he was extremely skilful at his job

6. The steersman was standing in order to _____.
   a. balance the weight in the boat

b. watch for rocks below the water's surface
c. determine the best passage through the rapids
d. prevent the canoe from capsizing

7. What would have happened to the men in the boat if it had swerved from the path it was travelling?
   a. They would have been thrown out of the boat and drowned.
   b. They would have jumped to safety.
   c. They would have been stranded at the fall without a boat.
   d. They would have been plunged into calmer waters below the fall.

8. Several of the Kayans jumped out of the boat in order to _____.
   a. recover the packages left on the shore
   b. reduce the weight in the boat
   c. swim in the bubbling waters
   d. get a lost paddle back

9. When the boat got into calmer waters, it _____.
   a. was as good as it was before
   b. had sprung a leak and water was rushing in
   c. was full of water
   d. was badly damaged

3. Weather

Through human history, weather has altered the march of events and caused some mighty cataclysms. Since Columbus did not know where he was going or where he had arrived when he got there, the winds truly deserve nearly as much credit as he for the discovery of America. Ugly westerlies helped turn the 1588 Spanish Armada away from England in a limping panic. Napoleon was done in twice by weather: once by the snow and cold that forced his fearful retreat from Moscow, later by the rain that bedevilled him at Waterloo and caused Victor Hugo to write: "A few drops of water ... and unseasonable cloud crossing the sky, sufficed for the overthrow of a world." In 1944 the Allied invasion of Normandy was made possible by a narrow interval of reasonably good weather between the bad. It was so narrow, in fact, that Supreme Allied Commander Dwight Eisenhower later expressed gratitude to "the gods of war".

Every year brings fresh reminders of the weather's power over human life and events in the form of horrifying tornadoes, hurricanes and floods. These leave behind forgettable statistics and unforgettable images of devastated towns and battered humanity that can only humble people in the face of such wrath. Farmers often suffer the most, from the drought and plagues of biblical times to the hailstorms or quick freezes that even today can wipe out whole crops in minutes. Icy assaults serve as reminders of the inescapable vulnerability of life and social well-being to the whims of the weather. And history is packed with reminders of far worse. The weather, for example, provoked a major social dislocation in the United States in the 1930's when it turned much of the South-west into the Dust Bowl.

No wonder, then, that man's great dream has been some day to control the weather. The first step toward control, of course, is knowledge, and scientists have been hard at work for years trying to keep track of the weather. The United States and other nations have created an international apparatus that maintains some 100,000 stations to check the weather round the clock in every sector of the globe and, with satellites, in a good deal of the more than 16 billion cubic kilometres of the atmosphere. With computers on tap and electronic eyes in the sky, modern man has thus come far in dealing with the weather, alternately his nemesis and benefactor. Yet man's predicament today is not too far removed from that of his remote ancestors. For all the advances of scientific forecasting, in spite of the thousands of daily bulletins and advisories that get flashed about, the weather is still ultimately capricious and unpredictable. Man's dream of controlling it is still just that—a dream.

466 words