



张鑫友大学英语应试系列

# 大学英语

## 过关阅读 180 篇

主编 张鑫友

READING  
Comprehension

4 级

湖北人民出版社

张鑫友大学英语应试系



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## (4 级)

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## 写在前面的话

在大学英语四级试题中,阅读理解部分所占百分值最大,因而此部分解题准确率的高低,是直接决定四级考试能否通过的关键所在。

中国有句古语:“读书破万卷,下笔如有神。”多多阅读的重要性由此可见。在常年的试题及教学研究中我们发现,考生们面临的问题主要有:词汇量不足,缺乏阅读文章的技能,知识面有限,解题思路不明等。同时我们也发现,阅读能力的提高,不是一朝一夕的事,更不是随意翻阅就能解决的问题。提高速度与准确度,扩大视野,显然需要大量泛读。针对这一要求,我们结合多年教学经验和学生中普遍存在的问题编写了此书,以帮助广大考生更有效率地提高自身英语实力。本书的特点如下:

★ 题材新颖、选材广泛、体裁多样。本书所选文章囊括了百余篇来自新近国外报刊书籍的文章,选材涉及到有关政治、文化、社会生活、科技及医学等方面。包括叙事文、说明文、议论文和描写文四种。以说明文和议论文为主,以帮助考生提高其分析和解决问题的能力。

★ 解析详尽。本书中每篇文章均附有详尽解析。由词汇注释、思路及大意、答案及详析等三大部分组成。其中答案及详析更细分为参考答案、题目译文及详析(解题思路)等三栏,旨在使考生在每次阅读及解题后都能得到详细指导和在此基础上的启发和进步。

★ 层次分明。本书共分 45 个单元,每一单元包括 4 篇文章,按其程度由易到难分布,以便于考生循序渐进地进行练习备考。

本书是大学英语四级考试应试者之良师益友,同时也是广大英语爱好者及大专院校学生自学英语的首选参考书目,更是英语教学者进行教学的好帮手。

四达外研语言研究部

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# UNIT 1

(35 minutes)

Directions: There are 4 passages in this unit. Each passage is followed by five questions or unfinished statements. For each of them there are 4 choices marked A), B), C) and D). You should decide on the best choice.

## Passage One

Questions 1 to 5 are based on the following passage:

Everyone has heard of the San Andreas fault (地质断层), which constantly threatens California and the West Coast with earthquakes. But how many people know about the equally serious New Madrid fault in Missouri? Between December of 1811 and February of 1812, three major earthquakes occurred, all centered around the town of New Madrid, Missouri, on the Mississippi River. Property damage was severe. Buildings in the area were almost all destroyed. Whole forests fell at once, and huge cracks opened in the ground, allowing the odor (气味) of sulfur to filter upward.

Few people were killed in the New Madrid earthquakes, probably simply because few people lived in the area in 1811. But the severity of the earthquakes is shown by the fact that the shock waves rang bells in church towers in Charleston, South Carolina, on the coast. Buildings shook in New York City, and clocks were stopped in Washington, D. C.

Scientists now know that America's two major faults are essentially different. The San Andreas fault is a horizontal boundary between two major land masses that are slowly moving in opposite directions. California earthquakes result when the movement of these two masses suddenly lurches (颠簸行进) forward. The New Madrid fault, on the other hand, is a vertical fault, at some point, possibly hundreds of millions of years ago, rock was pushed up toward the surface, probably by volcanoes under the surface. Suddenly, the volcanoes cooled and the rock collapsed, leaving huge cracks. Even now, the rock continues to settle downwards, and sudden sinking motions start earthquakes in the region. The fault itself, a large crack in this layer of rock, with dozens of other cracks that split off from it, extends from northeast Arkansas through Missouri and into southern Illinois.

Scientists who have studied the New Madrid fault say there have been numerous



smaller quakes in the area since 1811. These smaller quakes indicate that larger ones are probably coming, but the scientists say they have no method of predicting when a large earthquake will occur.

- This passage is mainly about \_\_\_\_\_.  
 A) the New Madrid fault in Missouri  
 B) the San Andreas and the New Madrid faults  
 C) the cause of faults  
 D) current scientific knowledge about faults
- The New Madrid fault is \_\_\_\_\_.  
 A) responsible for many deaths  
 B) a horizontal fault  
 C) a worse fault than the San Andreas fault  
 D) a vertical fault
- We can conclude from the passage that \_\_\_\_\_.  
 A) it is probably as dangerous to live in Missouri as in California  
 B) the New Madrid fault will eventually develop a mountain range in Missouri  
 C) in the future California will become an island  
 D) California will be broken into small pieces by an eventual earthquake
- The passage suggests that \_\_\_\_\_.  
 A) volcanoes cause earthquakes in New Madrid  
 B) horizontal faults are more dangerous than vertical faults  
 C) vertical faults are more dangerous than horizontal faults  
 D) faults are cracks in the earth's surface
- As used in this passage (Line 1, Para. 3), the word "essentially" means \_\_\_\_\_.  
 A) basically  
 B) industriously  
 C) silently  
 D) astonishingly

## Passage Two

Questions 6 to 10 are based on the following passage:

A question that has puzzled anthropologists (人类学家) for years whether the uniquely human habit of bipedalism (walking upright on two limbs) developed suddenly among our ancient ancestors or occurred gradually over time received new attention in September 1988. Anthropologist William L. Jungers of State University of New York reported evidence that australopithecines, humanlike creatures who lived between 1 million and 4 million years ago, probably moved in a manner similar to both human beings and apes (猿), suggesting that bipedalism was a gradual development in early human beings.

Jungers compared the hip (臀部) and leg joints of apes. He noted that in human beings these joints are exceptionally large relative to body size. This is because they bear all of the body's weight when a person is standing. In apes, however, the leg and hip joints are smaller because apes also use their forelimbs for support.

Jungers then examined the hip and leg joints of an australopithecine skeleton

nicknamed Lucy and found that its joints display both humanlike and apelike characteristics. Jungers concluded that Lucy's physical development—as well as that of other australopithecines—falls somewhere between human beings and apes. While australopithecines may have walked in an upright manner, their gait (步法) was probably far different from the upright movement exhibited by modern human beings.

6. The goal of Jungers' research is to \_\_\_\_\_.

- A) learn how bipedalism developed into human beings
- B) display both human-like and ape-like joints
- C) make clear the different walking manner between early and modern human beings
- D) show how an australopithecine study is done

7. Jungers' findings showed that : \_\_\_\_\_.

- A) human beings walked upright later than australopithecines
- B) bipedalism might have developed suddenly in early humans
- C) early humans might have learned to walk gradually
- D) human beings evolved from australopithecines rather than from apes

8. Jungers' report was based upon his comparison of \_\_\_\_\_.

- A) the body size of people, apes and australopithecines
- B) the skeleton of people, apes and australopithecines
- C) the hips and leg joints of people, apes and australopithecines
- D) the size of hip and leg joints of modern people and australopithecines

9. Which of the following is TRUE about Lucy according to Jungers?

- A) Lucy walked more like apes than like human beings.
- B) Lucy moved her steps in the same manner as people.
- C) Lucy might walk quite differently from modern man.
- D) Lucy had hip and leg joints only like people's.

10. Why is the size of the hip and leg joints important in establishing the human habit of bipedalism?

- A) They support human body in an upright position.
- B) They are the only observable evidence in australopithecines study.
- C) The evolution of the joints is the fastest in animals.
- D) They mark the major difference between humans and human-like animals.

### Passage Three

Questions 11 to 15 are based on the following passage:

The poverty line is the minimum income that people need for an acceptable standard of living. People with incomes below the poverty line are considered poor. Economists study the causes of poverty in order to find solutions to the problem.

As the general standard of living in the country rises, the poverty line does, too. Therefore even with today's relatively high standard of living, about 10 percent of the people in the United States are below the poverty line. However, if these people had stable jobs, they could have an acceptable standard of living. Economists suggest several reasons why poor people do not have jobs.

For one thing, more than half of the poor people in the United States are not qualified to work. Over 40 percent of the poor people are children. By law, children less than 15 years cannot work in many industries. A large number of poor people are old. Many companies do not hire people over 65 years old, the normal retirement age.

Some poor adults do not look for jobs for a variety of personal reasons: they are sick, they do not have any motivation, they have family problems, or they do not believe that they can find a job.

Other poor people look for a job but cannot find one. Many poor adults never went to high school. Therefore, when they look for jobs, they have few skills that they can offer.

At the present time, the government thinks it can reduce poverty in the country in the following ways.

First, if the national economy grows, businesses and industries hire more workers. Some of the poor who are qualified to look for jobs may find employment. Then they will no longer be below the poverty line.

Second, if society invests in the poor, the poor will become more productive. If the government spends money on social programs, education, and training for poor people, the poor will have skills to offer. Then it is more likely that they can find jobs.

Finally, if the government distributes society's income differently, it raises some poor people above the poverty line. The government collects taxes from the nonpoor and gives money to the poor. These payments to the poor are called welfare. In 1975 over 18 million people in the United States received welfare.

Some economists are looking for better solutions to the poverty problem. However, at the present time, many people depend on welfare for a minimally acceptable standard of living.

11. The author defines the poverty line \_\_\_\_\_.
  - A) from the economists' view point
  - B) in view of the people's need
  - C) according to his own understanding
  - D) according to the general opinions
12. Which of the following is NOT true?
  - A) The poverty line rises when the general standard of living rises.
  - B) Poor people always live below the poverty line.
  - C) The poverty line has always been at the same level.
  - D) 10 percent of the American people live a poor life.
13. People could have an acceptable standard of living unless \_\_\_\_\_.
  - A) the life style doesn't change
  - B) the poverty line doesn't rise
  - C) they have stable jobs
  - D) their minimum income doesn't change
14. Many poor people are not qualified for work because \_\_\_\_\_.

- A) they have either physical or family problems  
 B) they are short of self-confidence  
 C) they do not have any motivation to work  
 D) they are either too young or too old to work
15. According to the economists the better solution to the poverty problem \_\_\_\_\_.  
 A) is to provide more welfare      C) is to hire more people  
 B) is to offer more jobs              D) is to be found

## Passage Four

Questions 16 to 20 are based on the following passage:

Plastics are materials which are softened by heat and into lasting form when shaped in a mold(模具). Some are natural; some semi-synthetic, the result of chemical action on a natural substance; some are synthetic, built up from the constituents(成分) of oil or coal. All are based on the chemistry of carbon, with its capacity for forming chains. The molecules that compose them(monomers) link together in the setting or curing process to form chains(polymers), which give plastics their flexible strength. Some plastics retain their ability to be softened and reshaped; like wax, they are thermoplastic. Others set permanently in the shapes they are given by heat and pressure; like eggs, they are thermosetting.

From industrial beginnings in the nineteenth century, plastics have struggled through a hundred and twenty years of glory, failure, disrepute(坏名声) and suspicion on the slow road to public acceptance. Now, at last, one can positively say that plastics are appreciated and enjoyed for what they are; that they make modern life richer, more comfortable and convenient, and also more fun. Plastics are warm materials, sympathetic to the human touch, and their transformation into things that come into contact with human beings is entirely appropriate.

The fact that there are plastics antiques(古物) comes as a shock to most people. How can a material that seems so essentially twentieth-century, and one that is so much associated with cheap, disposable products, have a history at all? It is a young technology, and a great part of the fun of collecting plastics is that beautiful pieces of historical interest can still be found very cheaply.

16. Which of the following is the best title for the passage?  
 A) The Importance of Plastics in the Nineteenth Century  
 B) Why People Are Suspicious of Plastics  
 C) The Development of Plastics as a Modern Material  
 D) How Plastics Are Manufactured
17. Which of the following is necessary to create any type of plastics?  
 A) Carbon      C) Oil and coal.  
 B) Wax          D) Chains.
18. Plastics that harden into permanent shapes are referred to as \_\_\_\_\_.  
 A) chained      C) monomeric  
 B) thermoplastic      D) thermosetting

19. According to the author, for approximately how many years have plastics existed?  
A) 100. B) 120. C) 190. D) 160.
20. What historical information does the second paragraph give about plastics?  
A) They originated primarily as road-surfacing material.  
B) They have come into general use very gradually. ✓  
C) Their popularity was at its peak at the time of the Industrial Revolution.  
D) The earliest types were soft and did not last very long.

\*

\*

\*

## Passage One

### 【词汇注释】

occur [ə'kʌ:] v. 出现, 发生; 想到  
severe [si'viə] a. 严重的; 严峻的, 艰难的  
crack ['kræk] n. 裂缝, 破裂声  
sulfur = sulphur ['sʌlfə] n. 硫, 硫磺  
filter ['fɪltə] v. 过滤 n. 过滤器, 滤纸  
horizontal [ˌhɒrɪ'zɒntl] a. 水平的, 与地平线平行的

vertical ['vɜ:tɪkl] a. 垂直的, 竖立的  
volcano [vɒl'keɪnəʊ] n. 火山  
collapse [kə'leɪps] v. 倒塌, 垮下来 n. 倒塌, 暴跌  
numerous ['nju:mərəs] a. 众多的, 许多的  
indicate ['ɪndikeɪt] v. 表明, 标出  
predict [prɪ'dɪkt] v. 预测, 预言

### 【思路及大意】

本文是一篇说明文。文章主要介绍了1811年12月至1812年2月在美国的密苏里州新马德里发生的巨大的地质断层。文章首先描述了多次地震所带来的损害, 接着通过对比指出该断层形成的原因, 最后点明科学家无法预测大地震。

### 【答案及详析】

#### 1. 【答案】 A

【题意】 这篇文章主要是关于什么的?

【详析】 文章对新马德里断层进行了全面的描述(包括其产生原因及其爆发情况), 文章虽然提到了 the San Andreas fault, 但这是为了更好地描述 the New Madrid fault, 可见 B) 不能用来作为文章的主要内容。C) 和 D) 仅仅是提到而已。因此 A) 为正确答案。

#### 2. 【答案】 D

【题意】 The New Madrid fault 如何?

【详析】 文章第三段指出 The New Madrid fault is a vertical fault. 因此 D) 说法正确。A) 与文章内容相反。B) 是描述 the San Andreas fault 的。C) 在文中未提及。

#### 3. 【答案】 A

【题意】从文章中能推断出什么?

【详析】文章开头提到了 the San Andreas fault 经常威胁 California, 接着又描述了密苏里地质断层带来的损害, 并且文章最后也指出自从 1811 年以来在密苏里经常发生许多小地震, 它们表明将有大地震发生, 可见生活在密苏里州可能和生活在加州一样危险。A) 说法与之相符, B), C) 和 D) 项从文章中无法推断出。因此 A) 为正确答案。

4. 【答案】D

【题意】文章暗示了什么?

【详析】从文章第三段后半部分不难发现 D) 项(断层是地球表面的裂缝)说法正确。新马德里地震是由于岩石的突然下沉, 所以 A) 错。B) 和 C) 项在文章中没有明确提到, 因为文章第三段未比较这两种断层的危险性。

5. 【答案】A

【题意】“essentially”的意思是什么?

【详析】该词出现的那一段指出, The San Andreas fault is a horizontal boundary. The New Madrid fault is a vertical fault. 可见 essentially 意为“本质上; 基本上”; basically 意为“基本上; 从根本上说”; industriously 意为“勤勉地, 刻苦地”; silently 意为“沉默地”; astonishingly 意为“令人惊奇地”; 因此 A) 为正确答案。

## Passage Two

### 【词汇注释】

limb[lim] n. 肢, 臂; 树枝

ancestor['ænsɪstə] n. 祖宗, 祖先

joint['dʒɔɪnt] n. 关节; 接头(处) a. 共

同的, 联合的

forelimb[fɔ:lim] n. 前肢

skeleton['skelɪtn] n. 骨骼; 骨架, 骷髅

### 【思路及大意】

本文是一篇说明文。文章首先指出, 人类直立行走是逐渐发展而来的还是一次突然的变化这个问题一直困惑着人类学家。Jungers 比较了人、猿和类人动物的胫骨和腿骨关节, 得出结论说人类直立行走是逐渐发展而来的, Lucy 也许能直立走路, 但其移步方式与现代人有巨大的差异。

### 【答案及详析】

6. 【答案】A

【题意】Jungers 研究的目标是什么?

【详析】文章第一句指出, 几年来困惑人类学家的问题是人类直立行走是逐渐发展而来的, 还是突然形成的。Jungers 是一名人类学家, 他所做的就是为了把这一问题弄清楚。因此 A) 为正确答案。B) 和 C) 是他研究过程中的内容, 不是目标。D) 在文中未提及。

7. 【答案】C

【题意】Jungers 的发现表明了什么?

【详析】第一段第二句指出, Jungers 的发现表明, 人类直立行走 (bipedalism) 是逐渐发展而来的, 因为他发现了生活在 100 万至 400 万年前的一种类人动物化石, 这种动物的走路方式既像人类也像猿。因此 B) 错, C) 为正确答案。

8. 【答案】 C

【题意】 Jungers 的评论建立在对比什么的基础上?

【详析】 从第二、三段可知, Jungers 将人、猿和类人动物的胫骨及腿骨关节进行了对比, 发现类人动物的胫骨及腿骨关节既像人也像猿。关节的大小与其承担的身体负荷有关, 因此两腿走路的动物关节当然要比四肢行走的动物关节要大。C) 为正确答案。

9. 【答案】 C

【题意】 关于 Lucy 下列哪一个是正确的?

【详析】 文章最后一句指出, 虽然类人动物也许能直立走路, 但其移步方式与现代人也许会大相径庭。因此 B) 错, C) 为正确答案。文章未点明类人动物是更像人或更像猿, 因此 A) 错。D) 错在 only 一词。

10. 【答案】 A

【题意】 形成人类直立行走的习惯时, 为什么胫骨和腿骨关节的大小很重要?

【详析】 参考第 8 题详析可知 A) 正确。D) 不对, 因为 Jungers 只是说胫骨和腿骨关节的生长与它们所承受的重量及行走的姿势有关, 并未说这是人与类人动物之间的主要区别。B) 和 C) 在文中未提及。

## Passage There

### 【词汇注释】

poverty [ˈpɒvəti] n. 贫穷, 贫乏

retirement [riˈtaɪəmənt] n. 退休, 退出

productive [prəˈdʌktɪv] a. 生产性的, 多产的

distribute [dɪsˈtrɪbjʊt] v. 分发, 分配, 分布

welfare [ˈwelfeə] n. 福利

### 【思路及大意】

本文是一篇议论文。文章首先为贫困线下下了一个明确的定义, 即可以接受的生活标准所需的最低收入; 接着指出百分之十的美国人生活在贫困线以下是由于没有稳定的工作造成的, 接着作者从三个方面详细论述了穷人没有工作的原因, 并提出了三个解决贫困问题的可能途径。

### 【答案及详析】

11. 【答案】 B

【题意】 作者如何给贫困线下定义?

【详析】 从第一段第一句话可知作者是从人们需求的角度来定义贫困线的。因此 B) 为正确答案。A), C) 和 D) 都未提及。

12. [答案] C

【题意】 下列哪一个不正确?

【详析】 第二段第一句指出,随着生活水平的上升,贫困线也在上升。可见 C)说法不对。从第二段可知 A), B)和 D)说法正确。因此 C)为此题答案。

13. [答案] C

【题意】 人们只有怎样才能有可接受的生活标准?

【详析】 从第二段倒数第二句可知是工作稳定,而不是贫困线稳定,才能使人们生活标准可接受。所以, C)为正确答案。

14. [答案] D

【题意】 许多穷人不适合工作的原因是什么?

【详析】 从第三段中 children less than 15 years old 和 people over 65 years old 可以得出正确答案是 D)。A), B)和 C)是一些成年人不找工作的个人原因,非本题所问。

15. [答案] D

【题意】 经济学家认为解决贫困问题的较好方法是什么?

【详析】 从最后一段第一句 some economists are looking for better solutions to the poverty problem. 可知,方法还有待发现。因此 D)为正确答案。现在许多人依靠福利来过活,但提供更多福利不是解决贫困之道, A)错。C)和 D)在文中未提及。

## Passage Four

### 【词汇注释】

synthetic[ sin'θetik] a. 合成的,人造的;  
综合的

capacity[kə'pæsiti] n. 容量;能力

molecule['mɒlikju:l] n. 分子

wax[wæks] n. 蜡,蜂蜡

permanently['pəmənenəntli] adv. 永久

地,持久地

sympathetic[, simpə'θetik] a. 同情的,  
赞同的,令人愉快的

appropriate[ə'prəʊpriit] a. 恰当的,合  
宜的

### 【思路及大意】

本文是一篇说明文。文章首先简要地介绍了塑料的三种类型(天然塑料、半合成塑料、合成塑料),描述了塑料的形成原理及其性质,接着叙述了从 19 世纪到现在人们对塑料这种材料使用价值的观念变化。

### 【答案及详析】

16. [答案] C

【题意】 哪一项最适合作文章的标题?

【详析】 文章第一段简要地介绍了塑料的分类及其性质。文章第二段描述了 120 多年来人们对塑料的观念改变,第三段谈论了塑料古物。可



见,整篇文章是围绕塑料的发展来展开的,C)与此相一致。因此C)为正确答案。

17.【答案】 A

【题意】 不管形成哪种类型的塑料,下列哪一个是必需的?

【详析】 文章开头提到了三种类型的塑料后,第三句指出,所有这些都是在碳化学的基础上,可见碳是形成塑料不可缺少的成分,因为它有形成链的能力。因此A)为正确答案。

18.【答案】 D

【题意】 加工后保持永久形状的塑料称作什么?

【详析】 第一段倒数二句指出,一些塑料像蜡一样具有软化和再成形的能力,他们被称作“热塑性塑料(thermoplastic)”。还有像鸡蛋一样坚硬的“热固性塑料(thermosetting)”在加热加压后则永久地保持形状。因此D)为正确答案。

19.【答案】 B

【题意】 根据作者所说,塑料大概有多少年的历史?

【详析】 文章第二段第一句 struggled through a hundred and twenty years of... 可知B)为正确答案。

20.【答案】 B

【题意】 第二段描述了关于塑料的哪些历史信息?

【详析】 A),C)和D)项文章未提到。第二段描述了塑料制品的用途,说明了该材料日益受到人们的欢迎,可见B)项(他们逐渐被普遍使用)是正确答案。