

大学英语考试过关必备系列丛书

大学英语

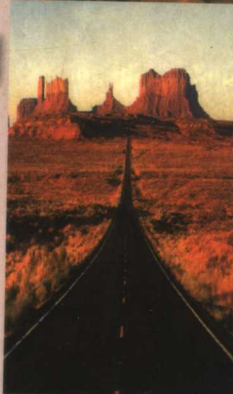
四级阅读理解150篇

BREAK THROUGH CET-4

许道林 主编

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安徽大学出版社



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四级阅读理解 150 篇

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出版说明

《大学英语》四级考试辅导系列丛书终于和广大读者见面了。

这套丛书的出版旨在进一步贯彻落实大学英语新大纲的精神,推动 21 世纪大学英语课程体系的改革,不仅着眼于帮助学生在英语听、说、读、写、译等方面打下扎实的基础,使之比较顺利地达到大学英语四级的基本要求,更着眼于对学生在外语能力的培养方面,再上一个新台阶。

这套丛书覆盖了近年来大学英语四级考试所涉及到的所有题型及四级后英语教学中的所需读本。它们是:《大学英语四级听力指导》、《大学英语四级写作指导》、《大学英语四级翻译指导》、《大学英语四级词汇语法及完形填空》、《大学英语四级口语指导》、《大学英语四级阅读理解 150 篇》、《大学英语四级模拟试题新编》、《基础科技英语阅读》、《大学英语最新多用词汇手册》等。

参加这套丛书编写的学校有:安徽大学、合肥工业大学、安徽师范大学、安徽医科大学、安徽农业大学、安徽中医学院、蚌埠医学院、阜阳师范学院、淮北煤师院、皖南医学院等。参加编写的人员都是在高校长期从事大学英语教学的老师,大家本着严肃认真、高度负责的精神,对照教学大纲的要求,努力编写好每一本书。但由于时间匆促,疏漏差错之处难免,敬请行家和读者指正。

编委会

1999 年 11 月

前 言

学好任何一种语言都要掌握“四会”,即听、说、读、写。读又是最重要的,因而阅读在整个大学英语教学过程中都占有很大份额,不但包括基础阶段的1-4级精读、泛读、快速阅读,而且还有提高阶段的两年的专业英语阅读。大学英语四、六级试卷中的阅读理解题占40%的分数就充分体现了阅读的重要性。

要想学好英语必须掌握大量的英语单词。如果不能熟练地掌握一定量的英语单词,就不可能快速地阅读一篇文章,也不可能完全理解其含义,更达不到《大学英语》新大纲对我们在听、说、读、写四个方面的量化要求。快速积累单词的较好方法就是经常阅读大量的文章。

本书的第一个特点:没有详细的注解,只有参考答案,其目的就是用较小的篇幅给读者提供较多的阅读内容,相信读者在仔细阅读每篇文章后自己会作出正确的判断。

本书的第二个特点:150篇文章包含了大学英语四(或六)级试卷可能涉及的内容,如,天文、地理、航空航天、航海、气象、工业、农业、商业、贸易、银行、军事、教育、出版印刷、医疗、保险、旅游、历史、文学、人物等。而且大部分选自国内外最新出版的原文刊物或书籍。书中1-12篇是2000年1月、1999年6月及1月全国四级考试试卷中的阅读理解题,最后14篇为2000年1月、1999年6月、1月及1998年6月的全国六级考试试卷中的阅读理解题。

本书适用于大学专科生、本科生、研究生,可作为他们平时自学资料或参加各类考试前的参考书,也可为各外语教学单位办强化班提供选材内容。

参加本书编写的有：许道林(1-12 篇、137-150 篇)、翟岚(13-33 篇)、朱蕾蔓(34-52 篇)、黄华兴(53-79 篇)、刘兰(80-108 篇)、袁远(109-136 篇)。

编者

2000 年 3 月

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Reading Comprehension

1

Unless we spend money to spot and prevent *asteroids* (小行星) now, one might crash into Earth and destroy life as we know it, say some scientists.

Asteroids are bigger versions of the *meteoroids* (流星) that race across the night sky. Most orbit the sun far from Earth and don't threaten us. But there are also thousands of asteroids whose orbits put them on a collision course with Earth.

Buy 450 million worth of new telescopes right now. Then spend \$ 10 million a year for the next 25 years to locate most of the space rocks. By the time we spot a fatal one, the scientists say, we'll have a way to change its course.

Some scientists favor pushing asteroids off course with nuclear weapons. But the cost wouldn't be cheap.

Is it worth it? Two things experts consider when judging any risk are: 1) How likely the event is; 2) How bad the consequences if the event occurs. Experts think an asteroid big enough to destroy lots of life might strike Earth once every 500,000 years. Sounds pretty rare — but if one did fall, it would be the end of the world. "If we don't take care of these big asteroids, they'll take care of us," says one scientist. "It's that simple."

The cure, though, might be worse than the disease. Do we really want fleets of nuclear weapons sitting around on Earth? "The world has less to fear from *doomsday* (毁灭性的) rocks than from a great nuclear fleet set against them," said a New York Times article.

1. What does the passage say about asteroids and meteoroids?
 - ☒ A. They are heavenly bodies different in composition.
 - ☐ B. They are heavenly bodies similar in nature.
 - ☐ C. There are more asteroids than meteoroids.
 - ☐ D. Asteroids are more mysterious than meteoroids.
2. What do scientists say about the collision of an asteroid with Earth?
 - ☒ A. It is very unlikely but the danger exists.
 - ☐ B. Such a collision might occur once every 25 years.
 - ☐ C. Collisions of smaller asteroids with Earth occur more often than expected.
 - ☐ D. It's still too early to say whether such a collision might occur.
3. What do people think of the suggestion of using nuclear weapons to alter the course of asteroids?
 - ☒ A. It sounds practical but it may not solve the problem.
 - ☐ B. It may create more problems than it might solve.
 - ☐ C. It is a waste of money because a collision of asteroids with Earth is very unlikely.
 - ☒ D. Further research should be done before it is proved applicable.
4. We can conclude from the passage that _____.
 - A. while pushing asteroids off course with nuclear weapons would destroy the world

- B. asteroids racing across the night sky are likely to hit Earth in the near future
- ☒ C. the worry about asteroids can be left to future generations since it is unlikely to happen in our lifetime
- ☒ D. workable solutions still have to be found to prevent a collision of asteroids with Earth
5. Which of the following best describes the author's tone in this passage?
- A. Optimistic. ☒ B. Critical. ☒ C. Objective. ☒ D. Arbitrary.

(2000 年 1 月 8 日四级考卷)

2

Believe it or not, *optical illusion* (视错觉) can cut highway crashes.

Japan is a case in point. It has reduced automobile crashes on some roads by nearly 75 percent using a simple optical illusion. Bent stripes, called *chevrons* (人字形), painted on the roads make drivers think that they are driving faster than they really are, and thus slow down.

Now the American Automobile Association Foundation for Traffic Safety in Washington D. C. is planning to repeat Japan's success. Starting next year, the foundation will paint chevrons and other patterns of strips on selected roads around the country to test how well the patterns reduce highway crashes.

Excessive speed plays a major role in as much as one fifth of all fatal traffic accidents, according to the foundation. To help reduce those accidents, the foundation will conduct its tests in areas where

speed-related hazards are the greatest — curves, exit slopes, traffic circles and bridges.

Some studies suggest that straight, horizontal bars painted across roads can initially cut the average speed of drivers on half. However, traffic often return to full speed within months as drivers become used to seeing the painted bars.

Chevrons, scientists say, not only give drivers the impression that they are driving faster than they really are, but also make a lane appear to be narrower. The result is a longer lasting reduction in highway speed and the number of traffic accidents.

1. The passage mainly discusses _____.
 - A. a new way of highway speed control
 - B. a new pattern for painting highways
 - C. a new approach to training drivers
 - D. a new type of optical illusion
2. On roads painted with chevrons, drivers tend to feel that _____.
 - A. they should avoid speed-related hazards
 - B. they are driving in the wrong lane
 - C. they should slow down their speed
 - D. they are approaching the speed limit
3. The advantage of chevrons over straight, horizontal bars is that the former _____.
 - A. can keep drivers awake
 - C. will have a longer effect on drivers
 - B. can cut road accidents in half
 - D. will look more attractive
4. The American Automobile Association Foundation for Traffic

Safety plans to _____.

- A. try out the Japanese method in certain areas
 - B. change the road signs across the country
 - C. replace straight, horizontal bars with chevrons
 - D. repeat the Japanese road patterns
5. What does the author say about straight, horizontal bars painted across roads?
- A. They are falling out of use in the United States.
 - B. They tend to be ignored by drivers in a short period of time.
 - C. They are applicable only on broad roads.
 - D. They cannot be applied successfully to traffic circles.

(2000 年 1 月 8 日四级考卷)

3

Amtrak (美国铁路客运公司) was experiencing a downswing in *ridership* (客运量) along the lines comprising its rail system. Of major concern to *Amtrak* and its advertising agency DDB Needham, were the long-distance western routes where ridership had been declining significantly.

At one time, trains were the only practical way to cross the vast areas of the west. Trains were fast, very luxurious, and quite convenient compared to other forms of transportation existing at the time. However, times change and the automobile became America's standard of convenience. Also air travel had easily established itself as the fastest method of traveling great distances. Therefore, the task for DDB Needham was to encourage consumers to consider other aspects of train travel in order to change their attitudes and in-

crease the likelihood that trains would be considered for travel in the west.

Two portions of the total market were targeted: 1) anxious fliers — those concerned with safety, relaxation, and cleanliness and 2) travel-lovers — those viewing themselves as relaxed, casual, and interested in the travel experience as part of their vacation. The agency then developed a campaign that focused on travel experiences such as freedom, escape, relaxation, and enjoyment of the great western outdoors. It stressed experiences gained by using the trains and portrayed western train trips as wonderful adventures.

Advertisements showed pictures of the beautiful scenery that could be enjoyed along some of the more famous western routes and emphasized the romantic names of some of these trains (Empire Builder, etc.). These ads were strategically placed among family-oriented TV shows and programs involving nature and America in order to most effectively reach target audiences. Results were impressive. The Empire Builder, which was focused on in one ad, enjoyed a 15 percent increase in profits on its Chicago to Seattle route.

1. What's the author's purpose in writing this passage?
 - A. To show the inability of trains to compete with planes with respect to speed and convenience.
 - B. To stress the influence of the automobile on America's standard of convenience.
 - C. To emphasize the function of travel agencies in market promotion.
 - D. To illustrate the important role of persuasive communication in changing consumer attitudes.
2. It can be inferred from the passage that the drop in Amtrak rider-

ship was due to the fact that _____.

- A. trains were not suitable for short distance passenger transportation
 - B. trains were not the fastest and most convenient form of transportation
 - C. trains were not as fast and convenient as they used to be
 - D. trains could not compete with planes in terms of luxury and convenience
3. To encourage consumers to travel by train, DDB Needham emphasized _____.
- A. the freedom and convenience provided on trains
 - B. the practical aspects of train travel
 - C. the adventurous aspects of train trips
 - D. the safety and cleanliness of train trips
4. The train ads were placed among family-oriented TV programs involving nature and America because _____.
- A. they could focus on meaningful travel experiences
 - B. they could increase the effectiveness of the TV programs
 - C. their profits could be increased by some 15 percent
 - D. most travel-lovers and nervous fliers were believed to be among the audiences
5. According to the passage, the Empire Builder enjoyed an increase in ridership and profits because _____.
- A. the attractiveness of its name and route was effectively advertised
 - B. it provided an exciting travel experience
 - C. its passengers could enjoy the great western outdoors
 - D. it was widely advertised in newspapers and magazines in

(2000 年 1 月 8 日四级考卷)

4

Why does cream go bad faster than butter? Some researchers think they have the answer, and it comes down to the structure of the food, not its chemical composition — a finding that could help rid some processed foods of chemical preservatives.

Cream and butter contain pretty much the same substances, so why cream sour much faster has been a mystery. Both are emulsions — *tiny globules* (小球体) of one liquid evenly distributed throughout another. The difference lies in what's in the globules and what's in the surrounding liquid, says Brocklehurst, who led the investigation.

In cream, fatty globules drift about in a sea of water. In butter, globules of a watery solution are locked away in a sea of fat. The bacteria which make the food go bad prefer to live in the watery regions of the mixture. "This means that in cream, the bacteria are free to grow throughout the mixture," he says.

When the situation is reversed, the bacteria are locked away in *compartments* (隔仓室) buried deep in the sea of fat. Trapped in this way, individual colonies cannot spread and rapidly run out of *nutrient* (养料). They also slowly poison themselves with their waste products. "In butter, you get a self-limiting system which stops the bacteria growing," says Brocklehurst.

The researchers are already working with food companies keen to see if their products can be made resistant to bacterial attack

through alterations to the food's structure. Brocklehurst believes it will be possible to make the emulsions used in salad cream, for instance, more like that in butter. The key will be to do this while keeping the salad cream liquid and not turning it into a solid lump.

1. The significance of Brocklehurst's research is that _____.
 - A. it suggested a way to keep some foods fresh without preservatives
 - B. it discovered tiny globules in both cream and butter
 - C. it revealed the secret of how bacteria multiply in cream and butter
 - D. it found that cream and butter share the same chemical composition
2. According to the researchers, cream sours faster than butter because bacteria _____.
 - A. are more evenly distributed in cream
 - B. multiply more easily in cream than in butter
 - C. live on less fat in cream than in butter
 - D. produce less waste in cream than in butter
3. According to Brocklehurst, we can keep cream fresh by _____.
 - A. removing its fat
 - B. killing the bacteria
 - C. reducing its water content
 - D. altering its structure
4. The word "colonies" (Line 3, Para. 4) refers to _____.
 - A. tiny globules
 - B. watery regions
 - C. bacteria communities
 - D. little compartments
5. Commercial application of the research finding will be possible if salad cream can be made resistant to bacterial attack _____.
 - A. by varying its chemical composition