

大学英语分级系列教材

五六级 阅读文选

ENGLISH *English*

丁宪理 编



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前 言

阅读是在国内条件下学习英语的主要目的和途径。人们往往以为,借助字典,阅读容易。其实则不然,即使借助字典、真正读懂有一定难度的英语文章,并非易事。有些词、短语、句子,似乎都认识,或字典里都查得到,就是不知道究意是什么意思,甚至理解错了。这种情况屡见不鲜。因此,英语阅读需要专门训练。

阅读的要求:一要快速,二要准确。为此,英语阅读教学分快读与精读。快读要争分夺秒,越快越好,每分钟读 70 词,不查字典,不停顿,不回顾,一口气读完,理解 70% 为合格。精读要准确理解词、语、句、段、篇,不留疑点,不含糊其词,不模棱两可,能概括文章的中心思想,能猜词悟意,能预见、判断和推理,能领会作者的观点和态度。

传统的英语阅读教材分快读、泛读、精读,种类繁多。精读教材一般为十课书,课文冗长。每课书后含包罗万象的理解、词语、填空、改错、写作练习。每课书耗时太长,学生又忙于作业,兴味索然。

本文集收文 100 篇,题材广泛,包括社会、文化、科普、史地、生活知识、人物传记,大多短小精悍,读来饶有兴趣。课后练习仅有阅读理解。文章难度为大学英语五、六级水平,含《大学英语教学大纲》所公布的五、六级词汇,可供参加六级统考的本科生或研究生使用。本书可一文两用,先快读做题,后精讲多练。精读时教师要突出词语教学,旨在扩大学生的词汇量,着重基础词的多种词性和词义,同义词、易混词的区别

及难词的掌握。语法结构在于掌握现代标准书面英语的表达方式。

由于水平有限,仓猝成册,谬误之处恭请读者诸君斧正。

编 者

1992年9月于广州

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Passage 1

Automation refers to the introduction of electronic control and automatic operation of productive machinery. It reduces the human factors, mental and physical, in production, and is designed to make possible the manufacture of more goods with fewer workers. The development of automation in American industry has been called the "Second Industrial Revolution".

Labour's concern over automation arises from uncertainty about the effects on employment, and fears of major changes in jobs. In the main, labour has taken the view that resistance to technical change is unfruitful. Eventually, the result of automation may well be an increase in employment, since it is expected that vast industries will grow up around manufacturing, maintaining, and repairing automation equipment. The interest of labour lies in bringing about the transition with a minimum of inconvenience and distress to the workers involved. Also, union spokesmen emphasize that the benefit of the increased production and lower costs made possible by automation should be shared by workers in the form of higher wages, more leisure, and improved living standards.

To protect the interests of their members in the era of automation, unions have adopted a number of new policies. One of these is the promotion of supplementary unemployment benefit plans. It is emphasized that since the employer involved in such

a plan has a direct financial interest in preventing unemployment, he will have a strong drive for planning new installations so as to cause the least possible problems in jobs and job assignments. Some unions are working for dismissal pay agreements, requiring that permanently dismissed workers be paid a sum of money based on length of service. Another approach is the idea of the "improvement factor", which calls for wage increases based on increases in productivity. It is possible, however, that labour will rely mainly on reduction in working hours in order to gain a full share in the fruits of automation.

1. Though labour worries about the effects of automation, it never doubts that _____.

- A. automation will eventually prevent unemployment B. automation will help workers acquire new skills C. automation will eventually benefit the workers no less than the employers ☒ D. automation is a trend which cannot be stopped

2. The idea of the "improvement factor"

(Para. 3, Line 11) implies roughly _____.

- A. wages should be paid on the basis of length of service ☒ B. the benefit of the increased production and lower costs should be shared by workers C. supplementary unemployment benefit plans should be promoted D. the transition to automation should be brought about with the minimum of inconvenience and distress to workers

3. In order to get the full benefits of automation, labour will de-

pend mostly on _____.

- A. additional payment to the permanently dismissed workers
 - B. the increase of wages in proportion to the increase in productivity
 - ☒ C. shorter working hours and more leisure time
 - D. strong drive for planning new installations
4. Which of the following can best sum up the passage?
- A. Advantages and disadvantage of automation.
 - ☒ B. Labour and the effects of automation
 - C. Unemployment benefit plans and automation.
 - D. Social benefits of automation.

Passage 2

The case for college has been accepted without question for more than a generation. All high school graduates ought to go, says conventional wisdom and statistical evidence, because college will help them earn more money, become "better" people, and learn to be more responsible citizens than those who don't go.

But college has never been able to work its magic for everyone. And now that close to half our high school graduates are attending, those who don't fit the pattern are becoming more numerous, and more obvious. College graduates are selling shoes and driving taxis; college students interfere with each other's experiments and write false letters of recommendation in the intense competition for admission to graduate school. Others find no stimulation in their studies, and drop out ... often en-

courged by college administrators.

Some observers say the fault is with the young people themselves—they are spoiled and they are expecting too much. But that's a condemnation of the students as a whole, and doesn't explain all campus unhappiness. Others blame the state of the world, and they are partly right. We've been told that young people have to go to college because our economy can't absorb an army of untrained eighteen-year-olds. But disappointed graduates are learning that it can no longer absorb an army of trained twenty-two-year-olds, either.

Some adventuresome educators and campus watchers have openly begun to suggest that college may not be the best, the proper, the only place for every young person after the completion of high school. We may have been looking at all those surveys and statistics upside down, it seems, and through the rosy glow of our own remembered college experiences. Perhaps college doesn't make people intelligent, ambitious, happy, liberal, or quick to learn things—maybe it's just the other way around, and intelligent, ambitious, happy, liberal, quick-learning people are merely the ones who have been attracted to college in the first place. And perhaps all those successful college graduates would have been successful whether they had gone to college or not. This is heresy to those of us who have been brought up to believe that if a little schooling is good, more has to be much better. But contrary evidence is beginning to mount up.

1. According to the author,_____.

- A. people used to question the value of college education ☒ B.
people used to have full confidence in higher education C.
all high school graduates went to college D. very few high
school graduates chose to go to college
2. In the 2nd paragraph, "those who don't fit the pattern" refers
to _____.
A. high school graduates who aren't suitable for college edu-
cation B. college graduates who are selling shoes and driv-
ing taxis ☒ C. college students who aren't any better for their
higher education D. high school graduates who failed to be
admitted to college
3. The drop-out rate of college students seems to go up because
_____.
A. young people are disappointed with the conventional way
of teaching at college B. many young people are required to
join the army ☒ C. young people have little motivation in
pursuing a higher education D. young people don't like the
intense competition for admission to graduate school
4. According to the passage, the problems of college education
partly arise from the fact that _____.
☒ A. society cannot provide enough jobs for properly trained
college graduates B. high school graduates do not fit the
pattern of college education C. too many students have to
earn their own living D. college administrators encourage
students to drop out
5. In this passage the author argues that _____.

- ☒ A. more and more evidence shows college education may not be the best thing for high school graduates B. college education is not enough if one wants to be successful C. college education benefits only the intelligent, ambitious, and quick-learning people D. intelligent people may learn quicker if they don't go to college
6. The "surveys and statistics" mentioned in the last paragraph might have shown that _____.
- A. college-educated people are more successful than non-college-educated people ☒ B. college education was not the first choice for intelligent people C. the less schooling one has the better for him D. most people have sweet memories of college life

Passage 3

Ours has become a society of employees. A hundred years or so ago only one out of every five Americans at work was employed, i. e., worked for somebody else. Today only one out of five is not employed but working for himself. And when fifty years ago "being employed" meant working as a factory labourer or as a farmhand, the employee of today is increasingly a middle-class person with a substantial formal education, holding a professional or management job requiring intellectual and technical skills. Indeed, two things have characterized American society during these last fifty years: middle-class and upper-class

employees have been the fastest-growing groups in our working population — growing so fast that the industrial worker, that oldest child of the Industrial Revolution, has been losing in numerical importance despite the expansion of industrial production.

Yet you will find little if anything written on what it is to be an employee. You can find a great deal of very dubious advice on how to get a job or how to get a promotion. You can also find a good deal of work in a chosen field, whether it be the mechanist's trade or bookkeeping. Every one of these trades requires different skills, sets different standards, and requires a different preparation. Yet they all have employeeship in common. And increasingly, especially in the large business or in government, employeeship is more important to success than the special professional knowledge or skill. Certainly more people fail because they do not know the requirements of being an employee than because they do not adequately possess the skills of their trade; the higher you climb the ladder, the more you get into administrative or executive work, the greater the emphasis on ability to work within the organization rather than on technical abilities or professional knowledge.

1. It is implied that fifty years ago _____.

- A. eighty per cent of American working people were employed in factories B. twenty per cent of American intellectuals were employees C. the percentage of intellectuals in the total work force was almost the same as that of industrial

workers **D.** the percentage of intellectuals working as employees was not so large as that of industrial workers

2. According to the passage, with the development of modern industry, _____.

A. factory labourers will overtake intellectual employees in number **B.** there are as many middle-class employees as factory labourers **C.** employers have attached great importance to factory labourers **D.** the proportion of factory labourers in the total employee population has decreased

3. The word "dubious" (Para. 2, Line 2) most probably means _____.

A. valuable **B.** useful **C.** doubtful **D.** helpful

4. According to the writer, professional knowledge or skill is _____.

A. less important than awareness of being a good employee
B. as important as the ability to deal with public relations
C. more important than employer-employee relations **D.** as important as the ability to co-operate with others in the organization

5. From the passage it can be seen that employeeship helps one _____.

A. to be more successful in his career **B.** to be more specialized in his field **C.** to solve technical problems **D.** to develop his professional skill