

# 大学英语阅读精选

COLLEGE ENGLISH READING

(四)

主 编 江 澜

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# 前 言

本书为大学英语系列教材中的泛读教材,主要使用对象为大学英语专业一、二年级的学生,参加自学考试、培训的学生以及欲在短期内提高阅读及应试能力、具有中等以上水平的广大英语学习者。

阅读在英语学习和提高中具有极其重要的作用,要想提高自己的英语整体水平,采用正确、有效的阅读方法是至关重要的。为使阅读的实践与理论得以充分结合,并使理论能够正确指导实践,本书对主要的阅读技巧都做了简要阐述,并附有范文。

本书旨在通过系统、科学的阅读,以较快地提高学生的英语水平,为此在每个单元之前都有指导性文章,对于学生养成良好阅读习惯,提高阅读速度都有帮助。为了加强对课文的理解,我们在每篇课文之后都安排了形式不同的练习,书后附参考答案。

本书文章、段落全部选自近年来国内外出版的书籍、报刊及杂志,编者对各位作者的辛勤劳动表示衷心地感谢。本书内容丰富新颖,题材多样,包括名人传记、风土人情、史地常识、短篇故事、语言文化、社会知识等,以期在提高学生阅读能力的同时增强学习兴趣,扩大知识面。

本书在编写过程中得到西安外国语学院副院长兼英语系主任余宝珠教授及加拿大籍英语专家 Alex Proudfoot 教授的大力支持与关怀,在此全体编写人员对他们的辛勤劳动表示

衷心地感谢。

由于编者的水平有限,加之时间紧迫,本书难免存在不足之处,敬请各位使用者及同仁提出批评建议,编者不胜感激。

**编者**

**一九九八年五月**

**于西安外国语学院**

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# CHAPTER 1

## SKILLS EXERCISE

**Skimming.** Skimming is a type of partial reading that can be used as a survey. Its purpose is to find only the main idea and major details. Skim the following article. Run your eyes over the article to get a general idea of what it is about. Don't read all of the words.

1. After you have skimmed the article, write the main idea in your own words.

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2. Without looking back at the article, write three questions that you think will be answered by reading it.

- a. \_\_\_\_\_
- b. \_\_\_\_\_
- c. \_\_\_\_\_

**Scanning.** Scanning is a type of partial reading that can be used to find answers to specific questions. Each of the sentences below contains a blank. Read the sentences first and then scan the article to find the missing words. Write the words in the blanks.

1. The passage recommends setting aside for reading practice \_\_\_\_\_ a day.
2. It is a good idea always to carry in your pocket \_\_\_\_\_.
3. The passage recommends pacing yourself every \_\_\_\_\_ days with \_\_\_\_\_ book.
4. When you are reading a novel, the passage advises you to pause to check the content every \_\_\_\_\_.
5. The use of a dictionary is \_\_\_\_\_ for speed reading practice.
6. If you really want to know what all the words mean \_\_\_\_\_.
7. The topic sentence of an expository paragraph in English is most often at the \_\_\_\_\_.
8. The \_\_\_\_\_ of a piece of writing often summarizes the essence of the passage.

## **Hints for Reading Practice**

### ***Gerald Mosback & Vivienne Mosback***

#### **Set aside time each day**

Most of us can find 15 minutes or half an hour each day for some specific regular activity. It may be a free period or a regular wait, say in the queue for a bus or meal—even while eating breakfast. One famous surgeon always made it a rule to



spend at least 15 minutes on general reading before he went to sleep each night. Whether he went to bed at 10 p.m. or 2.30 a.m. made no difference. Even if you cannot keep to this kind of discipline, it is a good idea to make sure you always have a general interest book in your pocket. Don't forget it should be a book which entertains you and the English must not be too difficult for you.

### **Check your progress through pacing**

Nearly all 'speed reading' courses have a 'pacing' element——some timing device which lets the student know how many words a minute he is reading. You can do this simply by looking at your watch every 5 or 10 minutes and noting down the page number you have reached. Check the average number of words per page for the particular book you are reading. How do you know when 5 minutes have passed on your watch if you are busy reading the book? Well, this is difficult at first. A friend can help by timing you over a set period, or you can read within hearing distance of a public clock which strikes the quarter hours. Pace yourself every three or four days, always with the same kind of easy, general interest book. You should soon notice your habitual w.p.m. rate creeping up.

### **Check comprehension**

Obviously there is little point in increasing your w.p.m. rate if you do not understand what you are reading. When you are consciously trying to increase your reading speed, stop after

every chapter (if you are reading a novel) or every section or group of ten or twelve pages (if it is a textbook) and ask yourself a few questions about what you have been reading. If you find you have lost the thread of the story, or you cannot remember. Try this from time to time. Take four or five pages of the general interest book you happen to be reading at the time. Read them as fast as you possibly can. Do not bother about whether you understand or not. Now go back and read them at what you feel to be your 'normal' w. p. m. rate, the rate at which you can comfortably understand. After a 'lightning speed' read through (probably around 600 w. p. m.) you will usually find that your 'normal' speed has increased—perhaps by as much as 50 – 100 w. p. m. This is the technique athletes use when they habitually run further in training than they will have to on the day of the big race.

### **Dictionaries slow you down!**

If you have chosen the right, fairly easy, sort of book for your general reading practice, you will not need to use a dictionary for such an exercise. If you really must know the dictionary meaning of all the words you meet (a doubtful necessity), jot them down on a piece of paper to look up later. Actually, the meanings of many words will be clear from the sentences around them—what we call the 'context'. Here is an example. Do you know the word 'sou'wester'? It has two meanings in English as the following sentences indicate;

a) In spite of the fact that the fishermen were wearing sou'

westers, the storm was so heavy that they were wet through.  
b) An east or northeast wind brings cold, dry weather to England, but a sou' wester usually brings rain.

You should have guessed very easily that in sentence a) the word sou' wester refers to some kind of waterproof clothing, presumably quite thick and heavy since it is worn by fishermen in storms. In sentence b) it is clearly a kind of wind, coming from a south-westerly direction. Incidentally, you would have had the greatest difficulty in finding this word in most dictionaries since it often appears a long way down among the secondary meanings of south. If you did not know that sou' meant 'south' in the first place' you could only have found the word by the merest chance.

### **Pay attention to paragraph structure**

Most paragraphs have a 'topic sentence' which expresses the central idea. The remaining sentences expand or support that idea. It has been estimated that between 60 and 90% of all expository paragraphs in English have the topic sentence first. Always pay special attention to the first sentence of a paragraph; it is most likely to give you the main idea.

Sometimes, though, the first sentence in the paragraph does not have the feel of a 'main idea' sentence. It does not seem to give us enough new information to justify a paragraph. The next most likely place to look for the topic sentence is the last sentence of the paragraph. Take this paragraph for example:

'Some students prefer a strict teacher who tells them exactly what to do. Others prefer to be left to work on their own. Still others like a democratic discussion type of class. No one teaching method can be devised to satisfy all students at the same time.'

Remember that the opening and closing paragraphs of a passage or chapter are particularly important. The opening paragraph suggests the general direction and content of the piece, while the closing paragraph often summarizes the very essence of what has been said.

## **SKILLS EXERCISE**

### **EXERCISE 1. SPEED READING**

Find a suitable book for yourself, check your progress through pacing and check your comprehension by asking yourself a few questions after each section or chapter.

### **EXERCISE 2. CONTEXT CLUES: PURPOSE**

Read each sentence quickly and then write a word that completes the sentence. There may be more than one correct answers.

- 1) I went to the store to buy some \_\_\_\_\_ to wash my clothes.
- 2) Mike and Sue sent me a \_\_\_\_\_ to wish me a happy birthday.
- 3) Mr. Miller bought an \_\_\_\_\_ in order to wake up on

time.

- 4) You'll have to call the \_\_\_\_\_ to order to see when the bus arrives from Miami.
- 5) He went to the \_\_\_\_\_ for some books.
- 6) I bought a \_\_\_\_\_ by that musical group to listen to at home.
- 7) Read the \_\_\_\_\_ in order to understand the exercises in the homework.
- 8) He needed a \_\_\_\_\_ to dry off after he got out of the shower.

### EXERCISE 3.

#### CONTEXT CLUES: MULTIPLE CHOICE

In each of these sentences, you will find an italicized word or group of words. Read the three choices and then decide which choice means about the same as the italicized word or words. Circle the letter of the answer.

- 1) We need a large, empty *case* to put all these old shoes in.  
A. envelope      B. box      C. notebook
- 2) The meat on my plate was *raw*, so I asked the chef to cook it a little longer.  
A. loud      B. delicious      C. uncooked
- 3) That *chubby* boy who is in my math class needs to lose some weight.  
A. new      B. quiet      C. fat
- 4) Mary does not do well on tests because she studies too

*hastily*. She should spend more time preparing for each test.

A. hard                      B. quickly              C. well

- 5) I like the color of this shirt, but I do not like the way the *fabric* feels.

A. material              B. price              C. color

- 6) John *dreads* his final history test tomorrow. He knows that it will be extremely difficult.

A. knows he will pass    B. reads              C. is afraid of

- 7) When John tells one of his *hilarious* jokes, no one can stop laughing.

A. unhappy              B. very long              C. funny

- 8) Everyone agreed that the woman in the photo was *gorgeous*. It was easy to see why she had won the beauty contest.

A. angry                      B. beautiful              C. careful

#### EXERCISE 4. WORD PARTS: PREFIXES

In the following exercise, the prefixes of the words in the left column are underlined. The meanings of the underlined prefixes are in the middle column. Find another word with the same prefix and put it in the blank in the last column. Use your dictionary if you need help.

Word	Prefix	Another Word
1. <u>ab</u> normal	away, from, down	_____
2. <u>count</u> erclockwise	opposite in direction	_____
3. <u>extra</u> curricular	outside, beyond	_____

- |                             |                                      |       |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------|
| 4. <u>forecast</u>          | before in time, place                | _____ |
| 5. <u>postgraduate</u>      | after, later than                    | _____ |
| 6. <u>pro</u> -British      | acting for, favouring                | _____ |
| 7. <u>semifinal</u>         | half, partly                         | _____ |
| 8. <u>supermarket</u>       | above, greater or<br>more than usual | _____ |
| 9. <u>ultra</u> fashionable | beyond what is usual,<br>excessively | _____ |
| 10. <u>vice</u> -chairman   | next in rank to                      | _____ |

### EXERCISE 5. WORD PARTS: PREFIXES

Read the following list of prefixes and their meanings first, and then complete each of the sentences by writing a word in the blank using the appropriate prefix.

Prefix	Meaning
bi-	two
under-	less than normal; not enough
trans-	across; on or to the other side of
multi-	many
ex-	former; not any more
auto-	same; by oneself or by itself
out-	be superior; do more than
mis-	indicates an error or mistake; badly
inter-	between, among
uni-	one; the same

- 1) My friend John is trilingual, which means he speaks three languages. I am \_\_\_\_\_ because I speak my native language and English.
- 2) Many countries in the world are not fully developed. These \_\_\_\_\_ nations must work very hard to grow.
- 3) He is going to take a trip across the entire continent on foot. His \_\_\_\_\_ trip will attract a lot of attention.
- 4) Mr. Marks is a millionaire. He has over seven million dollars. He is a \_\_\_\_\_.
- 5) She was a director of that company from 1960 to 1966. She goes to all the meetings of the company because she is an \_\_\_\_\_.
- 6) Another name for a car is \_\_\_\_\_. We call it that because it is not necessary to push or pull it. It is mobile by itself.
- 7) Mark is a good tennis player, and so was his opponent yesterday. Mark \_\_\_\_\_ his opponent and won the match.
- 8) The government did not inform the public correctly. Some of the people think that the government \_\_\_\_\_ the public intentionally.
- 9) The United Nations is an \_\_\_\_\_ organization. There are many nations in that organization.
- 10) We must be united. National \_\_\_\_\_ is essential in time of war.



# TEST 1

## Reading Comprehension

### Passage 1

The electromagnet was invented in England by William Sturgeon, who took an iron rod and bent it into the shape of a horseshoe. This “horseshoe” was coated with varnish and a layer of copper wire was wrapped around it. An electric current was passed through the wire, thus making the rod magnetic. The rod was now, because of magnetic attraction, able to support nine pounds of iron.

In the US, a scientist named Joseph Henry improved on Sturgeon’s electromagnet by insulating the copper wire with silk. He was able to wrap many turns of wire around an iron core without danger of short circuits between the turns. His magnet could hold 2,300 pounds.

This experiment prompted Henry to try his hand at converting magnetism into electricity. First he coiled some insulated wire around an iron bar, connecting both ends of the wire to a galvanometer. The iron bar was placed across the poles of the electromagnet. Then the coil of the electromagnet was connected to a battery. The galvanometer indicated a voltage, then dropped to zero. Henry signaled his assistant to disconnect the coil. The galvanometer showed that once again a