

CET 百篇训练丛书

大学英语四级考试

**快速阅读**

*Fast Reading*

**100**

**篇**

上海外语教育出版社

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# 快速阅读

Fast Reading

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朱新福 主编

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## 内 容 提 要

本书是为大学英语四级考生提供的一本题材广泛多样、文字新颖生动、可读性与趣味性极强的英语快速阅读教材。

全书 100 篇,依篇幅长短及难度大小编排先后。篇幅跨度为 380—600 词左右,生词控制在 3%—4% 之间,文章附有多项选择性的阅读理解若干,供读者自我检查。书后附有答案。

## 前 言

本书是根据《大学英语教学大纲》编写,目的在于帮助高等学校的学生迅速提高阅读水平,达到大纲规定的要求。

本书 100 篇,依篇幅长短及难度大小编排先后。篇幅跨度为 380—600 词左右。每篇文章后附有 6—10 个阅读理解题,生词控制在 3%—4% 之间。

本书选材广泛,内容新颖,集趣味性、知识性、实用性于一体。文章内容既有科普常识、风土人情,又有人物传记、日常知识等,涵盖了社会、文化、教育、经济、法律等领域。文章体裁多样,有叙述文、说明文、议论文、应用文等。为避免与以往所使用的同等程度的材料内容重复,本书部分内容采取自选自编、独立设计问题的方式。

本书旨在培养学生下述能力:掌握所读材料的主旨大意;了解说明主旨大意的细节;既理解字面的意思,也能根据所读材料进行一定的判断和推论;既理解个别句子的意义,也理解上下文的逻辑思路,并能就文章的内容进行判断、推理和信息转换。

使用本书时,应注意以下两点:

1. 在阅读时不能查词典,如有生词,可根据上下文内容进行猜测以确定词义。
2. 培养边阅读、边理解、边记忆的良好习惯。读完文章即做练习,做练习时,不再翻阅已读过的课文。

由于编者水平有限,时间仓促,谬误疏漏之处在所难免,望广大读者及同行专家不吝赐教。

编 者

1997.8

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# Fast Reading 100

## Passage 1

Mind and body are two parts of a complex organism controlled by the nervous system, which acts on information received from the senses. The way a person perceives and reacts depends on his mood, his state of health, his diet, his body temperature and his level of consciousness.

There is considerable evidence that every thought or emotion has some related physical effect, and that every change within the nervous system should have some psychological effect. Although the precise nature of these correlations is not always known, the view that body and mind are constantly interacting in some way is now accepted by most psychologists.

The relationship between mind and body is particularly apparent in emotional states, especially those of fear and anger. When a person is in the grip of a powerful emotion his body undergoes changes, just as it does when he is asleep, ill or under the influence of drugs or alcohol. Most people are familiar with such sensations as a dry mouth when they are nervous, or a racing heart when they are afraid or excited. Such physical changes can be measured – for instance, by recording pulse rate and breathing, or by measuring the dilation of the pupils of the eyes.

A particularly sensitive measure of bodily change during periods of emotion is the galvanic skin response (GSR). This is used in the instrument known as the lie detector. The GSR depends on the fact that some mental activity produces bodily changes, such as sweating, which affect the skin's resistance to electricity. To measure GSR, electrodes are placed on the palm and on the back of the hand, and a weak current is passed between the electrodes. Changes in the current are recorded in an amplified form, often by means of an automatically controlled pen on moving paper. Other recordings, for instance of pulse, blood pressure and breathing, can be made simultaneously, by an instrument called a polygraph.

The galvanic skin response method has proved a very efficient indicator of general psychological arousal. Even slight embarrassment will cause a deflection of the recording pen.

### Comprehension Exercises:

1. We are told in the first paragraph that mind and body are \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. the same
  - b. both controlled by the mind
  - c. each controlled by the other
  - d. both controlled by the nervous system
2. Which of these expressions is nearest in meaning to 'perceives and reacts'(line 2)?

- a. senses and responds
  - b. notices and answers
  - c. understands and replies
  - d. discovers and changes
3. The main idea of the second paragraph is \_\_\_\_\_.
- a. we do not know enough about the relationship between the mind and the body
  - b. it is generally accepted that the mind and the body affect each other all the time
  - c. we have a good deal of evidence as to how the mind works
  - d. our body is affected by our thoughts and our feelings
4. In line 8, the word 'apparent' means \_\_\_\_\_.
- a. 'clearly seen'
  - b. 'misleading'
  - c. 'strong'
  - d. 'firmly established'
5. The word 'those' (line 9) refers to \_\_\_\_\_.
- a. 'these correlations' (line 6)
  - b. 'relationship between mind and body' (line 8)
  - c. 'emotional states' (line 8)
  - d. 'changes' (line 10)
6. In the third paragraph, we are told that \_\_\_\_\_.
- a. all bodily changes caused by emotional states can be measured
  - b. strong emotions cause detectable changes in the body
  - c. before bodily changes can be measured, the person must be asleep, ill or under the influence of drugs or alcohol
  - d. scientists can tell which emotion is affecting someone
7. The author uses the expression 'in the grip' (line 9) \_\_\_\_\_.
- a. to show that the person is afraid
  - b. because an angry person usually clenches his fists
  - c. because such strong emotions are painful
  - d. to give the idea that the emotion is strong enough to produce physical effects
8. In the fourth paragraph we are told that the GSR \_\_\_\_\_.
- a. is another name for a lie detector
  - b. is a measurement of strong emotions only
  - c. measures the amount of electricity in the body
  - d. measures the amount of electricity passing through the skin
9. The writer mentions the polygraph \_\_\_\_\_.
- a. because it is a means of recording the GSR automatically
  - b. because it is used to amplify the GSR readings
  - c. to show us that the GSR is not the only indication used by a lie detector
  - d. because it is used by doctors
10. The main idea of the last paragraph tells us more about a word used in the previous paragraph. The word is \_\_\_\_\_.
- a. 'sensitive' (line 14)
  - b. 'galvanic' (line 14)
  - c. 'mental' (line 15)
  - d. 'amplified' (line 19)

The art of growing dwarf trees, or “bonsai” as their Japanese creators call them, is increasing in popularity in the United States. Growing bonsai can make a fascinating hobby for anyone who enjoys plants and creating beautiful effects with them; elaborate equipment isn’t required to grow these lovely and tiny trees, but time, patience, and a sense of natural beauty are.

Second, one must be careful in choosing the size of the container the bonsai will be in. This is necessary because the major growth of bonsai is kept confined to the tree's trunk and leaves, not its root system—a process quite unlike what is done with other plants.

The last thing one must do is to be careful to keep the miniature trees well-watered. Because bonsai are grown in smaller-than-usual containers, they often need more water than ordinary houseplants do.

### Comprehension Exercises:

- 3 •

- (4) a variety of specialized equipment
- (1), (2), (3), (4)
  - (1), (2), (3)
  - (1), (4)
  - (2), (3)
- Where is the major portion of growth in bonsai trees?
    - In the roots.
    - In the branches.
    - In the needles.
    - In the trunk and leaves.
  - Compared to other houseplants, bonsai often require \_\_\_\_\_ than one might expect.
    - less light
    - more water
    - a larger container
    - less care
  - What does the ideal bonsai look like?
    - It has abnormally large leaves.
    - It has an unusually thick trunk.
    - It has many more branches.
    - None of the above.
  - What is the meaning of "this" in Line 12?
    - The bonsai-grower.
    - The bonsai tree.
    - Trimming the trunk and leaves.
    - Trimming the roots and branches.
  - What is the implied meaning of a certain amount of time and effort in line 18?
    - Definite and exact amount of time and effort.
    - More time and effort than ordinary houseplants do.
    - More time and effort than most people can expend.
    - A constantly changing amount of time and effort.
  - To what quality of the bonsai described in the last paragraph does the word "stately" (line 20) probably refer?
    - The kind of container it's in.
    - The size of its trunk and the number of its branches.
    - Its physical appearance and attractiveness.
    - The color of its needles or leaves.
  - What are required to grow bonsai?
    - Elaborate equipment.
    - Time, patience and a sense of natural beauty.
    - Adequate knowledge.
    - Seeds and water.
  - Why do people grow bonsai? Because \_\_\_\_\_.
    - they think it a marriage of art and nature
    - bonsai can be used to decorate their houses
    - bonsai is more beautiful than any other trees
    - it can help to build the close relationship between two generations

### Passage 3

Scientists at Sussex University appear to be on the way to discovering how the mosquito, carrier of diseases such as malaria and yellow fever, homes in on its target. The problem is that they have found that the best way to avoid being bitten is: stop breathing, stop sweating, and keep down the temperature of your immediate surroundings. Unfortunately the first suggestion is impossible and the others very difficult.

Scientists have found that there are three distinct stages in a mosquito's assault. Stage one is at fifty feet away, when the insect first smells a man or animal to bite. Stage two is thought to come into operation about twenty-five feet from the target, when the insect becomes guided by the carbon dioxide breathed out by the intended victim. Stage three is when the mosquito is only a matter of inches from its prey: the warmth and moisture given off by the victim is the final clue.

The researchers then examined how repellents interfere with its three stage attack. They found repellents act more subtly than by just giving off a nasty smell. A Canadian researcher says that repellents appear to confuse mosquitoes first when it is following the carbon dioxide and second during the final approach, where the warmth and moisture are the insect's guide.

Air pervaded by one of the many chemical repellents stops the mosquito reacting to the victim's carbon dioxide, and the repellent seems to affect the tiny hairs with which the insect senses moisture in the air. The sensors are blocked so that the insect does not know when it is flying through a moist current, or the sensors are made to send the wrong signals.

One positive suggestion from the researchers followed the discovery that mosquitoes on the hunt tend to fly very close to the ground. A dense screen of trees around a village may keep mosquitoes at bay. Unless they are already following a scent, the insects are likely to be deflected by such a screen. This solution could offer great relief to heavily attacked villages.

The experts also agree that mosquitoes seem to prefer some people to others, but they do not know why. The Canadian work suggests that it might be simply a matter of skin temperature and moisture.

#### Comprehension Exercises:

1. Which of the following is nearest in meaning to 'homes in on' (1.2) ?
  - a. takes aim at
  - b. finds its way to
  - c. attacks
  - d. fastens on to
2. The 'problem' (1.2) is that \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. scientists are not completely sure how a mosquito homes in on its target
  - b. mosquitoes carry several kinds of diseases
  - c. it is difficult to hold one's breath
  - d. the best way to avoid being located by a mosquito is impossible or impractical

3. Which of the following is nearest in meaning to 'distinct'(2.1)?
  - a. visible
  - b. progressive
  - c. caused by instinct
  - d. clearly separate
4. The main idea of the second paragraph is that \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. a mosquito uses three methods of attacking its prey
  - b. smell is the mosquito's strongest sense
  - c. mosquitoes attack warm, moist targets
  - d. there are three stages in the mosquito's approach to its prey
5. The word 'its' (3.1) refers to the \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. mosquito
  - b. repellent
  - c. mosquito's attack
  - d. victim
6. The writer says that repellents \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. also work in three ways
  - b. do not give off a nasty smell
  - c. interfere with the first and second stages
  - d. interfere with the second and third stages
7. The repellents, we are told, do not merely give off a nasty smell; they work more \_\_\_\_\_ than that.
  - a. indirectly
  - b. effectively
  - c. strongly
  - d. suitably
8. In the fourth paragraph we are told that \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. repellents remove carbon dioxide from the air
  - b. repellents remove moisture from the air
  - c. the tiny hairs of the mosquito detect the carbon dioxide
  - d. repellents prevent the mosquito from detecting moist air
9. The main idea of the fifth paragraph is that \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. mosquitoes fly close to the ground
  - b. the solution to the problem of mosquitoes has been found
  - c. researchers have discovered that mosquitoes fly close to the ground
  - d. a screen of trees may protect a village from mosquitoes since mosquitoes fly close to the ground
10. Which of the following sentences best sums up the whole passage?
  - a. Scientists at Sussex University have discovered that a mosquito approaches its target in three stages.
  - b. Scientists now know how repellents prevent a mosquito from reaching its victim.
  - c. Scientists have now discovered a great deal about how a mosquito finds its target and some ways of preventing it from reaching it.
  - d. A great deal of progress has been made by scientists in Sussex and in Canada into the habits of the mosquito.

## Passage 4

Americans may be reading fewer books, but they are listening to more. The books-on-tape business is booming. The audio industry, as it likes to be called, used to amount to little more than the odd stand in a book-shop; most customers assumed they were for the blind. As an American publisher puts it, books on tape give people a chance to utilize their downtime. Statistics are vague, but Americans probably spend around \$ 500 million a year on audio books, ranging from self-help guides to fiction.

Publishers say the market is growing by at least 10% a year. Purists prefer to rent books unabridged from mail-order firms like Recorded Books and Books on Tape. The latter boasts a library of 2,700 works including a 40-tape version of "War and Peace". The average book is on ten tapes and costs \$ 18 to rent for a month.

Yet the biggest growth has come in the abridged market—where the book is cut down to two tapes (or three hours of listening) and sold for around \$ 15. Most of the new buyers are commuters or joggers. Lorry drivers are keen buyers; there are small books-on-tape stalls in pit stops.

The abridged books are usually read by well-known actors – or by the authors themselves. Tapes by Richard Nixon and Oliver North have all appeared in bookshops at the same time as their books. Literary agents, who used to cede the audio rights for a good lunch, now haggle.

Despite the huge potential, the big bookshops tend to hide away their audio sections. One reason may be that selling hardback books at \$ 30 is more profitable than selling tapes at \$ 15.

This should change. Already a few specialist stores have sprung up. An audio shop close to Los Angeles airport, carries 6,000 different tapes of books. Nearly all its business comes from selling tapes rather than renting them. It will soon open another branch in central Los Angeles.

Smarter shops and commercial success will probably never convert those in the publishing industry who think that books should be read—and certainly not abridged. In private, though, publishers admit that many non-fiction books are too long anyway; they should have been cut by their editors in the first place.

### Comprehension Exercises:

1. The books-on-tape business is \_\_\_\_\_.  
a. slackening                      b. flourishing                      c. discouraging                      d. silly
2. The books-on-tape business is called \_\_\_\_\_.  
a. visual industry                      b. audio industry  
c. media industry                      d. audio-visual industry
3. Books-on-tape give people a chance \_\_\_\_\_.  
a. to help the blind                      b. to further their education  
c. to utilize their downtime                      d. to get fun in a new way

4. Audio books may not include \_\_\_\_\_.  
a. fiction  
b. self-help guides  
c. poems  
d. The World Bank Year Book
5. You can buy unabridged audio books \_\_\_\_\_.  
a. from Oliver North  
b. from Richard Nixon  
c. from pit stops  
d. from Books on Tape
6. Which of the following statements may not be true?  
a. Purists prefer unabridged books.  
b. More and more people like abridged books.  
c. Audio books will replace paper books someday.  
d. Truck drivers are keen buyers.
7. There are 2,700 audio books in \_\_\_\_\_.  
a. the Congress Library  
b. Recorded Books  
c. Richard Nixon's study  
d. Books on Tape
8. The big book shops can make more profit from selling \_\_\_\_\_.  
a. books on tape  
b. hardback books  
c. abridged audio books  
d. unabridged audio books
9. How much does it cost to rent an average audio book for a month?  
a. \$ 15  
b. \$ 18  
c. \$ 27  
d. \$ 30
10. Literary agents used to give up the audio rights \_\_\_\_\_.  
a. for an overseas tour  
b. for an expensive car  
c. for a good lunch  
d. for a lot of cash

## Passage 5

Mr. Smith is well known in Washington because of his many social blunders. He always likes to attend the various social functions because he wants to expand his circle of friends. Whenever he is invited, he goes, unless he is ill.

Recently he received an invitation to a fashionable banquet. Although he did not know the hostess, he accepted the invitation. He was secretly very pleased, because he felt that his reputation as a desirable guest was growing.

When he arrived at the banquet hall, he found that about one hundred people had been invited. He began to move around the hall. He spoke to other guests whether he knew them or not. He soon realized that he had never met any of the other people present, although they seemed to know each other.

At dinner, he was seated beside a very dignified woman. The woman tried to be friendly even though she had never met Mr. Smith before. She spoke politely, whenever he spoke to her. Between the first and second course of the meal, she turned to Mr. Smith and said, "Do you see that gray-haired man at the end of the table? The one with the glasses."

"Ah, yes. Who is he?" asked Smith.

"He's the Secretary of the Interior!" she replied.

Mr. Smith said: "So that's the Secretary of the Interior! I'm afraid that I find very little to admire about him, although he is the Secretary."

The woman stiffened and did not reply. Smith continued in spite of her coldness. "I really can't see how he received his appointment, unless he is perhaps a relative of the President."

"It hardly matters whether you like the Secretary or not," she said. "He was chosen because the President thought he was the man for the job. If he does the job well, you should have no complaint."

"That's just it," persisted Smith. "No one does the things he does, unless he is a complete fool!"

"Sir," said the woman in all her dignity. "Do you know who I am?"

"No," replied Smith.

"I am the Secretary's wife," she said coldly. Mr. Smith was flabbergasted, but he went on in spite of his embarrassment.

"Madam, do you know who I am?"

"No, I don't," the woman replied.

"Thank goodness!" exclaimed Mr. Smith, as he quickly left the table.

### Comprehension Exercises:

1. Mr. Smith likes to attend the various social functions because \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. he is invited