



CET 百篇训练丛书

大学英语六级考试

快速阅读

Fast Reading

100

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上海外语教育出版社

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主编 朱新福  
副主编 沈婉芳 苏芳

BANKS/op



外教社

上海外语教育出版社

图书在版编目(CIP)数据

大学英语六级考试快速阅读100篇 / 朱新福主编. —上海: 上海  
外语教育出版社, 2001

ISBN 7-81080-106-6

I. 大… II. 朱… III. 英语—高等学校—语言读物 IV. H319.4

中国版本图书馆CIP数据核字(2001)第09672号

出版发行: 上海外语教育出版社

(上海外国语大学内) 邮编: 200083

电 话: 021-65425300 (总机), 65422031 (发行部)

电子邮箱: bookinfo@sflep.com.cn

网 址: <http://www.sflep.com.cn> <http://www.sflep.com>

责任编辑: 孙梅琳

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印 刷: 上海长阳印刷厂

经 销: 新华书店上海发行所

开 本: 787×1092 1/16 印张 20 字数 479 千字

版 次: 2001年9月第1版 2001年9月第1次印刷

印 数: 5 000 册

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书 号: ISBN 7-81080-106-6 / G · 051

定 价: 21.50 元

本版图书如有印装质量问题, 可向本社调换

## 前 言

本书根据《大学英语教学大纲》编写,目的在于帮助已通过大学英语四级考试的学生进一步提高阅读水平,以更好服务于更高层次的阅读与专业发展。

本书有 100 篇阅读文章,篇幅跨度为 350—1100 词左右,每篇文章后附有 7—10 个阅读理解题。文章编排尽量依篇幅长短和难易程度而分先后。

本书选材广泛,内容新颖,强调语言的真实性,集趣味性、知识性、实用性于一体。文章内容既有科普常识、风土人情、日常生活、文化教育、经济及法律,又有选自英美报刊、杂志的新闻报道。为避免与以往所使用的同等程度材料内容重复,本书大部分内容采取自选、自编、自行设计问题的方式。

本书旨在培养学生下述能力:掌握所读材料主旨大意;了解说明主旨大意的细节;既理解字面的意思,也能根据所读材料进行判断和推理;既理解个别句子的意思,也理解上下文的逻辑思路,并能就文章的内容进行判断、推理和信息转换。

使用本书时,应注意以下两点:

1. 阅读时尽量不查词典,如遇生词,可根据上下文内容进行猜测以确定词义。
2. 培养边阅读、边理解、边记忆的良好习惯。读完文章即做练习,做练习时尽量凭记忆,少翻已读过的文章。

由于编者水平有限,时间仓促,谬误疏漏之处在所难免,望广大读者及同行专家不吝赐教。

编 者

2000. 10

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## Passage 1

As a scientist at the Jean Mayer USDA Human Nutrition Research Center on Aging at Tufts University, I often talk with women of all ages about their weight problems. Some have been heavy all their lives; others are trying to lose the post-pregnancy excess; still others are struggling with the inevitable midlife shift in body composition.

They're all surprised to learn that they really can reshape their bodies. Strength training — the use of hand weights, resistance equipment or your own body weight to build and sculpt muscle — is the key, whether you're 18 or 80.

I first studied the effects of strength training at Tufts over ten years ago. Then in 1991 I recruited 40 sedentary, postmenopausal women at risk for muscle and bone loss. Before starting this study, I warned the volunteers they'd have to avoid changes that could confuse our findings: for the next year they were to do just the strength-training program; they could not diet or begin aerobic exercise.

The women were conscientious about not dieting or doing aerobics. But they changed anyway — they couldn't help it.

Verna Larson, like others, became shapelier. "My weight was never out of control, but there was fat in the wrong places," she says. "My inner thighs trimmed up, my upper arms got firmer, and I lost my tummy."

Perhaps the most dramatic results were experienced by another volunteer. After just a few months of strength training, Dorothy Barron, who had been wearing a size 16, noticed that her clothing was becoming loose. "I bought size 14s," she says. "Soon I needed 12s and sometimes 10s. My legs and hips became trimmer, and my arms got much firmer."

When we took stock after a year, the women had gained muscle and bone density, they were more energetic and physically active — and their bodies felt 15 to 20 years younger.

A volunteer group of younger women tested the program, and they had similar results. "In the past when I went on a diet, I would try to motivate myself by thinking about reaching my ideal size," reported Ruth Norman Curington, 49. "But the task seemed overwhelming. Eventually I'd say, 'Forget it — I'll never get there.' But with strength training, I'm getting immediate gratification, and that keeps me going. And people are starting to comment on how much better I look."

Another volunteer, Susan Miele, 34, says, "I'd been pear-shaped — my tops were size 8, but my bottoms were size 12 or 14. Now I can wear size-ten bottoms. "

These women were not unusual: many participants in the Tufts Studies dropped one to three sizes because their muscles were more toned. It quickly became clear



that, in addition to its many less visible health benefits — increased vitality and strength, improved mood and sleep, better balance and flexibility — strength training is the most effective way to reshape your body.

1. According to the author, strength training is fit for \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. old people
  - b. young people
  - c. people of all ages
  - d. post-pregnancy women
2. Why were the volunteers warned not to diet or begin aerobic exercises?
  - a. Because the author wanted to get accurate results.
  - b. Because the volunteers wanted to reshape their bodies.
  - c. Because the volunteers were too conscientious about dieting and doing aerobics.
  - d. Because the author preferred strength training to diet and aerobic exercise.
3. Which of the following is NOT true according to the passage?
  - a. Some women put on weight after giving birth to their children.
  - b. The purpose of strength training is to build muscle.
  - c. The volunteers were reluctant to give up dieting.
  - d. The 40 women the author recruited exercised much.
4. Which of the following is closest in meaning to “trimmed up” in the fifth paragraph?
  - a. “Became skinny”.
  - b. “Became thinner”.
  - c. “Became shapelier”.
  - d. “Became weighty”.
5. What is the result of strength training?
  - a. People are having better figures.
  - b. People are becoming less active.
  - c. People are losing much weight.
  - d. People are keeping their former shape.
6. Why did the participants in strength training drop sizes?
  - a. Because they had strengthened their muscle.
  - b. Because they ate less and exercised more.
  - c. Because they looked younger.
  - d. Because they lost weight.
7. Most women taking part in strength training \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. eat less than before

- b. sleep better than before
  - c. are as healthy as before
  - d. dropped the same weight
8. What can we conclude from this passage?
- a. The women in the Tufts studies look shapelier because of weight loss.
  - b. Instead of doing harm, strength training does people much good.
  - c. Strength training is no better than dieting.
  - d. Strength training is harmful.

## Passage 2

Near-suicide, abortion, passion and heartache: Monica Lewinsky's book on her sex affair with US President Bill Clinton went on sale last week in Britain and America, spiced with sad and intimate details.

Written with former British tabloid journalist Andrew Morton — also responsible for the biography of Princess Diana — “Monica's Story” is expected to net the 25-year-old former White House intern an estimated US \$1.5 million.

This will be on top of the 400,000 pounds (US \$640,000) she earned from an interview with Britain's Channel 4, broadcast on March 4, a day after her appearance on the US channel ABC, for which she is not being paid.

In the book, she tells how she wooed the president, and also of her heartache, notably when she had an abortion after a brief affair with another man while she was still involved with Clinton.

But it was when Special Prosecutor Kenneth Starr began to use the secret liaison as a tool in his investigation into Clinton that the nightmare began for Lewinsky.

Cross-examined by FBI agents for 10 hours about her relationship with the president in January 1998, Lewinsky seriously contemplated suicide as she was threatened with 27 years in jail if she refused to co-operate. Looking across at the sliding windows in 10th floor hotel room, she thought of throwing herself out, Lewinsky says. “I thought there is no way out other than killing myself. If I killed myself there would be no information and I wouldn't have to deal with the hurt and trouble I had caused the president,” she said.

The book describes how their eyes first met when Clinton was greeting a line-up at a White House function. Lewinsky says he “gave me the full Bill Clinton ... It was this look, the smile disappeared and the rest of the crowd disappeared and we shared an intense but brief sexual exchange. He undressed me with his eyes.”

The book is filled with photographs of Monica, from her childhood and through her adolescence to the time of the affair, providing glimpses of her and Clinton never seen before.

Special Prosecutor Starr, the man who doggedly pursued the president, still haunts her nightmares.

Lewinsky was granted immunity after she admitted lying on oath about her relationship with Clinton. And Starr later obtained the impeachment trial of Clinton in the US Senate on charges of perjury and obstruction of justice based on his investigation of the affair.

1. Which of the following does the author not tell us about “Monica's Story”?
  - a. It is a true story.

- b. It is going to be interesting.
  - c. It is going to be published soon.
  - d. It is available in England and the US.
2. What can you infer from the second paragraph?
- a. Monica will be rich because of her book.
  - b. "Monica's Story" will be popular among the readers.
  - c. "Monica's Story" was written by a British journalist.
  - d. The author of "Monica's Story" worked for a famous newspaper.
3. What might happen to Lewinsky if she didn't tell the FBI agents what they wanted to know?
- a. She might be put in prison.
  - b. She might commit suicide.
  - c. She might start a different life.
  - d. She might be examined by the FBI agents.
4. What can you infer from the passage?
- a. Lewinsky got paid each time she appeared on TV.
  - b. Clinton was the only man Lewinsky had an affair with.
  - c. Lewinsky was attracted by Clinton at first sight.
  - d. Lewinsky and Clinton have grown up together.
5. Why is Princess Diana mentioned in the passage?
- a. To show Lewinsky is as popular as Diana.
  - b. To introduce the author of "Monica's Story".
  - c. To show Lewinsky is as famous as Diana.
  - d. To tell us that Lewinsky was as unfortunate as Diana.
6. Why are there photographs of Monica at different periods in "Monica's Story"?
- a. To prove that she has always been an attractive girl.
  - b. To make the book more vivid.
  - c. To show Lewinsky didn't know Clinton before.
  - d. To give more details.
7. What does "contemplated" in the sixth paragraph most probably mean?
- a. "Tried".
  - b. "Contended".
  - c. "Committed".
  - d. "Considered".
8. The purpose of this passage is \_\_\_\_\_.
- a. to make known to the public the relationship between Clinton and Lewinsky
  - b. to explain to the public the relationship between Clinton and Lewinsky
  - c. to give a brief introduction to "Monica's Story"
  - d. to satisfy the curiosity of the public

## Passage 3

At the opening session of Bangladesh's new parliament last July, legislators reacted with fury to a gesture by Shipping Minister A. S. M. Abdur Rob. "This is a dishonor not only to parliament but to the nation," said Dr. A. Q. M. Badruddoza Chowdhury, the Bangladesh Nationalist Party's deputy leader.

What had Rob done to provoke such wrath? He gave the old thumbs-up sign. In the United States the gesture means "good going!" But in Bangladesh it's a taunt, and in other Islamic countries it's the equivalent of an upraised middle finger.

That's just one of a huge array of cross-cultural gaffes an innocent abroad could make.

**The A-Okay.** Joining the thumb and index finger in a circle is an insult in many Latin American countries. When Richard Nixon was U. S. Vice President, he is reported to have greeted a crowd south of the border with a double "A-Okay." Imagine the reaction!

Once, the concierge in a French hotel asked me, "Is your room satisfactory?" I gave the okay sign. With an irritated shrug he said, "If you don't like it, we'll find you another room." A Frenchman reads the gesture as meaning "zero" or "worthless."

**"V" for victory.** In the United States it means "victory" or "peace." But in England if the palm faces inward it's a taunt, especially if executed with an upward jerk of the fingers.

As the story goes, over 650 years ago, the French disabled the English archers they captured in battle by cutting off their middle and forefingers. After the battles of Agincourt and Crecy, where the French were heavily defeated, the triumphant English gloated over their prisoners by holding up their hands, first two fingers upright, palm inward, to show both fingers fully intact.

**Finger Beckoning.** Americans sometimes hail a waiter with index finger slightly raised and thumb loosely extended. In Japan it's rude to beckon a waiter if you then motion with the index finger. In Germany the waiter might well respond by bringing you two more drinks.

In Malaysia, curling the index finger is considered very rude. Scratching the air would be preferable for calling over a waiter.

**Tapping Forehead With Forefinger.** It means "smart" in the United States, while in Holland, tapping the center of the forehead means "he's crazy." But in Argentina the American sign for "he's crazy" (circling a forefinger next to the ear) could be confused with their signal for "you have a telephone call."

**Hands in pockets.** Think you can save yourself a load of trouble by shoving your

hands in your pockets? Think again: keeping one's hands in one's pockets while conversing is impolite in Indonesia, France and Japan.

1. What can you infer from the passage?
  - a. Abdur Rob committed a crime.
  - b. Abdur Rob might be an American.
  - c. Abdur Rob laughed at the legislators.
  - d. Abdur Rob said something unpleasant.
2. Who will be very angry to see an OK sign?
  - a. The Latin Americans.
  - b. The Bangladeshi.
  - c. The Americans.
  - d. The French.
3. All of the following are true EXCEPT that \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. Richard Nixon once visited a Latin American country.
  - b. the A-Okay gesture may cause anger among the French.
  - c. Richard Nixon tried to be friendly in the country he visited.
  - d. Latin Americans and Americans interpret the A-Okay gesture the same way.
4. Which of the following is closest in meaning to "taunt" in the second paragraph?
  - a. "Sign".
  - b. "Insult".
  - c. "Praise".
  - d. "Criticism".
5. Which of the following statements is TRUE according to the passage?
  - a. The English don't like the "V" sign.
  - b. A war was fought between England and France 150 years ago.
  - c. The "V" gesture is a taunt in France.
  - d. The French cut off the fingers of some of the British prisoners.
6. What does the word "intact" in the fifth paragraph mean?
  - a. "Complete".
  - b. "Be cut off".
  - c. "Disabled".
  - d. "Missing".
7. What may the American sign for "he is crazy" mean in Argentina?
  - a. He's crazy.
  - b. He's confused.
  - c. You are smart.
  - d. You have a phone call.

8. What might be the best title for this passage?
- a. Different interpretations of different gestures
  - b. Different ways to use different gestures
  - c. Different gestures on different occasions
  - d. Different sign languages

## Passage 4

Nathaniel Hawthorne's writings are noteworthy for their perceptive exploration of the hidden motivations behind the puritan American heritage. Like many authors of his time, he faced great difficulties making a living as his writings were not financially lucrative. In part, his financial status within the community significantly contributed towards the underlying message in his works. The powerful influence of the religious community on economic affairs of the day ordained that most respected and highly compensated callings were those that demonstrated strict physical discipline. As fiction writing did not fit within those guidelines, the young author found himself torn between the contrary needs of his family and those of his artistic aspirations. The resulting tensions are played out in the themes of his stories.

In the sense that his writings described the subtle motivations behind human behavior as guilt and anxiety resulting from the sins perpetrated against humanity, he adhered to the same mores as his Puritan predecessors. He differed from them in that he saw the potential consequences of all decisions resulting in either the chance possibility of regeneration or some form of humiliating punishment. This element of ambiguity in his works ran directly counter to the thoughts of his fundamentalist contemporaries who believed that all actions, and their consequences, were predetermined.

As he chose an allegorical style, his short stories were often situated in fantastic settings with unlikely characters. It was not unusual for Satan to appear in his narratives disguised in human form but possessing some defining characteristic such as cloven hooves and a tail. What marks these tales as unique to the author's position is their suggestion that there may be contradictory meanings behind the actions of figures which initially appear to be cast in transparent roles.

His classic novel, *The Scarlet Letter* (1850), concerned a case of adultery in Puritan community. The heroine, Hester Prynne, stands accused of the crime, but refuses to reveal the identity of her partner. The moral ambivalence inherent in the plot of the work is representative of the themes found throughout Hawthorne's writing.

1. What is the main topic of the passage?
  - a. The writings of Nathaniel Hawthorne
  - b. The motivations of Nathaniel Hawthorne
  - c. The life of Nathaniel Hawthorne
  - d. The relationship between Hawthorne and Puritanism



2. It can be inferred that the most powerful force in the social life of Hawthorne's time was \_\_\_\_\_.  
a. money  
b. literature  
c. religion  
d. tension
3. According to the passage, in what way were Hawthorne's beliefs similar to the Puritans?  
a. They attributed guilt to regeneration.  
b. They saw all actions as predetermined.  
c. They saw motivations arising from guilt.  
d. They allowed for moral ambiguities.
4. In Paragraph 2, the word "adhered" is closest in meaning to \_\_\_\_\_.  
a. "subscribed"  
b. "admonished"  
c. "attached"  
d. "contributed"
5. In Paragraph 2, the word "counter" is closest in meaning to \_\_\_\_\_.  
a. "overhead"  
b. "parallel"  
c. "clockwise"  
d. "contrary"
6. All of the following are mentioned as images from Hawthorne's stories EXCEPT \_\_\_\_\_.  
a. Satan  
b. unlikely characters  
c. fantastic settings  
d. Hester Prynne
7. *The Scarlet Letter* may concern all of the following themes EXCEPT \_\_\_\_\_.  
a. infidelity  
b. ambiguity  
c. honesty  
d. destiny
8. According to the passage, the themes found in *The Scarlet Letter* are \_\_\_\_\_.  
a. unique to the novel  
b. common among Hawthorne's contemporaries  
c. found in many of Hawthorne's works  
d. the key to solving its mystery