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INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION
AN INTEGRATED ENGLISH COURSE

大学跨文化英语
综合教程

Student's Book
学生用书

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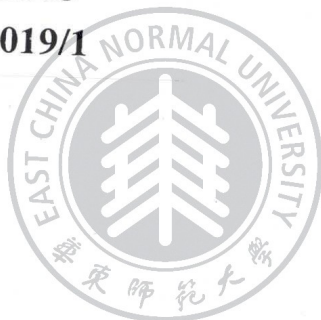
Student's Book
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Foreword

In this New Era, we are riding on the crest of a new wave of integrated language and culture teaching. In the 1800s, European scholars started focusing on the comparative study and teaching of cultures. In the 1900s, Americans explored ways of affirming and maintaining cultural origins as immigrants sought to adapt and get along with each other, and by the 1930s an “intercultural education” movement had started. In the 1950s the concept of “intercultural communication” (IC) and practices of intercultural training helped formalize the “intercultural” and “cross-cultural” fields launched in the 1970s.

Related to China’s opening and reform policies, He Daokuan introduced this discipline in 1983 and Hu Wenzhong edited the first set of essays entitled: *Intercultural Communication: What It Means to Chinese Learners of English* in 1988. Led primarily by internationally exposed and engaged foreign language teachers, the Chinese Association for Intercultural Communication (CAFIC) was formed in Harbin in 1995. Chinese academics have continued to grapple with how to study intercultural communication and how to apply research to Chinese classroom and social contexts.

Our team at Shanghai International Studies University (SISU) have been a key part of this process, from my own first intercultural orientation courses in 1994 and close cooperation and work with Zhang Hongling, since 1996. Together we have co-taught courses, co-designed educational curricula and training programs, co-developed BA, MA, Ph.D., MBA, and MOOC programs as well as co-founded the SISU Intercultural Institute (SII) in 2006. Since then, our multi-volume flagship series *Intercultural Research* has been established and important academic works such as *An Intercultural Approach to Foreign Language Teaching* (Prof. Zhang’s seminal 2007 monograph) have appeared. Therefore, it is both a joy and affirmation of our decades-long collaboration to be asked to be the Co-Chief Editors of this important set of language textbooks and be joined by members of the core team that have worked with us to build the SISU IC disciplinary base.

With our CAFIC colleagues and collaborating intercultural scholar-practitioners at home and abroad, we have welcomed each new version of the national framework for foreign language teaching adopted by the Chinese Ministry of Education. We are motivated by the broader aims of Core Literacy for all students and specific guidelines for (1) general English, (2) special-purpose English, and (3) intercultural communication. These guidelines call for our

bridges of understanding between cultural groups.

From the outset of preparing this series, we have therefore aimed to design a new IC-oriented approach to English textbooks that might advance the quality of education, social interaction, and individual shaping of young people's personal orientations in this New Age.

As our repertoire of intercultural teaching expanded, we were also learning new ways of engaging students. Beyond in-class role-plays, we particularly found that students learned more deeply through exploring cultural misunderstandings together in small groups, writing up such conflict cases, and presenting ways to apply both intercultural theories and indigenous cultural explanations. This led to us working with this press (SFLBP) to launch the Intercultural Communication Competence (ICC) Contest in 2016, which has now spread across China as another important tool to link the classroom with real life situations and find ways to build

Each of these exercises needed to be adapted for different types of learners, from non-English majors to vocational school students and adults.

From my own classroom teaching as a foreign expert, I noted that the most effective exercises were those that fostered reflection, both on the assumptions embedded in one's own cultural background and on the reasons for differences observed in other cultures. Students needed time and guidance to go beyond simple observations to explore interpretations, analyze influences, and evaluate the plausibility of explanations. Just teaching students to consider Edward T. Hall's descriptions or Geert Hofstede's dimensions did not necessarily contribute to their intercultural understanding. Our SII teaching team sought to help students write out their own cultural stories and consider variations in others' narratives, list out their own cultural values or identities and become sensitive to how others might prioritize such lists, note differences in cultural patterns, consider reasons for pragmatic failure or expectancy violations.

build on that over the years.

It has thus been an honor and a challenge to be asked to develop a pioneering textbook series to apply lessons learned from 25 years of experience at SISU and across China toward addressing these national reforms. When I started teaching non-English majors or young professionals in the Overseas Training Center (OTC) at SISU in 1993, culture-related teaching materials were non-existent, and year by year we sought to find essays, videos, exercises, or class simulations that could both strengthen the broad set of English language skills as well as integrate cultural awareness or cultivate intercultural competence. Our first intercultural courses were offered with this integration of language + culture + intercultural thinking in mind, and we've continued to

joint efforts to more fully integrate intercultural awareness, and especially communication and competence aspects through (a) new courses, (b) updated general English curricula (for non-

We are also hopeful that this textbook series will serve as a springboard for further enhancing curriculum reform and updating practices in English language education. As we've worked together on each unit, we've also grown in our understanding of the concepts, reflections, and applications by which critical thinking through cross-cultural exposure can develop us both as global learners and intercultural communicators.

Personally, I've learned much working with our textbook team developing the Cultural Exploration sections, especially reading and editing the many wonderful "Window to the World" essays submitted by international teachers and students. Even as a seasoned intercultural professional, many have opened my eyes to new perspectives or expanded cross-cultural insights. We hope that you will experience a similar process as you go through these units. Whatever you might think that intercultural communication is, we propose that it needs to foster a new approach to observation, a new way of interpretation, a new pattern of thinking and evaluation — ultimately leading to personal transformation, to a process of becoming intercultural.

A key part of intercultural interaction is international team-building. We're pleased that our SISU Intercultural Institute could pull together a diverse team of Chinese and foreign teachers and qualified experts to work collaboratively on this project with the skilled staff of the Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press. Besides established SISU Intercultural Faculty who designed, developed, and co-edited each textbook, the team includes international consultants and reviewers who are leading experts and scholars in cross-cultural studies, visiting scholars and other teachers engaged in college English teaching for many years, and Ph.D. students who helped adapt, edit, or field-test important sections. Each of them has been a part of expanding our thinking and considering how to best represent that in these learning units.

After this long and fruitful process of preparation, we are pleased to be presenting these textbooks to you and the college English learning community of China. It is our sincere hope that each unit will help fulfill the goals and aims stated above to effectively enhance English instruction as well as develop international-oriented learners and competent Chinese intercultural communicators in this New Era of greater global interaction. To better understand our dynamic world, better tell Chinese stories, and better equip our students for global people-to-people interaction opportunities, let's ride this new wave together!

Steve J. Kulich, Shanghai

January 2019

Director, SISU Intercultural Institute

President, IAIR (2019–2021)

International Academy of Intercultural Relations

前言

1. 背景和指导思想

2018年9月,习近平总书记在全国教育大会上明确指出,要把立德树人融入思想道德教育、文化知识教育、社会实践教育各环节,贯穿基础教育、职业教育、高等教育各领域,学科体系、教学体系、教材体系、管理体系要围绕这个目标来设计,教师要围绕这个目标来教,学生要围绕这个目标来学。外语教育作为学校教育的重要组成部分,在立德树人和综合素质培养方面具有不可替代的优势。

根据《国家中长期教育改革和发展规划纲要(2010—2020年)》和教育部《关于全面提高高等教育质量的若干意见》等文件精神,教育部高等学校大学外语教学指导委员会在总结大学英语课程建设和教学改革经验的基础上,于2016年完成了新版《大学英语教学指南》的编制,对大学英语课程教学的意义、定位与性质、教学目标与要求、课程设置、教学方法与手段、测试评价等内容进行了全新的定义和描述,清晰阐明了新时代大学外语教育的新使命和新理念。

《大学英语教学指南》指出,高校开设大学英语课程既满足国家战略的需求,为国家改革开放和社会经济发展服务,同时也满足学生个人专业学习和职业发展的需要。学习英语有助于学生树立世界眼光,培养国际意识,提高人文素养,同时为知识创新、潜能发挥和全面发展提供一个基本工具,为迎接全球化时代的挑战和机遇做好准备,对大学生未来发展具有现实意义和长远影响。大学英语课程是高等学校人文教育的一部分,开展跨文化教育、培养跨文化能力是其重要任务之一。

挖掘和发挥大学英语课程所具有的丰富人文内涵,将其工具性和人文性有机统一,也符合2014年《教育部关于全面深化课程改革 落实立德树人根本任务的意见》中提出的培养核心素养和全面发展的人的教育目标。

《大学跨文化英语综合教程》即是根据《大学英语教学指南》和《中国学生发展核心素养》编写的一套大学英语教材。如何在大学英语课程教学中将语言学习的工具性和人文性有机统一,将英语语言教学和跨文化能力培养有机融合,实现大学英语教学效益最大化,是《大学跨文化英语综合教程》编写的重要指导思想。

2. 理论基础

什么是跨文化能力?如何在外语教学中开展跨文化教育?对这两个问题的回答构成本套教材的理论基础。

在众多跨文化能力概念模型中,我们采用的是被广泛认可的ABC模型,即跨文化能力包括情感态度、文化知识和行为能力三个维度。我们对这三个维度界定如下:

- C (cognitive): 文化知识的学习是基础,它既包括对目的语文化的学习,也包括对世界其他文化的了解,还包括对本族文化的深入理解和反思。
- A (affective): 情感态度的培养是重点,在广泛接触和了解不同文化之间差异的基础上,增强学习者对中国文化的认同,以及对世界其他文化开放、包容、理解和欣赏的态度,培养全球意识。
- B (behavioral): 行为技能是目标,将文化知识和跨文化情感态度转化为能力,

形成善于倾听、观察、分析、阐释、比较、评价、创新以及批判思维和自主学习等能力，为讲述中国文化故事，参与中外人文交流，促进人类命运共同体建设做好准备。

根据上述跨文化能力框架，本教材在语料选用和教学活动设计时，将文化知识的学习与情感态度和跨文化交际行为能力培养并重。针对如何在外语教学中开展跨文化教育这一问题，本教材以张红玲(2007)提出的跨文化外语教学理论及 Angel M. Y. Lin (2016) 的内容—语言融合式外语学习理论 (CLIL) 为依据，借鉴新课标提出的、集综合性、关联性、实践性等特点为一体的英语学习活动观，运用跨文化培训方法，设计了大量体验式学习活动，将语言能力、跨文化能力等核心素养的提升有机融合，提高教学效率，充分发挥外语学科的育人功能。

3. 编写原则

- (1) 运用综合性、关联性、实践性的外语学习活动观，将语言教学与跨文化教学有机融合。

本教材主要通过文本和语料的选用以及练习和活动的设计来实现语言教学和文化教学的融合。具体来说，基于语篇所提供的主题情境，由信息获取与理解、梳理与加工、整合与内化、表达与交流、迁移与创新，构成一系列融语言、思维、文化为一体的学习活动，架起了课程内容和课程目标之间的桥梁。

- (2) 运用布鲁姆学习分类法 (Bloom's Taxonomy of Learning)，促进语言能力和跨文化能力循序渐进地提升。

本教材参照布鲁姆的记忆、理解、应用、分析、综合、评估六个学习阶梯，对各单元的学习活动进行设计，形成了“选择和搭配——分类和对比——应用和建构——分析和评价——创新和提高”的编排框架，促进学习者语言能力和跨文化能力的逐步提升。

4. 教材特点

- (1) 语言学习与跨文化学习有机融合。在选择课文和练习语料时，特别关注其跨文化教育的内涵和潜力。同时，将文化教学内置于传统的精读课文、阅读理解和语言训练中，并专门开设文化探索 / 跨文化对话板块，以英语为媒介进行多种形式的跨文化教学活动。
- (2) 文化活动丰富多彩，涉及情感、认知和行为多个维度，能够全面提升学习者的跨文化能力。我们借鉴和应用了上海外国语大学跨文化研究中心团队 20 余年跨文化教育与培训所积累形成的系列教学活动，根据各单元主题，采用学习任务 + 分解步骤的形式，设计了大量原创性的跨文化外语教学活动。
- (3) 既注重跨文化交际普遍规律和原则的教学，也让学习者有机会接触和了解世界各国文化及其特点。在选取课文和设计活动时，文化的广泛代表性是我们遵循的原则，我们因此还专门开辟了“世界文化之窗”板块，为学习者展示了 30 多个国家的文化特点。
- (4) 重视学习者对中国文化的学习和思考，增强他们的中国文化身份认同。一方面，在各单元文化教学活动中将中国文化与世界其他文化进行比较分析，

感知文化差异，进行跨文化对话；另一方面，每册教材都有一个单元以中国文化为主题，激发学习者学习中国文化的热情，深刻反思自己的文化身份认同。

- (5) 选材遵循体裁多样、语言优美、思想内容深刻、文化多元性、经典性和时效性兼顾等原则，既关注经典，又着眼现代；既立足中国，又放眼全球；既强调主题新颖有趣、贴近大学生生活，又注重文章的思想性和人文性。
- (6) 充分考虑传统课堂教学与学生自主学习相结合的需求，把慕课学习融入教学活动，创新教学模式。张红玲、顾力行、迟若冰主讲的全英语《跨文化交际》慕课在英国 FutureLearn 平台上每年运行两次，教师使用本套教材进行教学时可同时运用这门慕课开展翻转课堂教学。同时，本套教材还配套制作了数字资源供学习者自主学习。
- (7) 练习编写既采用学生比较习惯的传统阅读理解和语言练习形式，帮助他们应对四级和六级考试，又运用了大量以能力提升为目的的创新学习活动，特别是在文化探索和跨文化对话板块，语言运用能力、跨文化交际能力、批判思维意识和创意写作能力是各项活动设计的主要出发点。

5. 教材结构

本套教材共四册，每册八个单元，课文选文长度为 700—1 200 词，每册新词数量控制在 500—600 个。从第一册到第四册，课文长度和深度、词汇难度以及文化学习活动的高度，按照初级—中级—中高级—高级四个层级目标逐步递进。

四册书的基本结构一致，个别部分在一、二册和三、四册间有所区别。每个单元从名人名言和热身活动开始，由 Reading & Digesting、Cultural Exploration（一、二册）/ Intercultural Dialogue（三、四册）和 Reading & Reflecting 三大板块构成，另有世界文化之窗（Window to the World）和批判思维与创意写作（一、二册 Critical Thinking & Creative Writing/三、四册 Essay Writing）穿插其间。

- 名人名言：皆为与单元主题相关、蕴含丰富文化学习内涵的精辟短句，出自历史名人或跨文化研究学者。
- 热身活动：一般为与课文主题相关、能激发学习者进行文化讨论的短视频、歌曲或图片。
- Reading & Digesting：围绕一篇精读课文，包括“阅读理解”（由课文结构、细节理解、难句解析、拓展问题等题型组成）和“语言训练”（包括选词填空、多项选择、词语搭配、词形转换、语法训练、中英翻译等题型）两个部分。其中一、二册注重词法讲解和单句翻译；三、四册注重句法讲解和句群翻译，还特别突出了与中国文化相关的语料内容。
- Window to the World：旨在让学习者接触和了解课文覆盖不到的其他国家文化，感受世界文化的多样性。我们邀请来自不同国家、特别是“一带一路”沿线国家留学生讲述他们的文化故事，每个单元涉及一个文化，四册教材共涉及 32 个文化。
- Cultural Exploration/Intercultural Dialogue：Cultural Exploration（一、二册）包括一到两个与课文主题相关的文化探索任务，每个任务分解为若干个步骤，采取音频或视频欣赏、信息匹配、角色扮演、小组讨论、案例分析、心理测试等形式，从情感、认知和行为各个维度全面发展学习者的跨文化能力。三、

四册改为 Intercultural Dialogue, 相比前两册而言, 更注重跨文化能力实训, 每单元同样由一个任务和四个步骤构成, 分别以反思中国文化、了解外国文化、跨文化对话和跨文化实践为目标, 旨在为学生搭建从知识学习到行为和情感转变的脚手架, 深化跨文化能力的培养。

- **Critical Thinking & Creative Writing/Essay Writing:** 写作训练在第一、二册以批判思维与创意写作 (Critical Thinking & Creative Writing) 为题, 旨在培养学习者的逻辑思维和批判思维, 提升英语写作能力。三、四册为 Essay Writing, 根据大学英语四、六级考试常见作文题目形式, 基于单元主题设计写作任务, 在进一步提高学生写作能力的同时, 帮助他们备考。
- **Reading & Reflecting:** 选用一篇与精读课文主题相关且包含跨文化教学内容的文章作为课文, 并配以阅读理解、拓展练习和翻译等学习活动。

6. 主编及编写团队

本套教材由上海外国语大学跨文化研究中心团队精心打造。总主编张红玲教授是中国跨文化交际学会副会长, 长期从事跨文化教育及跨文化外语教学研究和实践, 其《跨文化外语教学》一书建构了我国跨文化外语教学理论体系; 总主编顾力行 (Steve J. Kulich) 教授是国际跨文化研究学会主席、价值观和身份认同研究专家, 在跨文化研究学科发展、跨文化教育和课程体系建设方面具有重要影响力。

教材编写人员均为具有丰富英语教学和跨文化教育与培训经验的大学教师。团队成员在张红玲和顾力行的带领下, 全面调研大学英语教学现状, 研读相关文件, 研讨跨文化外语教学理念, 研制教材编写大纲和原则。团队核心成员翁立平、索格飞和迟若冰分别带领三个小组, 负责阅读理解、语言练习和文化探索/跨文化对话三大板块的编写工作。参与教材编写的人员包括付小秋、郭爱丽、赵富霞、沈兴涛、姚春雨、虞怡达、梁晓雪、张安琪、袁苾璇、蒋璜、左成利、林帜、石雪、赵爽等。

在教材策划和编写过程中, 上海外语教育出版社策划编辑邵海华老师给予编写团队全面、细致、专业的指导, 确保了教材顺利完成。此外, 出版社为教材安排了非常敬业又专业的责任编辑, 他们耐心和细心的工作风格也是本套教材质量的保证。

由于编者水平与经验有限, 教材中难免有不足之处, 希望读者批评指正。

编者

2019年1月

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UNIT

1

Starting a New Journey

Overview

In this unit, you will

- identify your goals and seek ways to enhance your college experience;
- explore your university culture and get prepared for your college life;
- understand issues related to the distribution of knowledge across the globe.

It never will rain roses. When we want to have more roses we must plant trees.

— George Eliot

Great works are performed not by strength, but by perseverance.

— Samuel Johnson

Warm-up

 Watch a clip from the movie *Dead Poets Society* and answer the following questions.



1. What does the candlelight symbolize?
2. If you are requested to draw a picture of your university life, what would you focus on?



Text

How to Live Wisely

Richard J. Light¹

dean /di:n/ *n.* (大学的) 学院院长, 系主任

actionable /'ækʃənəbl/ *a.* workable
切实可行的

implement /'ɪmplɪmənt/ *vt.*
make sth. that has been
officially decided start to
happen or be used 贯彻, 实行

enhance /n'hɑ:ns/ *vt.* improve
sth. 提高, 改进

response /rɪ'spɒns/ *n.* 反应, 回答

commentary /'kɒməntəri/ *n.* 评论

emerge /ɪ'mɜ:dʒ/ *vi.* appear or
come out from somewhere
出现, 涌现

productive /prəʊ'dʌktɪv/ *a.*
producing or achieving a lot 富
有成效的

conflict with 与……冲突

build on 在原有的基础上增加

grapple with 尽力解决, 设法理解
(难题)

1 Imagine you are Dean for a day. What is one actionable change you would implement to enhance the college experience on campus?

2 I have asked students this question for years. The answers can be eye-opening. A few years ago, the responses began to move away from “improve the history course” or “change the ways labs are structured.” A different commentary, about learning to live wisely, has emerged.

3 What does it mean to live a good life? What about a productive life? How about a happy life? How might I think about these ideas if the answers conflict with one another? And how do I use my time here at college to build on the answers to these tough questions?

4 A number of campuses have recently started to offer an opportunity for students to grapple with these questions. On my campus, Harvard, a

1. Richard J. Light is a Professor of Teaching and Learning at Harvard Graduate School of Education.

(标有*的为六级词汇, 斜体的为超纲词汇, 其余均为四级词汇。)

small group of faculty members and deans created a non-credit seminar called “Reflecting on Your Life.” Here are three exercises that students find particularly engaging. Each is designed to help freshmen identify their goals and reflect systematically about various aspects of their personal lives, and to connect what they discover to what they actually do at college.

5 For the first exercise, we ask students to make a list of how they want to spend their time at college. What matters to you? This might be going to class, studying, spending time with close friends, perhaps volunteering in the off-campus community or reading books not on any course’s required reading list. Then students make a list of how they actually spent their time, on average, each day over the past week and match the two lists.

6 Finally, we pose the question: How well do your commitments actually match your goals?

7 A few students find a strong overlap between the lists. The majority don’t. They are stunned and dismayed to discover they are spending much of their precious time on activities they don’t value highly. The challenge is how to align your time commitments to reflect your personal convictions.

8 In the core values exercise, students are presented with a sheet of paper with about 25 words on it. The words include “dignity,” “love,” “fame,” “family,” “excellence,” “wealth,” and “wisdom.” They are told to circle the five words that best describe their core values. Now, we ask, how might you deal with a situation where your core values come into conflict with one another? Students find this question particularly difficult. One student brought up his own personal dilemma: He wants to be a surgeon, and he also wants to have a large family. So his core values include the words “useful” and “family.” He said he worries a lot whether he could be a successful surgeon while also being a devoted father. Students couldn’t stop talking about his example, as many saw themselves facing a similar challenge.

9 The third exercise presents the parable of a happy fisherman living a simple life on a small island. The fellow goes fishing for a few hours every day. He catches a few fish, sells them to his friends, and enjoys spending the rest of the day with his wife and children, and napping. He couldn’t imagine changing a thing in his relaxed and easy life.

10 Let’s tweak the parable: A recent M.B.A. visits this island and quickly

faculty /'fækəlti/ *n.* (主美) (高等院校或系的) 全体教员及有学衔的行政人员

seminar /'semɪnɑː/ *n.* 研讨课, 研讨会

reflect /rɪ'flekt/ *vi.* think carefully and deeply about sth. 沉思

engaging /ɪn'geɪdʒɪŋ/ *a.*

interesting or pleasant in a way that attracts your attention 有吸引力的

identify /aɪ'dentɪfaɪ/ *vt.*

recognize and correctly name sb. or sth. 识别

systematically /,sɪstɪ'mætɪkəli/ *ad.* 有系统地, 有组织地

volunteer /,vɒləntɪə/ *vi.* offer to do sth. without being paid 自愿

on average 平均来看, 一般说来

pose /pəʊz/ *vt.* raise or ask 提出

commitment /kə'mɪtmənt/ *n.* 投入

overlap* /,əʊvə'læp/ *n.* 重合, 重叠

majority /mə'dʒɔrəti/ *n.* 大多数

stunned* /stʌnd/ *a.* too surprised or shocked to speak (因惊讶、震惊而) 说不出话来

dismayed* /dɪs'meɪd/ *a.* worried, disappointed, and upset when sth. unpleasant happens 失望的

value /'væljuː/ *vt.* think that sb. or sth. is important 尊重, 重视

align* /ə'laɪn/ *vt.* organize or change sth. so that it is in the right relationship to sth. else 调整

conviction* /kən'vɪkʃən/ *n.* 坚定的信仰或主张

core /kɔː/ *a.* 核心的

present ... with ... 给予, 颁发

dignity /'dɪgnəti/ *n.* 尊严

deal with 应付, 处理

bring up 提出

dilemma /dɪ'lemə/ *n.* 进退两难的境地, 困境

surgeon /'sɜːdʒən/ *n.* 外科医生

devoted /dɪ'vəʊtɪd/ *a.* giving sb. or sth. a lot of love and attention 尽心尽职的

parable /'pærəbl/ *n.* (说教性) 寓言, 道德小故事

tweak /twiːk/ *vt.* change slightly 稍作修改

M.B.A. (Master of Business Administration) 工商管理学硕士

market /'mɑ:kɪt/ *vt.* make a product available in shops 营销, 销售

cannery /'kænəri/ *n.* 罐头食品厂

issue /'ɪʃu:/ *vt.* officially produce sth. such as new stamps, coins, or shares and make them available for purchase 正式发行

I.P.O. (Initial Public Offerings)
首次公开募股

ultimately /'ʌltɪmɪtli/ *ad.* in the end, eventually 最后, 最终

donate /dəu'neɪt/ *vt.* give sth. in order to help a person or organization 捐献

make a difference 有影响, 起(重要)作用

feed /fi:d/ *vt.* give food to 喂食

apply ... to 把……应用于

substantial /səb'stænʃəl/ *a.* large in amount or number 大量的

undergraduate /ˌʌndə'grædʒuət/ *n.* 大学(本科)生

capitalize on 利用, 使用

remarkable /rɪ'mɑ:kəbl/ *a.* unusual or surprising and therefore deserving attention or praise 非凡的, 显著的

introspection /ˌɪntrəʊ'spekʃən/ *n.* 内省, 反省

transformational
/ˌtrænsfə'meɪʃənəl/ *a.* able to produce a big change or improvement in a situation 转变的, 变革的

sees how this fisherman could become rich. He could catch more fish, start up a business, market the fish, open a cannery, maybe even issue an I.P.O. Ultimately he would become truly successful. He could donate some of his fish to hungry children worldwide and might even save lives.

11 “And then what?” asks the fisherman.

12 “Then you could spend lots of time with your family,” replies the visitor. “Yet you would make a difference in the world. You would have used your talents, and fed some poor children, instead of just lying around all day.”

13 We ask students to apply this parable to their own lives. Is it more important to you to have little, be less traditionally successful, yet be relaxed and happy and spend time with your family? Or is it more important to you to work hard, perhaps start a business, or even make the world a better place along the way?

14 Typically, this simple parable leads to substantial disagreement. These discussions encourage first-year undergraduates to think about what really matters to them, and what each of us feels we might owe, or not owe, to the broader community — ideas that our students can capitalize on throughout their time at college.

15 At the end of our sessions, I say to my group: “Tell me one thing you have changed your mind about this year,” and many responses reflect a remarkable level of introspection. Three years later, when we ask them again, nearly all report that the discussions had been valuable, a step toward turning college into the transformational experience it is meant to be.

(842 words)