

British & American Culture

英语时文阅读(上)

主编：张晓辉 王卓 李俊涛

● 黑龙江美术出版社

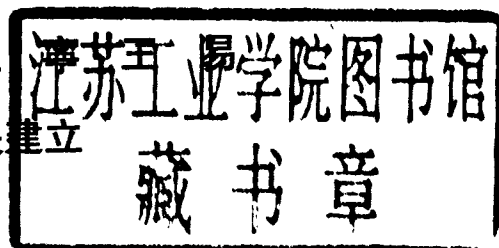
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图书在版编目 (CIP) 数据

英语时文阅读. 上 / 张晓辉编著. —哈尔滨: 黑龙江
美术出版社, 2006.5

ISBN 7-5318-1579-6

I. 英... II. 张... III. 英语—阅读教学—自学参
考资料 IV.H319.4

中国版本图书馆 CIP 数据核字 (2006) 第 033802 号

书 名 英语时文阅读 (上)
Ying yu shi wen yue du

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出 版 黑龙江美术出版社
地 址 哈尔滨道里区安定街 225 号
邮政编码 150016
经 销 全国新华书店
责任编辑 付弦
装帧设计 柴超
发行电话 (0451) 84270514
网 址 WWW.HLJMSS.COM

制 版 哈尔滨修臣百业科技发展有限公司
印 刷 哈尔滨市宾县华兴书刊印刷厂
开 本 787×1092 1/16
印 张 18.75
字 数 660 千字
版 次 2006 年 6 月第 1 版
印 次 2006 年 6 月第 1 次印刷

书 号 ISBN7-5318-1579-6/J.1580
定 价 80.00 元 (全 3 册)

本书如发现印装质量问题, 请直接与印刷厂联系调换。

前言

现代科技的发展,多媒体的诞生,互联网的普及以及经济的高度全球化发展,使得人们渴望了解他国风俗习惯及文化特点,以达到互相交流的目的。因此,文化与交际不仅成为人们的热门话题,而且潜移默化地影响着对外语教学观念的改变,越来越多的外语教育工作者意识到在传授语言知识的同时,应加强文化知识的渗透。

但是在实际授课的过程中,由于受学生、教材、教学内容、教学计划等具体因素的制约,课堂上往往没有大量的时间来介绍、解释和分析语言文化现象和文化背景方面知识。

针对这种情况,《英语时文阅读》应运而生。本书选用了现代英语阅读材料,其中大部分摘自近年来的国内外报纸、期刊及网络。这些文章题材广泛、内容丰富、风格迥异、语言环境真实、文化信息量大,反映了欧美各国多姿多彩的生活侧面和风土人情。使学生在阅读过程中一举两得,不仅能够提高英语的阅读能力,而且可以从中获得大量有价值的信息,丰富他们的英美文化知识,进而扫清语言学习中遇到的文化障碍。

本书主编和其他编者一直工作在外语教育的最前线,有着多年的外语教学经验,并试图在阅读教学中锐意创新,尝试各种先进的文化导入方法。本书经过编者的精心选材和试题设计,设计了大量的热门话题和文化背景知识,使文章难易适中、长短搭配、语言规范、内容与现代生活密切相关,力争将语言学习与文化学习有机地结合起来,引导学生从被动地接受信息到主动地思维求索。书中各篇文章附有生词及含义,供读者阅读时参考。

由于编者水平有限,编译过程中难免有疏漏之处,敬请广大师生批评指正。

—编者

2005年于哈尔滨

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Unit 1

Passage 1

Using a public telephone may well be one of the minor irritations of life, demanding patience, determination and a strong possibility of failure, together on occasion with considerable unpopularity.

The hopeful caller (shall we call him George?) waits still six o'clock in the evening to take advantage of the so-called 'cheap rates' for a long-distance call. The telephone box, with two broken panes of glass in the side, stands at the junction of two main roads with buses, lorries and cars roaring past. It is pouring rain as George joins a queue of four depressed-looking people. Time passes slowly and seems to come to a standstill while the person immediately before George carries on an endless conversation, pausing only to insert another coin every minute or so.

Eventually the receiver is replaced and the caller leaves the box. George enters and picks up one of the directories inside, only to discover that someone unknown has torn out the very page he needs. Nothing for it but to dial Directory Inquiries, wait patiently for a reply (while someone outside bangs repeatedly on the door) and finally note down the number given.

At last George can go ahead with his call. Just as he is starting to dial, however, the door opens and an unpleasant-looking face peers in. As he continues to dial, his unwanted companion withdraws. At last he hears the burr-burr of the ringing tone, immediately followed by rapid pips demanding his money, but he is now so upset that he knocks down the coins he has placed ready on the top of the box. Having at last located them, he dials again: the pips are repeated and he hastily inserts the coins. A cold voice informs him, 'Grand Hotel, Chalfont Wells...'

Breathing heavily, George replaces the receiver, just as the knocking on the door starts again.

1. The main intention of the passage is to provide _____.
- A. instructions about how to use a public call box
- B. advice about how to deal with public call telephone problems
- C. criticism of the efficiency of the telephone system
- D. an account of possible annoyances in using a public telephone

2. Which of the following calls are you unlikely to make at the 'cheap rate' referred to?
- A. to discuss your account in a bank in Scotland
 - B. to have a chat with an elderly relation
 - C. to ask about a friend in hospital who had just had an operation
 - D. to express Christmas greetings to cousins in Australia
3. The word 'standstill' in Paragraph 2 is closest in meaning to which of the following?
- A. interruption
 - B. halt
 - C. wait
 - D. gap
4. George can at least be thankful that _____.
- A. the call box is in a convenient position
 - B. the telephone itself is working
 - C. he can use the directory in the box to find the number
 - D. he is able to give his message to the hotel receptionist
5. Why does George have to dial a second time?
- A. He hasn't remembered to put the money in the box.
 - B. He hasn't got enough money with him.
 - C. He has got to find the money to put in the box.
 - D. He can't find the number he wants in the directory.

Passage 2

Most people think their time problems are external, that they are caused by the telephone, meetings, visitor, and delayed information or decisions. Although these problems often stem from the initiative of others, as when people call or drop in, we usually contribute to them. We fail to have calls screened by a competent secretary or assistant, or we leave our door open, virtually assuring constant interruptions.

In almost all cases, it is possible to influence, if not control, externally generated time problems. More difficult to identify, as well as to manage, are the internally generated time wasters: procrastination and indecision, lack of self-discipline, the inability to say no, the inability to delegate, or the tendency

to forget fires, to act without thinking, and to jump from task to task without finishing any of them.

Time is a constant that cannot be altered. The clock cannot be slowed down or speeded up. Thus we cannot manage time itself. We can only manage our activities with respect to time.

The same skills are needed as those used in managing others-the abilities to plan, organize, delegate, direct, and control. Time management is simply self-management. It is impossible to be effective in any position without controlling one's time effectively.

Successful time management does not mean working harder, but working smarter. An array of management skills must be used in the home and office to get the most value from time. You must think ahead about what to do, and how and when to do it. You must remember that everyone has the same amount of time. Some just use it more effectively than others, making it yield maximum results in the shortest possible period.

1. According to the writer, time problems_____.
 - A. are caused by the telephone, meeting and visitors
 - B. are caused by delayed information or decisions
 - C. can be solved by self-management
 - D. can be controlled
2. Which of the following is NOT mentioned as the internally generated time wasters?
 - A. Procrastination and indecision.
 - B. Lack of self-discipline.
 - C. Jumping from task to task without finishing any of them.
 - D. Working hard.
3. It can be concluded from the passage that the abilities to plan, organize, delegate, direct and control should_____.
 - A. be used in managing others' activities
 - B. be used in managing one's own activities
 - C. not be used in time management
 - D. be used in managing both others' and one's own activities
4. We can also draw a conclusion that the key to successful time management

is _____.

- A. working harder and harder
- B. clever self-management
- C. thinking of what to do, and how and when to do it
- D. employing a competent secretary

5. The best main idea for the passage is that _____.

- A. self-management is one of the best strategies for time-management
- B. we must use various skills to get the most value from time
- C. time cannot be altered but influenced
- D. time problems are external

Passage 3

A few common misconceptions. Beauty is only skin-deep. One's physical assets and liabilities don't count all that much in a managerial career. A woman should always try to look her best.

Over the last 30 years, social scientists have conducted more than 1000 studies of how we react to beautiful and not-so-beautiful people. The virtually unanimous conclusion: looks do matter, more than most of us realize. The data suggest, for example, that physically attractive individuals are more likely to be treated well by their parents, sought out as friends, and pursued romantically. With the possible exception of women seeking managerial jobs, they are also more likely to be hired, paid well, and promoted.

Un-American, you say, unfair and extremely unbelievable? Once again, the scientists have caught us mouthing pieties(虔诚)while acting just the contrary. Their typical experiment works something like this. They give each member of a group—college students, perhaps, or teachers or corporate personnel managers—a piece of paper relating an individual's accomplishments. Attached to the paper is a photograph. While the papers all say exactly the same thing the pictures are different. Some show a strikingly attractive person, some an average-looking character, and some an unusually unattractive human being. Group members are asked to rate the individual on certain attributes, anything from personal warmth to the likelihood that he or she will be promoted.

Almost invariably, the better looking the person in the picture, the higher the person is rated.

In business, however, good looks cut both ways for women, and deeper than for men. A Utah State University professor, who is an authority on the subject, explains: In terms of their careers, the impact of physical attractiveness on males is only modest. But its potential impact on females can be tremendous, making it easier, for example, for the more attractive to get jobs where they are in the public eye. On another note, though, there is enough literature now for us to conclude that attractive women who aspire(追求)to managerial positions do not get on as well as women who may be less attractive.

1. According to the passage, people often wrongly believe that in pursuing a career as a manager _____.
 - A. a person's property or debts do not matter much
 - B. a person's outward appearance is not a critical qualification
 - C. women should always dress fashionably
 - D. women should not only be attractive but also high-minded
2. The result of research carried out by social scientists show that _____.
 - A. people do not realize the importance of looking one's best
 - B. women in pursuit of managerial jobs are not likely to be paid well
 - C. good-looking women aspire to managerial positions
 - D. attractive people generally have an advantage over those who are not
3. Experiments by scientists have shown that when people evaluate individuals on certain attributes _____.
 - A. they observe the principle that beauty is only skin-deep
 - B. they do not usually act according to the views they support
 - C. they give ordinary-looking persons the lowest ratings
 - D. they tend to base their judgment on the individual's accomplishments
4. "Good looks cut both ways for women" (Para 5) means that _____.
 - A. attractive women have tremendous potential impact on public jobs.
 - B. good-looking women always get the best of everything
 - C. being attractive is not always an advantage for women
 - D. attractive women do not do as well as unattractive women in managerial

positions

5. It can be inferred from the passage that in the business world ____.
- A. handsome men are not affected as much by their looks as attractive women are
 - B. physically attractive women who are in the public eye usually do quite well.
 - C. physically attractive men and who are in the public eye usually get along quite well.
 - D. good looks are important for women as they are for men.

Passage 4

Which trait would you, as a parent, prefer your child to develop tolerance or obedience to authority? Chances are you'd choose the form, unless you were a parent 60 years ago.

The traits U.S. parents want to see in their children have changed dramatically during this century. In the 1920s, parents emphasized traits linked to conformity, with three top choices as "loyalty to the church", "strict obedience" and "good manners". Today, parents are more likely to choose traits related to autonomy, such as independence and tolerance of opposing views. This virtual revolution in values described by the sociologist Duane Alwin, has far-reaching implication for parent-child relationships, and has nationwide influence.

There are various for this move towards greater individualism, according to Alwin. "It's an increasingly complex world," he says, "parents want their kinds to succeed in it, to survive in it. They k-now that god jobs require being able to think for yourself."

Another reason for this shift, he says, is the increased education of parents today. "The farther you go in school, the more you are encouraged to think for yourself and the more likely you are to see that as a positive value for your children."

The rising number of working mothers and single parents has also made self-reliance among children desirable. Pressed for time and energy, these parents often encourage their children to take more responsibility for themselves, tacking homework on their own, transporting themselves back and forth to

school or minding younger siblings.

1. The main purpose of this passage is to ____.

- A. point out mothers' top choices in child-rearing
- B. explain why parents nowadays have changed their attitudes in child-rearing
- C. inform the readers of the importance of being independent nowadays
- D. show what traits a child should develop today

2. All of the following can be inferred from the passage except that ____.

- A. parents in the 1920s received less education than those today
- B. there were fewer working women in the 1920s than today
- C. in the 1920s people showed more respect for those loyal to church
- D. today, no parents in the U.S. will show any respect for the trait for obedience

3. Today's mothers encourage their children to be independent because ____.

- A. the complex world makes it necessary
- B. they have more children to care about
- C. they have less time to look after their children
- D. Both A and C.

4. It can be concluded from the passage that ____.

- A. parents of more than 60 years old have a strong preference for disobedience
- B. today parents are more likely to accept different opinions
- C. parents today are less energetic than those in the 1920s
- D. parents today are more concerned with themselves than with their children

5. Which of the following is the best title for this passage ____.

- A. Why have today's parents changed their child-rearing goals?
- B. reasons for the changing goals of child-rearing
- C. contrast of the child-rearing goals
- D. three top choices in child-rearing goals today

Unit 2

Passage 1

When we think about people who are leaders, we often get a mental picture of someone who is older, smarter, and wiser than ourselves. Studies of leadership, though, have usually found that there is almost no relationship between skill as a leader and traditional measures of intelligence.

Some recent research by psychologist Fielder and his colleagues suggests that both intelligence and experience may be important depends upon how stressful the work situation is and what kind of task is to be accomplished. The researchers obtained measures of intelligence, experience, performance, and stress.

Overall, these variables were not related to one another. Men with high and low intelligence were equally likely to give good performance, as were men with more men and less experience, or more and less stress with their bosses. However, when you look separately at those men who have high stress with their bosses, the picture changes.

In high stress situations, there was no association between intelligence and performance, but there was between experience and performance. In other words, in difficult situations, it was helpful to "know the ropes". In low stress situations, the findings were just the reverse: Experience was not related to good performance, but intelligence is very in leadership.

A study of the fighters' performance under high and low stress conditions also found the experienced officers performance best under situations of stress.

None of this is really very surprising. If you have ever had a supervisory job, you probably found that at least as much energy went into handling people as went into handling the job itself. Tests of intelligence, at least the ones we have now, do not predict success in handling people.

1. Which of the following aspects is not regarded as a quality of a leader?

- A. Intelligent.
- B. Traditional.
- C. Experienced.
- D. Older.

2. According to Fred Fiedler and his colleagues, we can see that_____.

- A. intelligence is closely related to performance in difficult situations
 - B. a man with higher intelligence was more likely to do a good job than a man with lower intelligence
 - C. intelligence plays an important role in performing well in low stress situations
 - D. if a person has less stress with his boss, he is more likely to give good performance
3. The phrase "know the ropes" most probably means ____.
- A. be skillful
 - B. be intelligent
 - C. do a good job
 - D. be familiar with even unimportant things
4. It can be inferred from the passage that ____.
- A. a successful leader in his job may possibly fail in his personal relation
 - B. the followers usually have easier jobs to do than leaders
 - C. it's easier to deal with the job than with colleagues
 - D. a fire fighter may perform better in higher stress conditions than in lower stress conditions
5. The primary purpose of this passage is to ____.
- A. correct a misunderstanding of the relationship between intelligence and leadership
 - B. make a study of relation between skill as a leader and traditional measures of intelligence
 - C. suggest the more difficulty in handling people than in handling jobs
 - D. summarize the studies of relationship between leadership and intelligence

Passage 2

Despite the fact that breast-feeding is better for infants than bottle-feeding, studies have shown that during the 1900s mothers in both the developed and the less-developed countries of world have shifted to formula. While this practice generally has caused no hardship or nutritional problems for the great majority of infants in developed countries, the shift to commercial infant formula has resulted in widespread malnutrition and high infant death rate in poorer countries, Malnutrition occurs when people lack the money to buy adequate

milk substitutes; in addition, many babies die when the commercial formula is diluted with dirtied water, thereby transmitting diseases to the infants.

Breast-feeding is most common among relatively advantaged women in society-women with college degrees and women who work in high -status white-collar occupations. It is less common among black women, women with less than 12 years of formal education, poor or near-poor women, and women who have never worked outside the home. Before 1950, 70% of black women breast-fed their children; by 1973, that percentage had dropped to 11%. In the same period, the percentage of white women who breast-fed dropped from 56% to 30%. Curiously the increase in the number of working mothers was not considered the sole cause of the downward trend in breast-feeding. Breast-feeding declined among women who did not work between births as well as among those who did.

Some recent studies indicate that the downward trend in breast -feeding in the United States may stay steady and, in some areas, may actually be reversing.

Martinez et. al. reported the following: of the infants born in hospitals in 1980, 55.3% received breast milk, while 50.5% received either prepared formula or cow milk. (some infants received both breast milk and prepared formula).

Why do some mothers choose to breast-fed, while other prefer to bottle-feed? It appears that good nutrition is only one of the many factors that influence this choice.

1. According to this passage, it can be concluded that ____.

- A. breast-feeding is more popular in developed countries
- B. breast-feeding is less common among black women before the 1900s than today
- C. breast-feeding is likely to do harm to babies in any countries
- D. non-career women have more time for breast-feeding than career women

2. Which of the following is a reason for the shift from the breast-feeding into bottle-feeding?

- A. More income
- B. The increase in the number of working mothers
- C. Better nutrition