

大学英语四、六级标准考试参考用书

# 大学英语阅读理解

(第三册)

王 镁 主编

COLLEGE  
ENGLISH  
READING  
COMPREHENSION

北京理工大学出版社

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### 内 容 简 介

本书是《大学英语阅读理解》第三册，共精选课文40篇，每篇课文之后，编写了注释、常用习语、理解练习和词汇练习。书末附有练习答案。书中所选文章均来自英、美原文书刊。题材广泛，语言规范，富有知识性、科学性和趣味性。读者通过本书的阅读训练，不仅可以提高英语阅读能力，还可以广泛增加国外的文化教育和一般的科学技术知识。本书是各高校本科生较实用的阅读教材，也适合于研究生及其他英语爱好者阅读。

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## 前 言

国家教委颁布的理工科本科和文理科本科两种《大学英语教学大纲》中，对学生在大学学习各个阶段（一至六级）的阅读能力提出了定性和定量的要求。学生们欲达到《大纲》中规定的对阅读能力的具体要求，则必须具备快速阅读能力和正确理解能力。阅读理解（Reading Comprehension）不仅是培养学生通过阅读获取信息能力的一种方法，而且也是对学生的英语词汇、语法、文化背景知识和分析问题能力的一种综合测试手段。

我们编写这套《大学英语阅读理解》（College English Reading Comprehension），其目的就是培养学生提高阅读速度，增强阅读理解能力，并可广泛了解国外的社会、文化知识和风土人情。

本书所选的文章均来自英、美原文书刊，题材广泛，语言规范，具有知识性、科学性和趣味性。

这套阅读材料既可作为理工科和文理科本科生的阅读教材，也适合于研究生以及准备参加国家英语水平考试和美国托福考试的各类人员阅读。

全书共六册，大体上适应于《大纲》中一至六级的教学要求而分册的。本书为第三册，共选短文四十篇。编写体例和内容安排基本上与前两册相同，惟注释部分和常用习语均同时用英、汉两种文字注解，理解练习由八个增至十个，词汇练习由六个增至八个，课文的长度和难度也相应增加，以适应循序渐进的要求。

在编写本书过程中，我们得到了我校外语系许多老师的热情支持与帮助，在此向他们表示衷心的感谢。

由于我们水平有限，书中难免会出现一些缺点和错误，我们恳切希望读者提出宝贵的意见。

编 者

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## Passage 1

### LEARNING SKILLS FOR READING

What is reading? How do you read? There are many parts to the answers to these questions. We know that there are words on a page and that we use these words to understand ideas. However, there is more to reading than just words.<sup>1</sup>

5 Reading is a process, a series of actions that are related to each other. The first thing that all of us do (as readers) is to predict. We guess what the subject will be. We read the title, look at pictures, and perhaps read the first sentence or two. We use these predictions to anticipate the information of the  
10 reading. For example, if you need information about map reading, you go to the library to find books. Which of these books would you choose? Which is the best?

*A Traveler's Guide to Asia*

*How to Understand Maps*

15 *The Plants of South America*

*The Geography of the World*

*The Best Restaurants of Europe*

*Australia — the Original Land*

20 *What to See in Africa*

Do you think any of the other books would help you with map reading? Most of them are books about other places. You know from the titles of the books. You use your experience to

choose a book. In the same way, your experience helps you in  
25 reading. You guess the meaning of the next sentence. Predicting is a part of the reading process.

The next step in the reading process is "testing."<sup>2</sup> As we read, we check the ideas that we made before reading. We all do this testing very fast — so fast that we do not really think  
30 about it. If the sentences and ideas are what we expected, we continue reading. If the ideas are not what we expected, we change our own ideas. Then we go on to the next sentence. The reading process is a repetition of these steps.

Readers also use many other skills besides anticipating.  
35 Rapid reading, for example, is an important skill. It is especially important for students to learn to read quickly and with understanding. There is another part of the skill of fast reading. It is choosing the right speed. A person might want to read a newspaper fast. He or she is reading only for general information and can slow down anytime. However, the introduction  
40 to a textbook will need more attention and closer, more careful reading. Being able to change the reading speed is, therefore, necessary.

Skimming<sup>3</sup>, scanning<sup>4</sup>, and surveying<sup>5</sup> are all kinds of rapid  
45 reading. They have different purposes. Skimming and scanning are reading very fast while looking for a piece of information. For example, you might read for a particular name or a date in a history lesson. Surveying, also fast reading, is reading to understand the structure of an article, how it is "built." Many  
50 readers survey everything that they plan to read. By surveying, they know the order or sequence of parts. Good readers use this skill as part of anticipating.



The other reading skills are all related to understanding.

One is understanding the main idea of a part of an article or of  
55 the whole reading. Most paragraphs (but not all, unfortunately)  
have a main idea. All the other ideas are part of the most  
important thought. For studying well, students must be able  
to extract (to pull out) the most important ideas of their books  
and remember them.

60 Understanding vocabulary from context and learning other  
ways to figure out the meanings of words form an important  
reading skill, too. It is learning how to find clues and use them  
to understand the new words without having to look each one  
up in a dictionary.

65 Another reading skill is understanding sequences. A  
sequence is an order of events. In other words, it is sometimes  
necessary to know what happened first, what was second, what  
happened next, and what happened last.

The last reading skill is making inferences and drawing  
70 conclusions. This skill is using the information to make other  
statements about the subject. Drawing conclusions means making  
inferences after reading. Readers who understand an article  
also understand the added meanings. For example, if a story  
tells the readers that a person needs a warm heavy coat because  
75 of snow, the reader knows that the weather is cold. Another  
inference is that the season is winter.

Learning reading skills can help you as a student. You  
need to be able to read well. Students who can practice reading  
skills can learn to be better readers and more successful stu-  
80 dents,

## Notes to the Passage

1. **However, there is more to reading than just words:** However, reading is not just a matter of words. 然而, 阅读不仅仅是单词问题。
2. **"testing":** checking 验证
3. **skimming:** reading quickly to get the main ideas of a text 略读
4. **scanning:** reading rapidly to locate specific required information 查阅
5. **surveying:** taking a general view of; examining the general condition of 纵览; 通盘考虑

## Useful Expressions

1. **a series of:** a group of (things related in some way or coming in order) 一系列
2. **be related to:** be connected to 与...相联系, 与...相关
3. **slow down:** become slower or move more slowly 慢下来
4. **pull out:** produce (sth such as an idea) 得出, 产生
5. **figure out:** determine; understand 断定, 理解
6. **make an inference:** reach an opinion (from facts) (从事实中) 作出推断
7. **draw a conclusion:** come to believe after consideration of facts 得出结论

## Comprehension

Select the answer which is most accurate according to the information given in the passage.

1. The main idea of the passage is that \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a) reading skills are more important than words
  - b) readers need to know how to skim and scan to be good students
  - c) the reading process includes a combination of skills that can be learned
  - d) learning to figure out word meanings from context is a very important reading skill
2. How many kinds of reading skills are presented in the passage?
  - a) Four.
  - b) Six.
  - c) Eight.
  - d) Ten.
3. When you borrow a book in the library, you can usually find what you need by \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a) reading the title or the contents
  - b) reading the first sentence of each paragraph
  - c) scanning it for specific pieces of information
  - d) understanding the sequence
4. Paragraph 4 implies that you are able to do the testing very fast only when \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a) the subject is easy to predict
  - b) you can change your reading speed
  - c) the ideas are what you expected
  - d) you read very quickly and with good comprehension
5. According to the passage, a good reader \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a) always reads rapidly
  - b) reads slowly but carefully
  - c) changes the reading speed when necessary
  - d) pays more attention to textbooks
6. Fast reading is often used for \_\_\_\_\_.

- a) obtaining a particular piece of information
- b) reaching a general understanding
- c) understanding the organization of an article or a book
- d) All of the above

7. Which of the following is true?

- a) Contexts help readers to guess the meaning of new words.
- b) It is advisable to look up every unfamiliar vocabulary item in the dictionary.
- c) A main idea can be found in every paragraph of readings.
- d) Inferences can be easily made because they are clearly stated in an article.

8. One can become a good reader by \_\_\_\_\_ .

- a) choosing the right reading speed
- b) practicing all kinds of rapid reading
- c) knowing what the reading process is
- d) learning to use reading skills in reading practice

9. You are able to make inferences only when \_\_\_\_\_ .

- a) the article you are reading is understandable
- b) you understand well what you are reading
- c) you can figure out the main idea of the whole article
- d) you survey everything you plan to read

10) Which of the following is NOT mentioned in the passage?

- a) All the actions in the reading process are related to each other.
- b) Timed reading is the best method of improving reading speed.
- c) Different kinds of fast reading have different purposes.
- d) One's experience or knowledge helps him in reading.

## Vocabulary

Choose the definition which best fits these words and phrases as they are used in the passage.

1. *anticipate* (line 9)
  - a) obtain
  - b) expect
  - c) check
  - d) get before someone else
2. *closer* (line 41)
  - a) nearer
  - b) deeper
  - c) tighter
  - d) thorougher
3. *surveying* (line 44)
  - a) looking at something as a whole quickly
  - b) examining carefully
  - c) considering in details
  - d) measuring the extent of
4. *particular* (line 47)
  - a) unusual
  - b) special
  - c) concerned with details
  - d) relating to one, not others
5. *sequence* (line 51)
  - a) order
  - b) result
  - c) a series of things
  - d) composition
6. *clue* (line 62)
  - a) fact that suggests a possible answer to a question
  - b) something that helps the police find the criminal
  - c) a guide in the discovering of a mystery
  - d) a word, phrase or sentence that helps understand another word
7. *the added meaning* (line 73)
  - a) the other meaning

- b) the complicated meaning
- c) the implied meaning
- d) something said another way

8. *heavy* (line 74)

- |                |                   |
|----------------|-------------------|
| a) heavyweight | b) <b>weighty</b> |
| c) thick       | d) <b>severe</b>  |

## Passage 2

### LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

In learning a second or foreign language one must try not to carry over cultural views from the first language. As Fries points out: "If one wishes to master a foreign language so that he may understand with some completeness the native  
5 speakers of that language, he must find some substitute for the kind of background experience he has in his own language." The acquisition of this communicative competence<sup>1</sup> with its understanding of the cultural viewpoints and attitudes reflected in the appropriate use of language is probably more easily  
10 accomplished if the language is being learned in an environment where it is the principal language. Language learners are then immersed<sup>2</sup> in the culture and have the opportunity for first-hand observation of the situations in which the language is being used. If the language is acquired where direct observa-  
15 tion of the culture of the language is not possible (e.g., English as a foreign language in Europe), teachers will have to provide specific cultural information. This can be done in various ways: through pictures, films, magazines, literature, descriptions of their own experience in English-speaking countries, and the like.  
20 But truly learning the language must go hand in hand with an understanding of the cultural setting in which it is used.

In order to interpret culture to speakers of other languages,

it is essential that teachers be consciously aware of cultural behavior which is sometimes so automatic that it is unnoticed. For  
25 example, English speakers *alphabetize* books on shelves from left to right because this is the way they read, and they may assume that this is the way it is always done. As a matter of fact, a colleague of mine had a foreign graduate assistant who very conscientiously alphabetized all of her books on the shelves  
30 from right to left!

Gumperz (1964) says, "The more we know about a particular society, the more effectively we can communicate in it." Christina Paulston, a Swedish-English biligual, provides an illustration of how communication can sometimes break down  
35 because of cultural misinterpretation of language. Her description of an experience she had in Sweden, after having been away from that culture for many years, illustrates the fact that even though the linguistic forms may be readily understood by those interacting in a conversation, they can be interpreted differently  
40 because of cultural differences. In Sweden, we celebrated Thanksgiving by having my immediate family and friends for a traditional turkey dinner. I was busy in the kitchen and came belatedly into the livingroom<sup>3</sup> where my sister-in-law had just arrived. In impeccable Swedish I asked her politely, "Do you  
45 know everyone?" Any native American would correctly interpret that to mean that I wanted to know if she had been introduced to those guests she had not previously met. She looked at me sourly and said, "I don't know everyone, but if you are asking me if I have greeted everyone, I have." Fussed  
50 as I was and in such an archetypical American situation, I had momentarily forgotten that proper manners demand that Swedes



do not wait to be introduced by a third party, but go around the room, shake hands with everyone and say their name aloud to those they have not previously met. Any child knows that,  
55 and my sister-in-law felt I had reprimanded her for bad manners, her faulty sharing of a systemic set of social interactional rules. Clearly, the meaning of an interaction is easily misinterpreted if the speakers don't share the same set of rules, as in this example of non-effective communication where the same surface structure  
60 carried different social meaning.

A somewhat different example of communicative difficulty due to misinterpretation of what would usually be considered straightforward linguistic forms comes from an Arabic culture. William Slager (personal communication) told me that Egyptian  
65 culture prohibits speakers from saying "no" to any polite request. No matter how impossible it may be to carry it out, it would be considered extremely impolite to refuse; therefore, every request is answered affirmatively, even if the speaker has no intention of complying. One simply has to learn to read other  
70 signs in order to know whether the "yes" is truly affirmative or a polite answer that really means "no."

## Notes to the Passage

1. **Communicative competence:** the ability to express oneself  
表达能力
2. **immersed:** involved profoundly 深深地陷入, 卷入, 在...包围中
3. **livingroom:** also "living room", the main room in a house where people can do things together, (usu.) apart from eating 也