



全国高等农林院校“十一五”规划教材

大学英语

阅读教程

第一册

迟光明 主编

COLLEGE ENGLISH

*Reading
Course*

 中国农业出版社

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前 言

《大学英语阅读教程》系全国高等农林院校“十一五”规划教材，供高等农林院校非英语专业一、二年级使用，亦适用于农林牧类专科院校及同等程度的英语自学者。教材旨在提高学生的阅读理解能力，扩大词汇量，掌握阅读技巧，通过四个学期的授课和自学达到大学英语教学的基本要求，并掌握与农林牧水相关的基本专业英语知识。

本教材的主要特点为：

一、阅读材料题材广泛，涉及英语国家社会、经济、文化、历史等诸多领域，内容新颖，同时兼顾了农业院校的专业特点，收入了有关最新科学技术，尤其是农林牧水方面发展的文章，注重文章的趣味性、可读性及文体的多样化。

二、由于高等农林院校学生的外语整体水平与其他类别院校相比，在入学成绩、教学条件及语言学习环境等方面具有一定差距，本阅读教程根据学生语言学习和专业学习的实际需要，既能提高英语学习水平，扩大学生专业知识视野，又能增加文化背景知识，全面提高学生的英语素养，达到迅速提高英语水平、学习英美文化、了解农业最基本内容的目的。

本教程共四册，每册12个单元，供大学英语教学一到四学期使用。每单元分为三部分，第一部分为阅读课文及练习。练习包括阅读理解、完形填空、词汇、翻译及课堂讨论题。第二部分为快速阅读，提供有关农林牧水及现代科技的两篇短文，教师可根据学生的实际情况选用。每两个单元附有相关阅读技巧，重点介绍各种阅读技能，并配有相应的练习。书后附有练习答案，供教师和学生参考。

受编写时间与编者经验和水平所限，教材中不当之处在所难免，诚望广大读者不吝指正。

编 者

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Contents

Unit One	1
Text Life among the Aztecs	1
Exercises	5
Fast Reading	10
Unit Two	13
Text The Quality of Courage	13
Exercises	17
Fast Reading	21
Reading Skills Skimming	24
Unit Three	26
Text Circle of Love	26
Exercises	28
Fast Reading	32
Unit Four	36
Text Genghis Khan and His Hawk	36
Exercises	39
Fast Reading	43
Reading Skills Scanning	45
Unit Five	48
Text The Strange Voyage of Mary Celeste	48
Exercises	52

Fast Reading	56
Unit Six	60
Text Education Out of School	60
Exercises	64
Fast Reading	69
Reading Skills Recognizing Relationships	71
Unit Seven	75
Text The Red Pony	75
Exercises	80
Fast Reading	84
Unit Eight	87
Text An Empire and Its Problems	87
Exercises	92
Fast Reading	97
Reading Skills Implications & Generalities	100
Unit Nine	102
Text What Phase Are You In?	102
Exercises	105
Fast Reading	109
Unit Ten	112
Text The Wall	112
Exercises	115
Fast Reading	120
Reading Skills Recognizing Concepts	123
Unit Eleven	125
Text The Complete Breath	125
Exercises	129
Fast Reading	134

Unit Twelve	140
Text Advertising's Fifteen Basic Appeals	140
Exercises	145
Fast Reading	150
Key to Exercises	155
Bibliography	166



Unit One

Text

Life among the Aztecs

We often forget that Europeans did not bring civilization to the New World. They conquered an advanced civilization that was already here.

Long before Europeans *migrated* to this continent, American Indians were making history. One of the most important groups of Indians in North America was the Aztecs, who lived in the high valley which is now Mexico City. The *Aztecs* had developed a standard of living equal to that of many Europeans of that time.

The Aztecs left records of various kinds. Some of their history is *carved* in stone, while some is written on long sheets of paper made from *cactus* plants or the bark of certain trees. The Aztecs built solidly constructed temples and houses. They were skilled in astronomy, law, and government. And, in many ways, they were kind and gentle.

The Aztecs rose to power by way of their military abilities. Wars were often fought in order to capture enemies who could be sacrificed to the Aztec war god. Although such human sacrifice was shocking to the Europeans, it was the result of a civilization that combined religion and warfare. When the Spanish finally *vanquished* the Aztecs, the conquerors had to fight *vigorously* to stop the practice of human sacrifice.

According to tradition, in 1325—one hundred and sixty-seven years before

Columbus first landed on American shores—the Aztecs started to build their capital city. *Tenochtitlan* became the capital of the Spanish conquerors and, finally, of the Mexican republic.

Tenochtitlan was built on an island in a large lake. The city was connected to the mainland by *causeways*, which contained well-guarded bridges. Since these bridges could be removed in case of danger, it was very difficult to attack Tenochtitlan from the edge of the lake.

When the Aztecs first settled in the Mexican valley, they did not have much land of their own. They gradually obtained land for farming by building islands in the lake. They also supported themselves by fishing and by trading with nearby tribes. The Aztecs learned a good deal from their more advanced neighbors. And, as their military power grew, they used the lands they conquered to start more farms.

By the end of the fifteenth century the Aztecs were the leaders of a united group of surrounding tribes. They received *tributes* from other tribes that they had conquered. Many of these tribes were frequently at the point of rebellion. Cortés, the Spanish conqueror, took advantage of this situation and *allied* his troops with those tribes who hated the Aztecs.

The Aztecs achieved great power by building upon the wealth of the tribes they conquered. Their capital was a great center of commerce, wealth, and culture. Skilled architects and *stonemasons*, aided by slave labor, built great temples and palaces, as well as comfortable houses. The Aztecs even had *botanical* gardens, which were unknown in Europe at that time.

To aid irrigation and travel throughout the city, the Aztecs built an *elaborate canal* system. They grew cotton and made fine clothes, which were often *ornamented* with gold, rare furs, and the bright feathers of tropical birds.

The Aztecs had no alphabet, but they kept records of their history by means of picture writing. They had a system of education which was run by their priests and priestesses. Their schools were open only to the upper classes.

The Aztecs had hospitals and doctors and surgeons who were probably quite as good as the 15th century European medical facilities and staffs. The Aztecs' study of astronomy was so advanced that they were able to make a very accurate calendar and to predict *eclipses*. Their calendar is a famous *relic* of

their civilization. It is a round, flat stone, three feet thick and twenty feet in diameter, with signs and pictures representing the days and months of the year.

An Aztec legend *prophesied* that one day a white god would come to them from the east and rule over them. Hernando Cortés, the Spanish captain, took advantage of this belief, which helped him greatly in his conquest of the Aztecs.

In 1519 the beautiful Aztec city of Tenochtitlan, with its *gleaming* white temples and palaces, *dazzled* the eyes of the invading Spaniards. It was built in a most attractive natural setting, and the Spaniards saw it first from the high peaks which surrounded the valley of Mexico.

What the Spanish soldiers found in the Aztec city surpassed their wildest dreams. There were *shady* parks and gardens, containing rare plants from all parts of Mexico. There were strange animals in the zoo. And there were many large, busy markets, where the Spaniards found articles of food, clothing, and handicrafts that they had never seen before. When Cortés arrived at Tenochtitlan with his 450 Spanish soldiers and his Indian allies, the Aztec emperor Montezuma received them and gave them quarters in the city. Cortés realized that he was in a dangerous position. He invited Montezuma to the Spanish camp, where Montezuma was held prisoner until he died.

After the death of their emperor, the Aztecs revolted against the Spaniards. It was only after fierce fighting that the Aztecs were defeated and Spanish rule was established.

The Aztec country became an important part of the Spanish Empire. It was called New Spain, and Spanish priests came to establish Christianity in the new possession of the Spanish king. Mule trains, carrying the Aztecs' treasures, were sent down the hills to the coast. From there, the treasures were shipped to Spain.

Today, more than four centuries after the Spanish conquest, there are still many Indians living in Mexico who speak the language of the Aztecs. Modern Mexico and Mexicans are proud of their Aztec ancestry. Many of the Aztec customs have been preserved, and Mexican ways of living and eating show strong Aztec influence. Aztec designs are found in the pottery and painting of today. Many words of the Aztec language have been added to the Spanish

spoken in the country. And some of the words (such as chocolate, tomato, ocelot, coyote, and avocado) have even become part of the English language.

(998 words)

Notes

migrate [maɪ'greɪt] *v.*

to move from one country or region and settle in another 移动(短期)移居

Aztec [ˈæztek]

阿兹台克人(十六世纪前的墨西哥土著); 阿兹台克语

carve [kɑ:v] *v.*

to divide into pieces by cutting; slice 雕刻, 切开

cactus [ˈkæktəs] *n.*

[植] 仙人掌

vanquish [ˈvæŋkwɪʃ] *vt.*

to defeat or conquer in battle; subjugate; to overcome or subdue (an emotion, for example); suppress 征服, 击败, 克服

vigorously [ˈvɪgərəsli] *adv.*

energetically 精神旺盛地

Columbus [kə'lʌmbəs]

哥伦布(Christopher, 1446? —1506, 意大利航海家, 据传于1492年发现北美洲)

Tenochtitlan

提诺奇蒂兰城, 1325年建立, 墨西哥城的前身

causeway [ˈkɔ:zwei] *n.*

a raised roadway, as across water or marshland 堤道, 铺道

tribute [ˈtrɪbjut] *n.*

a gift, payment, declaration, or other acknowledgment of gratitude, respect, or admiration 贡品, 礼物, 颂词, 殷勤, 贡物

ally [ə'laɪ] *v.*

join or become joined with sb/sth by treaty, marriage 结盟, 与……(在血统, 性质等上)有关联, 同盟

stonemason [ˈstəʊnmeɪs(ə)n] *n.*

one that prepares and lays stones in building 石工, 石匠

botanical [bə'tænɪk(ə)l] *adj.*

of or relating to plants or plant life 植物学的

elaborate [ɪ'læbəreɪt] *adj.*

planned or executed with painstaking

canal [kə'neɪl] <i>n.</i>	attention to numerous parts or details 精心制作的, 详细阐述的, 精细 an artificial waterway or artificially improved river used for travel, shipping, or irrigation. 运河, 小道, 导管, 槽, 沟渠
ornament [ˈɔːnəmənt] <i>vt.</i>	something that decorates or adorns; an embellishment. 装饰, 修饰
eclipse [i'klips] <i>n.</i>	the partial or complete obscuring, relative to a designated observer, of one celestial body by another [天] 食, 日食, 月食
relic [ˈreɪlɪk] <i>n.</i>	something that has survived the passage of time, especially an object or a custom whose original culture has disappeared 遗物, 遗迹, 废墟, 纪念物
prophecy [ˈprɒfisi] <i>v.</i>	to prefigure; foreshow; foretell 预言, 预报
gleam [ɡli:m] <i>vi.</i>	to emit a gleam; flash or glow 闪烁, 隐约地闪现
dazzle [ˈdæzl] <i>v.</i>	to dim the vision of, especially to blind with intense light (使) 眼花缭乱, 眩惑
shady [ˈʃeɪdi] <i>adj.</i>	full of shade; shaded 成荫的, 多荫的, 阴暗的

Exercises

I. Comprehension

Read the following questions and statements and choose the best answer for each one.

1. The Aztecs became powerful because of their _____.

A. military ability

B. knowledge of astronomy

- C. ability in farming and weaving D. government
2. How long before the Spanish discovered America was the capital city of the Aztecs built?
- A. 300 years B. 193 years C. 167 years D. 120 years
3. The Aztec capital was first built _____.
- A. on a mountain B. in a swamp
C. on an island D. on the shores of a lake
4. Did the Aztecs use slave labor?
- A. Yes. B. No. C. Seldom. D. The story does not say.
5. The Aztecs kept records by using _____.
- A. their alphabet B. picture writing
C. special round stones D. religious sculptures
6. Cortés's behaviour towards the Aztecs could be best called _____.
- A. cruel B. treacherous C. unwise D. cunning
7. The Aztec practice of human sacrifice was the result of a civilization that _____.
- A. depended upon conquest to build wealth
B. developed outside the European traditions
C. often appeared shocking to Spanish conquerors
D. was warlike as well as religious
8. It was difficult to attack Tenochtitlan because _____.
- A. ambushes could be set up on the mountains
B. the surrounding tribes were hostile
C. the bridges could be removed
D. Montezuma maintained a powerful army
9. To aid irrigation, the Aztecs _____.
- A. constructed canals B. utilized rain water
C. built reservoirs D. drained the mountain streams
10. The Aztecs seemed interested primarily in _____.
- A. useful, practical things B. beauty and ornaments
C. luxury and furs D. beauty and utility

II. Maze

The following passage, taken from the selection you have just read, has

words omitted from it. Fill in each blank using a word from the set of five words below the passage.

Long before 1 migrated to this continent, American Indians were making history. One of the most important groups of Indians in North America was the Aztecs, who lived in the high 2 which is now Mexico City. The Aztecs had developed a standard of 3 equal to that of many Europeans of that time.

The 4 left records of various kinds. Some of their history is carved in 5, while some is written on long sheets of paper made from cactus 6 or the bark of certain trees. The Aztecs build solidly constructed 7 and houses. They were skilled in 8, law, and government. And, in many ways, they were kind and gentle.

The Aztecs rose to power by way of their military abilities. Wars were often fought in order to capture enemies who could be sacrificed to the Aztec war god. Although such 9 sacrifice was shocking to the Europeans, it was the result of a civilization that combined religion and warfare. When the 10 finally vanquished the Aztecs, the conquerors had to fight vigorously to stop the practice of human sacrifice.

1. A. foreigners B. Europeans C. Chinese D. Indians E. immigrants
2. A. hills B. mountains C. valley D. fields E. teepees
3. A. living B. life C. work D. community E. culture
4. A. Indians B. Spanish C. Mexicans D. French E. Aztecs
5. A. rock B. caves C. stone D. brick E. walls
6. A. trees B. plants C. bushes D. shrubs E. flowers
7. A. churches B. shelters C. homes D. temples E. buildings
8. A. astronomy B. biology C. ecology D. science E. physics
9. A. animal B. senseless C. useless D. destructive E. human
10. A. Mexicans B. Indians C. Americans D. Spanish E. Europeans

III. Vocabulary

A. Look at the word in boldface in each exercise below and read carefully the sentence to choose the best answer.

1. When the Spanish finally **vanquished** the Aztecs, the conquerors had to fight vigorously to stop the practice of human sacrifice.
A. defeated B. frightened C. sent running D. abused

2. The Aztecs learned a good deal from their more **advanced** neighbors.
A. available B. upgraded C. promoted D. progressive
3. They received tributes from other **tribes** that they had conquered.
A. words of gratitude B. violent arguments
C. taxes and land D. gifts in appreciation
4. Many of these tribes were frequently on the point of **rebellion**.
A. an uprising against authority B. an organization for resisters
C. a feeling of insubordination D. a carelessly formed group
5. Their capital was a great center of **commerce**, wealth, and culture.
A. entertainment B. business and trade
C. travel D. adventure and risk
6. To aid irrigation and travel throughout the city, the Aztecs built an **elaborate** canal system.
A. too complicated B. worked out with care and detail
C. up to date D. simple but effective
7. ...they were able to make a very accurate calendar and to **predict** eclipses.
A. produce B. foretell C. study about D. keep a record of
8. An Aztec legend **prophesied** that one day a white god would come to them from the east and rule over them.
A. uttered statements B. spoke with feeling
C. acted suddenly D. indicated beforehand
9. What the Spanish soldiers found in the Aztec city **surpassed** their wildest dreams.
A. contributed to B. satisfied
C. went beyond D. fulfilled
10. ...Montezuma received them and gave them **quarters** in the city.
A. a place to stay B. a separate section of land
C. a sum of money D. a rich estate

B. Fill in the blanks with the words in the text.

1. Some birds _____ to find warmer weather.
2. They were _____ alone in the wilderness.
3. The state visit by the premier would _____ the headlines of all newspapers.
4. The King's army finally _____ the rebels.

5. A good student must _____ what she reads with what she sees around her.
6. Bird flu was prevalent in New York and the _____ countryside.
7. Northwest to our campus is a _____ garden.
8. The feats _____ his reputation in the circle.
9. The Town Council spent a lot of money on _____ the old castle and other places of historic interest.
10. The witness' testimony simply did not _____ up anything to reach his aim.

IV. Translation

Put the following sentences from the passage into Chinese.

1. One of the most important groups of Indians in North America was the Aztecs, who lived in the high valley which is now Mexico City. The Aztecs had developed a standard of living equal to that of many Europeans of that time.
2. The Aztecs built solidly constructed temples and houses. They were skilled in astronomy, law, and government. And, in many ways, they were kind and gentle.
3. Although such human sacrifice was shocking to the Europeans, it was the result of a civilization that combined religion and warfare.
4. They gradually obtained land for farming by building islands in the lake. They also supported themselves by fishing and by trading with nearby tribes. The Aztecs learned a good deal from their more advanced neighbors.
5. The Aztecs country became an important part of the Spanish Empire. It was called New Spain, and Spanish priests came to establish Christianity in the new possession of the Spanish king.

V. Discussion Ideas

Discuss the following ideas in groups and get ready to give a presentation in the class.

1. What kind of an advanced civilization had the Aztecs created before Europeans migrated to New World?
2. What legacies, which even could be traced nowadays, did the Aztecs leave to the succeeding history?
3. What do you think that Europeans did in America to the culture of American Indians?