

Once in the ancient kingdom of Zheng there was a man who wanted to buy himself a pair of shoes. He took the measurement with a piece of string. Then he went to the market. He looked at the shoes at the shoe-maker's when he realized he had forgotten the measurement at home. He put down the shoes and rushed home. When the time he returned with the measurement the market had closed. So he failed to get his shoes. Somebody asked him, "Why did you do that?"

英语阅读技巧

——分析与实践

● 邱碧芬 骆世平 著



about two hours' bus ride from our school. The long trip was very tired, but as soon as we reached Tao Yuan Cave, the scene refreshed us. The most attractive sight in Tao Yuan Cave is "Thread of Sky". It is about one hundred and twenty metres long. From the top to the bottom, there are one hundred and seventy-six steps from the bottom to the top.

Later we went to visit the Stone Forest, which is the northwest of the Yong'an City. Our teacher told us that it was first opened up in 1729 by Lai Qiaoqian and his brother. He was very much interested in natural beauty. It consists of five huge stone, which weighs about twenty tons, like a giant. The Russian poet Pushkin and is thus named. We were very happy to salute this great man.



English Reading Skills:

Analysis + Practice

英 语 阅 读 技 巧
分析与实践

邱碧芬 骆世平 编著

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前 言

泛读是基础英语教学中的一门主要课程,其目的在于提高学生的阅读速度和理解能力。阅读理解能力的强弱常作为衡量英语水平高低的尺度之一。在国内外各种英语水平测试中,阅读理解题目都占有很大分量。因此,如何更快地提高阅读速度和理解能力,是泛读课所必须解决的问题。在长期教学实践中,我们体会到要较好解决这个问题,必须做到下列两个方面:一是通过较大量阅读,增强语感、扩大知识面;二是使学生熟练地掌握阅读技巧,逐步培养分析、推理和判断能力。本书就是专门针对阅读技巧而编写的。

在编写过程中,我们参考了国内外有关资料,较系统地,较全面地讲述了阅读技巧。

本书分为两大部分:

第一部分是阅读技巧。介绍提高阅读理解能力所必需具备的一些主要技巧,如:用上下文生词,运用词的分析,找主题句及中心意思,找衬托性细节,推理和读信号词等;并结合范例,详加分析,示范解答多项选择题的技巧。文中配有练习,以增强学生的印象。

第二部分是阅读实践。书中选编了45个短篇或段落,这些选材短小精悍,题材广泛,文理结合,富于知识性、实用性和趣味性;编排由浅入深,循序渐进。

每篇还附有多项选择测试题,用于检验理解能力。书后附有答案,部分较难的答案附有解释。

本书可作阅读技巧的教材,也是提高阅读能力的读物,适合英语阅读课使用,或供广大英语自学者或应试者使用。

编 者

Content
目 录

Chapter I .	Learning Words from Context Clues 从上 下文学生词	(1)
Chapter I .	Using Word Analysis 运用单词分析...	(9)
Chapter II .	Finding Topic Sentence and Main Idea 找主题句和中心思想	(25)
Chapter IV .	Locating Supporting Details 找衬托性 细节	(38)
Chapter V .	Making Inference 推理	(45)
Chapter VI .	Reading Signals 读信号词	(58)
Chapter VII .	Skimming and Scanning 速度和略读...	(64)
Chapter VII .	Distinguishing Between a Fact and an Opinion 区别事实与见解	(69)
Chapter IX .	Paying Attention to Words Often Confused 注意常混淆的词	(74)

Part Two

Reading Practice 阅读实践 (86)

Notes 注解 (183)

Answer Key 答案 (187)

Bibliography (204)

So, if you pay attention to context clues and figure out meanings as you read, you will help your speed as well as your comprehension.

2. Even when you use the dictionary it is often necessary to read several definitions of a word before you can find the one that fits the meaning of the sentence.

So you will have to be alert to context clues even when you use the dictionary.

Here is an example of guessing the meaning of an unfamiliar word by looking at familiar words around it. Imagine that you overheard someone saying the following:

I was so tired I didn't bother with a real bed.

I just lay down on the *liclac* in the living room.

As soon as my feet rested at one end and my head at the other, I fell asleep. In the morning I was cramped from pushing against the back of the *liclac*.

To guess what *liclac* means, you could examine all the familiar words and learn that (1) a *liclac* isn't a bed, but you can lie on it; (2) it's part of a living room; (3) it's the length of a person; (4) it's narrow and has a back. From these clues you might guess that the unfamiliar word *liclac* represents a piece of living room furniture similar to a couch or sofa.

There are five CONTEXT CLUES—examples, definitions, descriptive words, parallelism, synonym and antonym.

1. The context of a word will sometimes give examples that will give you a pretty clear idea of meaning. Suppose you want to know the meaning of the word *gesture* in the paragraph below. How many examples are given in the following paragraph?

Some dogs can be trained to respond to gestures instead of sound; for example, a hand pointing in a certain direction, an open hand, palm down, or arms outstretched can be used to mean go sit or come to a well-trained dog.

Let us read another sentence:

Society often has difficulty understanding nonconformists such as criminals, inventors, artists, saints, and political protesters.

The parallel examples help explain *nonconformist* because they all seem to be exceptions, people who go beyond the average or beyond the rules. This is close to an understanding of *nonconformists* as people who do not adapt themselves to the usual standards and customs of society.

Look for words like *for example*, *for instance*, *such as*, *to illustrate*, *including*, *like* that signal examples are coming.

Sometimes an example that reveals the meaning of an unfamiliar word is spread throughout the sentence or paragraph and is not announced by a phrase. For example,

During the first weeks of rehabilitation, Brian exercised as best he could, took his medicine daily, and thought constantly about the physical condition he once possessed.

Guessing the meaning of *rehabilitation* requires considering what occurred during it, (1) exercising "as best he could"—as if Brian had some kind of handicap; (2) taking medicine—as if he were ill; and (3) thinking about his past physical condition—as if he were wishing for the good shape he used to be in. Putting these examples together suggests that *rehabilitation* is returning to a healthy condition, which is one of its meanings. (The more precise definition is "restoring a former capacity"; recovering from a sickness.)

2. Sometimes the writer will save you the trouble of looking up a word by defining it for you. Read the examples below.

The point where the light rays come together is called the *focus* of the lens.

When you see expressions like *that is*, *is called* or the words *means*, *is*, you will know to watch for a definition of some kind. A second kind of definition is what is called an appositive. An appositive is just a phrase that follows a word and explains it. But instead of being introduced by one of the definition-type expressions, this kind of phrase is set off on both sides by commas. For example,

An aquarium needs *scavenger fish*, swimming garbage collectors, to keep the tank clean.

Sometimes definitions are enclosed in parentheses or set off by dashes.

At *burnout*—— the instant a rocket stops firing—— the satellite's path is fixed.

What is a word? A difficult question. Charlton Laird, an eminent scholar and expert on language, says that even the *lexicographer* (dictionary maker) has a difficult time deciding ...

3. You can sometimes piece together the meaning of a word by a little straight detective work.

The first impression that crossed my mind was that the woman was *obese*. Her clothing was stretched across her vast surface of skin like a lumpy balloon stretched to the bursting point.

Look at the italic word. The following descriptions help you understand the meaning of the italic word.

4. Parallelism shows you which ideas line up or go together and can often suggest the meaning of a new word. Watch for parallel ideas in the following sentence.

The kittens see their mother hunt and kill, and they in turn take up *predatory* behavior.

If you did not know the word *predatory*, you could put together clues from the context; parallel construction (*killens see . . . and they . . . take up*); the signified phrase *in turn*; and the suggested idea of imitation (Kittens watching their mother and taking up her behavior.) These clues produce the correct assumption that *predatory* behavior consists of hunting and killing.

5. One further way to pick up the meaning of a new word or expression is by looking for antonyms or synonyms.

1) Antonyms are words or phrases that have opposite meanings to other words or phrases. Recognizing that certain words often signal an antonym clue can help you to understand new words. Writers often use words and phrases, such as, *but*, *while*, *on the other hand*, *as opposed to*, *not rather than* and *instead of* to signal antonym clues. For example;

He tried to smile because the mood of the party was not *somber*, but happy

You know that *somber* must mean something that is the opposite of happy. In fact, it means sad or dreary.

Sometimes the way a sentence is put together will tell you what you are looking for the opposite of a word or idea that is found in one half of the sentence.

If you can't find anything to praise in the class, at least don't *denounce* it.

You know here that *denounce* must mean something opposite to *praise*. It means to condemn or criticize.

2) Synonyms are words or phrases that are similar in meaning to other words. Sentences with difficult words often contain synonyms for those words. It is not difficult for you to recognize some synonyms because they are set apart by commas, dashes, or parentheses. Usually, a synonym context clue appears as the same part of speech as the new word. A synonym is one type of context clue that helps you to determine the meanings of unfamiliar words. Here are some examples;

Your ideas are so *nebulous* that your point is unclear to me.

If you understand the *gist* of the story, you should be able to tell me the main idea.

The building's roof is in the shape of a *cupola*, or dome, and is similar to the one on the top of the city hall.

You may not know the meanings of *nebulous*, *gist* and *cupola* in the above sentences. But the synonym clues in each sentence tell you that *nebulous* means unclear, *gist* means main idea, and *cupola* means dome.

Practice 1

Read each sentence and select the best meaning for the underlined word.

1. If you want to save gas, trade in your big car and get a compact car.
a. small b. large c. secondhand
2. Even under repeated questioning, the witness remained reticent.
a. comfortable b. happy c. silent
3. You could see how repugnant the bitter medicine was by the way she trembled and made a face as she swallowed it.
a. distasteful b. powerful c. dangerous
4. The detectives were deluded by all the false evidence. They were completely deceived and they arrested the wrong person.
a. wrong b. arrested c. misled
5. Our plane tickets were voided when the airline ticket agent declared that the airport was closed. Therefore, all reservations were canceled.
a. reserved b. closed c. eliminated
6. She has a love of rote work, but no fondness for creative jobs.
a. creative b. mechanical c. fondness
7. Some students were inadvertently late for class while a few were purposely late.
a. purposely b. accidentally c. always
8. In many nations there are two financial extremes, from penury to great wealth.

- a. wealth b. poverty c. middle income
9. Laundry owners use indelible marking pencils on their customer's clothing. They use permanent markers that will not wash off the garments.
- a. removable b. lasting c. stained
10. Why did you spent such an inordinate amount of time on the first question? Ten minutes would have been more reasonable.
- a. tiny b. difficult c. excessive

Chapter II. USING WORD ANALYSIS

Some English words can often be divided into meaningful parts. A *handbook*, for instance, is a book you keep at hand (for reference). A *shepherd* herds sheep (or other animals). Knowing what the parts of a word mean by themselves, as you do here, can often help you infer approximately what they mean when combined. In fact, many long and difficult-looking English words, are only combinations of common prefixes, root words, and suffixes, many of which come from the Greek or the Latin language. Historically, Greek and Latin came flooding into English language in three waves; (1) religious terms at about the beginning of the Christian era; (2) literary and cultural terms during the Renaissance, the revival of learning of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries; and (3) scientific terms in recent centuries. Hence, a knowledge of some of the more important source words will increase your vocabulary skill greatly.

Here are some examples:

PREFIX + ROOT

non + sense = nonsense

ROOT + SUFFIX

use + ful = useful

PREFIX + ROOT + SUFFIX

un + comfort + able = uncomfortable

1. ROOT WORD

A root is the unchanging part of words related in origin and usually in meaning. Both *illiterate* (unable to read and write) and *literal* (following the usual meaning of the words, without any additional meanings) have the same root *liter*, a Latin word meaning "letter ". A person who cannot understand the letters that make up writing is *illiterate*. A person who wants to understand the primary meaning of the letters, or words, in a contract is seeking the *literal* meaning of that contract.

At least half of the English words are built up from Latin and Greek roots. A student without this half of vocabulary would be like a sprinter with one leg. Here are the common Latin and Greek roots. Memorize them and their meanings, so that they can help you to figure out the meanings of many words.

ROOT	MEANING	DERIVATIVES
am	love	amiable
ann	year	anniversary ; annual
aud audit	hear	audible ; auditorium
bio	life	biography , biochemistry
cred credit	believe	credence , creditor
cycl	circle , wheel	cyclone , motorcycle
dem	people	democracy
dic dict	say	addict ; dictate
duc duct	lead	conduct ; induce
frater	brother	fraternal , fraternize
gram graph	write	program ; autograph
litera	letter	literature
loc	place	allocate , location
mit miss	send	transmit ; mission
pon posit	place	postpone ; position
port	carry	export , transport
scrib script	write	describe ; manuscript
tempor	time	contemporary , temporize