

范建华 主编



大学英语

阅读与理解

范建华 ◉ 主编

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前 言

本书 66 篇文章选自英美书刊出版的各种当代英语著作,内容涉及自然科学和社会科学的许多学科,体裁多样,题材新颖,具有知识性、科学性、时代性和趣味性。

选编这些文章的目的在于培养学生的阅读技巧和阅读能力,使学生在领会文章的总体构成,如事实、观念、论点或经验的同时,也不忘注意暗示、含蓄和词语表达等细节。为此,在文章的后面既配备了测验理解水平的多项选择(comprehension)和是非题(true or false),也有培养语言能力的词汇(vocabulary)和完形题(cloze)。

为了扩大背景知识,拓宽文化视野,减少学生在阅读时的障碍,尤其为广 大自学者提供质疑参考,我们对文章中的一些词语作了注释。

本书适合高等院校的学生、出国进修留学人员和科技人员使用,也适合于英语爱好者使用。

编著者 2004 年 3 月

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My First Day at School

I was shy and half stiff when in the presence of a crowd, and my first day at the new school made me the laughingstock of the classroom. I was sent to the blackboard to write my name and address; I knew my name and address, knew how to write them, knew how to spell them; but standing at the blackboard with the eyes of many boys and girls looking at my back made me freeze inside and I was unable to write a single letter.

"Write your name," the teacher called to me.

I lifted the white chalk to the blackboard, and as I was about to write my mind went blank, empty; I could not remember my name, not even the first letter. Somebody giggled and I stiffened. "Just forget us and write your name and address," the teacher coaxed.

An impulse to write would flash through me, but my hand would refuse to move. The children began to titter and I grew red in the face.

"Don't you know your name?" the teacher asked.

I looked at her and could not answer. The teacher rose and walked to my side, smiling at me to give me confidence. She placed her hand tenderly upon my shoulder.

- "What's your name?" she asked.
- "Richard," I whispered.
- "Richard what?"
- "Richard Wright."
- "Spell it."

I spelled my name in a wild rush of letters, trying desperately to redeem my shyness.

- "Spell it slowly so I can hear it," she directed me.
- I did.
- "Now can you write?"
- "Yes, ma'am."
- "Then write it."

Again I turned to the blackboard and lifted my hand to write, and then I was blank and void within. I tried very hard to collect my senses but I could remember nothing. A sense of the boys and girls behind me made me forget everything. I realized how completely I was failing and I grew weak and leaned my hot forehead against the cold blackboard. The room burst into a loud and prolonged laugh and my whole body froze.

"You may go back to your seat," the teacher said.

I sat and cursed myself. Why did I always appear so dumb when I was called to perform something in a crowd? I knew how to write as well as any pupil in the classroom, and no doubt I could read better than any of them, and I could talk fluently and expressively when I was sure of myself. Then why did strange faces make me freeze? I sat with my ears and neck burning, hearing the pupils whisper about me, hating myself, and hating them.

Comprehension:

Se	lect the answer which is most appropriat	e according to the passage.				
1.	The boy couldn't write his name on the bla	he boy couldn't write his name on the blackboard because				
	A. he was nervous	B. he stiffened				
	C. he was the laughingstock	D. he was standing at the blackboard				
2.	The verb "coax" in Para. 3 means "					
	A. advise B. persuade patiently	C. suggest D. say impatiently				
3.	The teacher asked him the question "What	's your name?" because				
	A. she was angry	B. she wanted to disgrace him				
	C. she intended to calm him	D. she didn't know his name				
4.	The sentence "I spelled my name in a w	ild rush of letters" means "I spelled my name				
	A. in a wild way B. very quickly	C. letter by letter D. desperately				
5.	made him forget everything.					
	A. The laughter from the pupils	B. The blackboard				
	C. The teacher	D. The presence of his classmates				
6.	Which statement is correct?					
	A. He thought highly of himself.	B. He was pessimistic about himself.				
	C. He regarded himself dumb.	D. He looked down upon his classmates.				
V	ocabulary :					
Fi	ll in each blank with the most appropria	te word.				
1.	The girls at the back of the classroom could	n't help when the inexperienced young				
	teacher stammered.					
	A. giggling B. grinning	C. smiling D. sneering				
2.	Linda the famous director into gi	ving her a leading role in one of his plays and she				
	became successful instantly.					
	A. cheated B. coaxed	C. attracted D. tempted				
3.	If any of the runners interfere with the others during the competition, the race is automati-					
	cally declared null and					
	A. empty B. lacking	C. useless D. void				
4.	Various devices have been tried to supply t	he diver with air and thus permit astay				
	under water.					

Passage	1	sia		
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	A. enlarged B. expanded		C. increased	D. prolonged	
5.	The emphasis of	on commerce at the	Olympic Games is seen as	both a blessing and a	
	to the	sports world.			
	A. blame	B. curse	C. hurt	D. trouble	
6.	In order to an earlier mistake, little John worked harder than before.				
	A. repay	B. redeem	C. recover	D. regain	

Notes:

made me freeze inside: made me very cold or fill me with terror

An impulse to write would flash through me: All of a sudden I felt I wanted very much to write.

to collect my senses: to have control of my senses, in other words, to calm down

laughingstock: n. 笑柄

giggle: v. 格格地笑

titter: v. 笑

redeem: v. 挽回,弥补

prolonged: adj. 长时间的

curse: v. 诅咒



Pupils Cherish Opportunities

The children sit, four sharing one desk, shouting in union the Chinese characters written on the <u>cracked</u> blackboard by their teacher.

Their classroom is an old one-story house with bumpy walls. They have six teachers for 61 children in five grades.

This is Longquan Primary School in Dongling Village, Dongxiang Autonomous County in Northwest China's Gansu Province, one of the poorest mountainous areas.

Despite pitiful conditions, the school and hundreds like it are the hope for educating the Dongxiang ethnic minorities in China.

Zhang Qiangxiang is a first grader at Longquan Primary School. Every morning, the nine-year-old boy walks over 10 miles to attend school. "I must get up at six o'clock or I'll be late," Zhang said.

But Zhang is never late for class. Although he has never tasted chocolate or MacDonald's hamburgers, Zhang is grateful for the little he has.

"We only have potatoes. My father sells potatoes to pay for my tuition, 10 yuan a term," he said, holding a <u>dog-eared</u> textbook handed down from an older peer.

Having no exercise books, Zhang grabs a stick and practices writing Chinese characters in soil. He said he liked schooling because he can learn a lot and read at a desk, whereas back at home he must "bear over a box".

At present, his ambition is to complete his five-grade education and not to follow the steps of his mates who drop out of school before grade four. Others hold the same idea as Zhang does.

Education has become widely accepted as a key to Dongxiang's development and to ending the cycle of poverty.

By the end of 1999, 80 percent school-aged children have attended school, with 75 percent belonging to Dongxiang ethnic group. But only 20 percent have completed the nine-year education from primary through middle school.

Ma Zhilan is one of that number. Much better, she has almost finished three years' high school education. This year, the 19-year-old girl attended the three-day national college entrance exam in early July.

To her, it marks a turning point in her life. "If I pass the exam, I will continue my study. But if I fail it, the only way out is getting married," said the bright-eyed Ma, who wore a red

. . .

hand-made sweater.

Like Zhang, Ma cherishes her chance of schooling very much and seizes every minute to study hard. "Getting educated is the most important thing to me," Ma said. "The fact that my mother is illiterate always saddens me and I don't want to follow her footsteps."

She got up at 5 o'clock in the morning and walked 30 minutes to school. School finished at 6 pm and Ma stayed for another two and a half hours. After that, she helped her mother with some household chores. At 9:30pm, she opened her books and studied for two more hours.

The university of her dream is Beijing Normal University, for a simple reason. "My neighbor and best friend entered the university last year, which makes her mother respectable in the neighborhood. I want my mother to be respected too. "Besides, Ma said getting higher education was good for herself. In her word, it's a way to a bright future, a chance to see the world outside.

Ma is lucky. She has Wang Shunping as her teacher, who has devoted his life to teaching.

At 28, Wang looks 10 years older. Four years ago when the graduate from Lanzhou Teachers' Training School first entered the gate of Dongxiang Ethnic Group Middle School, he was disappointed.

He was greeted by the sight of the two rows of old shabby houses, one for classrooms, the other teachers' living rooms. "At first, I wanted to leave the desolate place," Wang recalled. "But looking at these diligent students here, I decided to stay to help them closer to their future."

Wang moved into his 14-square-meter room and settled down.

Every day, work starts at 6 am and ends late at night. Every week, Wang works five and a half days with 16 Chinese lessons and other limitless guidance. "The students are thirsty for knowledge. My colleagues and I feel it our responsibility to meet their needs, to encourage them. And I feel happy in doing so," Wang said.

It has paid off.

Dongxiang Ethnic Group Middle School's entrance exam admission rate rose from 20 percent in 1994 to 82 percent in 1999, topping the whole county.

Now, a new four-story building has replaced the row of old classrooms. But Wang and his colleagues still live in the old house which leaks on rainy days.

"It's OK, there's only one hole in my roof. Our headmaster is in greater trouble, with five holes in his roof," Wang beamed. "What I'm seeking now is not a new house, but a chance for advanced studies, Beijing Normal University at best. So I won't lag behind in teaching and help students climb higher up their ladder of progress."

True or false:

Decide whether each of the following statements is true or false according to the passage.

- 1. The district the author described is very poor.
- 2. The students there are poor but diligent.

- 3. By the end of 1999, 75 percent students belonging to the ethnic group attended school.
- 4. Wang Shunping worked there as a teacher because of the good salary there.
- 5. Wang Shunping decided to work there at the first sight of the school.
- 6. In Paragraph 8, Zhang said at home he must "bear over a box". That implies that he helps his parents with household chores at home.
- 7. Wang has worked in the school for 10 years.
- 8. The saying that "Knowledge is power" is acknowledged as a key to Dongxiang's development.
- 9. The living conditions of the teachers in Dongxiang village are bad, but their headmaster's are much better.

Comprehension:

Select the answer which is most appropriate according to the passage.

- 1. Which is NOT true according to the passage?
 - A. Lot of students in Gansu have entered the university.
 - B. Most of the students are eager to learn more.
 - C. The living conditions of the teachers there are very bad.
 - D. Mr. Wang is only 28 years old.
- 2. What's meaning of the under lined word "chore" in Para. 15 according to the passage?
 - A. Garage.
- B. Work.
- C. Waste.
- D. Garbage.
- 3. What's the meaning of the underlined sentence "It has paid off" in Para. 22?
 - A. The teachers have paid off the debts.
 - B. The students have paid off the debts to their teachers.
 - C. They helped the students to get more knowledge.
 - D. Their hard work has gained some results.
- 4. Which is Not the reason of Ma Zhilan's dream?
 - A. Both her neighbor and her friend entered the school.
 - B. She wanted her mother to be respected.
 - C. Getting higher education was good for herself.
 - D. It's a way to success.

Vocabulary:

Select the choice whose meaning is closest to the word given.

- 1. cracked (Para. 1)
 - A. broken
- B. tick
- C. racked
- D. creak

- 2. dog-eared (Para. 7)
 - A. a dog's ear

B. an ear like a dog

C. torn

D. long

3. cherish (Para. 14)

- A. take care
- C. cheer
- 4. shabby (Para. 19)
 - A. lonesome
 - C. old
- 5. desolate (Para. 19)
 - A. barren
- B. far

- B. adore and keep in mind
- D. value
- B. shadow
- D. untidy and low quality
- C. empty
- D. lonely

Notes:

autonomous; adj. 自治的

ambition: n. 愿望beam: v. 微笑

illiterate: adj. 文盲的



Diamonds

Some of the earliest diamonds known came from India. In the eighteenth century they were found in Brazil, and in 1866, huge deposits were found near Kimberley in South Africa. Though evidence of extensive diamond deposits has recently been found in Siberia, the continent of Africa still produces nearly all the world's supply of these stones.

The most valuable diamonds are large, individual crystals of pure crystalline carbon. Less perfect forms, known as "boart" and "carbonado", are clusters of tiny crystals. Until diamonds are cut and polished, they do not sparkle like those you see on a ring—they just look like small blue-grey stones.

In a rather <u>crude</u> form, the cutting and polishing of precious stones was an art known to the Ancient Egyptians, and in the Middle Ages it became widespread in Northwest Europe. However, a revolutionary change in the methods of cutting and polishing was made in 1476 when Ludwig Van Berquen of Bruges in Belgium invented the use of a swiftly revolving wheel with its edge <u>faced</u> with fine diamond powder. The name "boart" is given to this fine powder as well as the natural crystalline material already mentioned. It is also given to badly <u>flawed</u> or broken diamond crystals, useless as jewels, that are broken into powder for grinding purposes, the so-called "industrial" diamonds.

Diamond itself is the only material hard enough to cut and polish diamonds—though recently, high-intensity light beams called <u>lasers</u> have been developed which can bore holes in them. It may be necessary to split or <u>cleave</u> the large stones before they are cut and polished. Every diamond has a natural line of cleavage, along which it may be split by a sharp blow with a cutting edge.

A fully cut "brilliant" diamond has 58 facets, or faces, regularly arranged. For cutting or faceting, the stones are fixed into copper holders and held against a wheel, edged with a mixture of oil and fine diamond dust, which is revolved at about 2,500 revolutions a minute. Amsterdam and Antwerp, in Holland and Belgium respectively, have been the center of the diamond cutting and polishing industry for over seven centuries.

The jewel value of brilliant diamonds depends greatly on their color, or "water" as it is called. The usual colors of diamonds are white, yellow, brown, green, or blue-white; the blue-white brilliants are the stones of the "finest water" and so <u>command</u> the highest prices. During their formation, some diamonds absorb metallic oxides from the surrounding rocks and take on their color. Thus black, red and even bright pink diamonds have occasionally been

found.

The trade in diamonds is not only in the valuable gemstones but also in the industrial diamonds mentioned above. Zaire produces 70% of such stones. They are fixed into the rock drills used in mining and civil engineering, also for edging band saws for cutting stones. Diamond-faced tools are used for cutting and drilling glass and fine porcelain, and for dentists'drills. They are used as bearings in watches and other finely balanced instruments. Perhaps you own some diamonds without knowing it—in your wristwatch!

Comprehension:

Sel	lect the answer which is most appropriate according to the passage.				
1.	. Since 1866				
	A. most of the world's diamonds have come from Siberia				
	B. all the world's diamonds have come from near Kimberley in South Africa				
	C. Africa has produced nearly all the world's diamonds				
	D. diamonds have been discovered in most parts of the world				
2.	After a diamond has been cut and polished, it				
	A. looks like a small blue pebble				
	B. looks very different from its original form				
	C. can no longer be used to put in a ring				
	D. changes its chemical composition				
3.	The art of cutting and polishing precious stones remained crude until				
	A. the fourteenth century				
	B. the fifteenth century				
	C. the sixteenth century				
	D. the seventeenth century				
4.	Industrial diamonds are				
	A. made of a different substance from real diamonds				
	B. not as sparkling or brilliant as "boart"				
	C. made up of diamond dust and broken crystals				
	D. produced artificially in factories				
5.	During faceting, diamonds are held in copper holders				
	A. to facilitate accurate cutting				
	B. to make them shine more brilliantly				
	C. so that they can revolve more easily				
	D. as a steel holder might damage the diamond				
6.	The value order of "water" in diamonds				
	A. is more important than their color				
	B. ranges from blue-white upwards				
	C. ranges from blue-white downwards				

	D. has never been relial	oly e	established			
7.	Diamonds are					
	A. white, yellow, brown	n, g	reen or blue-whit	e		
	B. all the same color					
	C. either blue or white i	in ce	olor			
	D. different in color dep	end	ing on which rocl	ks th	ey come from	
8.	Zaire produces	_•				
	A. 70% of all diamonds	sol	d			
	B. 70% of industrial dia	amoi	nds sold			
	C. 70% of all precious	ston	es sold			
	D. 70% of the world's l	blue	-white diamonds			
9.	Industrial diamonds are	used	•			
	A. for a wide range of p	urp	oses			
	B. mainly for dentists'	drill	s			
	C. for decoration in ring	gs ar	nd watches			
	D. principally in mass-p	rodi	iced jewellery			
V	ocabulary :					
Cl	noose the definitions wh	ich	best fit these wo	rds	or phrases as the	ey are used in the pas
sa	ge.					
1.	crude (Para. 3)					
	A. ill-mannered			В.	uncultured	
	C. not refined			D.	uneducated	
2.	faced (Para. 3)					
	A. opposed	В.	surfaced	C.	confronted	D. decorated
3.	flawed (Para. 3)					
	A. imperfectly formed			В.	liquid	
	C. badly finished			D.	dropped to the g	round
4.	lasers (Para. 4)					
	A. saws			В.	energy beams	
	C. polishing machines			D.	light planks of w	ood
5.	cleave (Para. 4)					
	A. move	В.	clip together	C.	break	D. cut with sharp knife
6.	faceting (Para. 5)					
	A. surface polishing	В.	mounting	C.	splitting	D. setting in rings
7.	command (Para. 6)					
	A. order	В.	deserve	C.	tell	D. instruct
8.	fine (Para. 7)					
	A. high quality	В.	soft	C.	sunny	C. payment