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TOEFL

口语/写作素材 精选精练

万炜 张晗 梅仕鼎 古筝 / 编著

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素材手册

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每个 TOEFL 写作和口语老师一定都被问到过如下问题：“老师，我该如何提高自己的写作/口语水平？”最常见的答案就是“多写/多说”，这简直是最对但又最没用的答案。它是对的，因为多写可以提高写句子的熟练度，增加临场的适应度，甚至提高打字的速度；但是多写很难提高句子的质量。如果没有老师帮助改作文，学生很可能一直只能写出同一个水准的句子，过去犯的语法错误未来还会继续犯，过去写 Chinglish，未来还会继续写 Chinglish。这些问题怎么解决？在课上，我会经常增加写句子的主题，帮助学生掌握定语从句、状语从句、平行结构等复合句型的写法。但是最后总会落入一个窘境，本以为最困难的复合句其实是最简单的，因为它们有规则；而最终阻挡学生写出高质量文章的根本原因，恰恰是组成每个复合句的简单句。一个最简单的语义单元该如何表达？在这一点上，学生和我之间通常存在着巨大的鸿沟，而这个问题恰恰不是一两节课就可以解决的。那该怎么办？我会告诉学生们要多读，真正输出的素材来源必须是输入过的语言。我们很难凭空写出、说出一个大脑中没有储备的句型。

那读什么？市面上范文书那么多，为什么我要再写一本呢？原因在于 TOEFL 考试的本质。纵览 TOEFL 考试口语和写作的评分标准，你会发现，除了中心思想的统一、逻辑的连贯一致性、每个分论点的充分展开以外，TOEFL 考试几乎没有更深层的思维 and 逻辑要求。不像 GRE 考试的分析性写作部分，TOEFL 考试不要求我们思维全面，不需要我们客观，不需要我们具有思辨性，更不需要我们深刻。因为 TOEFL 考试的本质是对语言的测试，因此好的语言才是关键。那什么才算好的语言呢？自小就受到中式应试教育的洗礼，中国的考生们经常默认好的语言就等于华丽的句型和辞藻。是的，TOEFL 考试也明确要求的词汇量的体现和句型的多样性。但多少词汇才算体现了词汇量？多少种句型才算体现了句型的多样性？只要看过 TOEFL 考试的官方范文，你就会发现，标准的满分文章根本就没有我们想象中那么夸张的词句变化。这些文章的最大语言特点就是日常化，而这恰恰是过去范文书中最缺失的东西。

纵览市面上现有的范文书，无论口语还是写作，对于某一个话题，书中提供的答案无非是：“我支持/反对该观点。我有以下三个理由支持。第一……第二……第三……”，但没有任何人在日常生活中是如此说话的。作为一个有过多次 TOEFL 考试经历的教师，我每一次在考场上都是用最自然的语言，像日常对话一样地把我的答案表达出来。我在意的不是考官看完我的文章会不会震撼于我所使用辞藻的优雅，我希望的是他看完之后会说这样一句话：“这人是美国人吧。”因此，以口语为例，我主张的不是多说复合句，而是能够把最简单的故事用最简单的语言表达出来，而且要像日常生活中一样拥有节奏，拥有情感。不需要充分的理由，不需要全面的思考，只需要像一个普通人日常说话一样的感觉，仅此而已。

比如，我在 2013 年的一次托福考试中遇到的口语题目是：“艺术天赋是天生的还是后天的？”很多考生可能会下意识地回答：“I think artistic talent is inborn, for the following three reasons. First, ...” 然后发现连第一个理由都很难找到。我是如何回答的呢？下面就是我 45 秒的答案：“Yeah, of course it's inborn. Take myself for example. I've been playing piano for like 12 years. Wow, it's a long time. You know, I play relatively well. But, I don't get it. If I hear a song, it's about the sky, I may think it's about love. I just don't get it. But my sister is different. She's been playing piano for only 2 years. But she gets everything. When she hears a song, it's about love, she feels emotional, she feels passionate. She gets it. Of course it's inborn!” 这是一个满分答案。没有任何“高级”辞藻，所有句子都是短句，甚至充满了语法错误，也没什么逻辑连接。但这就是口语，我们日常说中文很少有人堆积长句，很少有人连续使用“因为”、“所以”、“尽管”、“况且”，我们是靠语气让对方懂得我们是在递进、转折抑或让步。我总在微博上看到人们转发类似话题：“让你的语言更华丽的词汇”，其内容无非是二十种替换 important 的方式，或者十八种替换 good 的表达。每次看到这些我都很抓狂，因为每一条转发基本就代表着又一个人被引入歧途。

写作也是类似的问题。即便在写作考试中，我不会像在口语考试中那样无视语法问题，但我也不会因为是写作考试而要求自己写出学术论文一样的书面语言，它仍然可以是生活化的、充满了幽默和情感的语句。比如，我遇到的一道写作题目是“能否通过一个人的穿着来了解一个人”。我的一个正文段落是这样的：“There is no doubt that one's character can be reflected through the clothes he chooses. When I was in college, I had quite a tough time. I was depressed and unconfident. All day long I wore clothes with dark colors, black, grey, brown and dark blue. All I wanted to do was to hide myself in the crowd. Fortunately with time passing by, now I become this shiny person, confident and outgoing. You can surely imagine that now I am always in white, red, yellow, orange, and sometimes even pink. I am a guy! I want to affect people around me with my optimism, especially my students.” 还是很简单的段落，仍然帮助我拿到了满分，因为这就是一个正常的美国人的表达方式。

很多考生在考场上总是为题目寻找全面的论述理由，非要找到三条理由佐证自己的观点。但很多题目根本找不到那么多客观的理由，即便找到了也很牵强，其实我们完全可以靠亲身经历和个人感受来支持自己的看法。有些考生因为自己语言能力欠缺，就认为需要背一个固定的模板，在考场上用同一个模板就可以得到好的分数。这是一种极其功利但又极其荒诞的想法。如果这个方法真的能够得到高分，我自然会推荐，但问题是，这个想法背后的一个重要假设是，所有话题都适合套用同一个模板来写。然而，如果一个题目背后只有一个明显的合理理由，但某个考生又非要把这个题目用在三理由展开法当中，势必最后的结果是，他把大量的时间用在了思考思路上，意味着他几乎没有多少时间来审视自己写出来的语言，最终肯定得不到满意的成绩。

有些考生会问，如果不背固定的理由，考场上是否能够做到把这些句子说出来呢？我认为经过一段时间的训练，这根本不是难事。我在课堂上就做了如下的训练：

拿到一道题目，用 30 秒钟的时间把最简单的故事想出大概结构，挑最核心的一些词写在笔记上，让学生看着这些词拼出简单句构成的回答。比如刚才的题目，我在笔记上呈现的就是“inborn, myself, piano 12 yrs, not get, sky → love, sister, piano 2 yrs, get, love song, emotional”。结果我发现，很多同学第一次上手就没有问题。因此，他们平时只需要练习如何把一个话题用 30 秒钟准备时间转化成一系列简单信号词。那么，这又如何做到呢？TOEFL 的话题是有限的，常见的主题无非就是科技、交通、娱乐、媒体、教育、家庭、工作、朋友、消费、医疗、环境等。很多学生花了两三个月甚至更长时间来训练考试窍门，这其实是南辕北辙。最直接、最有效的做法，就是每天寻找一个主题，把相关话题的答案全部过一遍，在考场上遇到这些话题时自然就有思路了，这根本就不需要两个月的时间。

综上所述，才有了这本素材书的出炉。它的目的既理想化又功利。理想化在于，我希望通过更地道的日常用语让大家拥有真正学英语的感觉。我不希望同学们辛苦准备了 TOEFL 考试，最后去了美国却连日常交流都做不到。因此，这本书中的口语素材都以日常对话场景为背景，充满了地道的口语表达，而写作的主题也大多选择的是日常话题，充满了情感性的表达方式。并且，为了让同学们学会这些表达方式，书中还提供了大量例句和翻译练习，帮助同学们真正掌握这些用法。但这本书又是功利的。其主题涵盖面极大，覆盖了过去 TOEFL 考试考过的绝大部分常见主题。希望同学们花时间去熟读每一个话题，不仅仅为了掌握一道题目，更重要的是融会贯通，能够将一个素材熟练地进行调整，运用到不同的题目中。因此，每一个主题的例文之后我们都配置了大量过去 TOEFL 考试中曾经出现的相关话题，并引导同学们将刚学过的内容应用到新的题目当中，真正做到学以致用。

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Part 1

口语部分

如何搞定独立口语任务?

先来看看以下话题及 response:

1. Describe your favorite music.

Well, my favorite kind of music is definitely rock and roll 'cos...um, it totally relaxes me! You know, now I am in my sophomore year, and can you imagine this? I have 13 courses to take—some of them are really difficult. So of course I feel very tired and exhausted every day. But rock and roll just pulls me back to life. You know, I like singing to the music, like, really crazily. It's strong, it's powerful, it's cool, and it's like I can be fully energetic again after listening to one piece. Anyway, rock and roll is my all time favorite.

2. Would you like to study in the library, or would you like to study in the dorm?

Wow, I surely would like to study in the library, 'cos um... you know, something in the dorm can be really really distracting. Um, I remember this snowy day; I just did not want to go all the way to the library. So I just chose to stay in the dorm to do some of the homework. But you know what? Soon my dorm mate Sophia returned from shopping. You know, what she got was really amazing—she even got a pair of UGG with a 50% discount! How am I supposed to resist that? So, that afternoon I ended up heading downtown for a pair of discounted UGG shoes! As you can easily imagine, I got no homework done whatsoever. So um... of course the library is a better place to learn!

3. Talk about a school event you participated in recently.

Well, I would like to talk about the recent graduation ceremony. That was really grand! It was like, everyone was there. In the middle of the ceremony, a video was played. You know, that just recorded how we had come along in these four years: the first day in class, the first party, the first hiking, the debate competition... You know, those clips really pulled all my memories back. I felt so great to have experienced the wonderful four years, and I also believed that it's another beginning from there.

4. If the university received a barrel of money, what do you think the university should build? A library or a gym?

Well, definitely the university should just build a gym. You know, my school library is great and amazing already—it's like whatever I need, I could find it in the library. But um... the gym and sports facilities, they are just um...they are just terrible. The gym is just too small, and every time I could hardly find any space to place myself. It is driving me crazy. I mean, shouldn't the school consider improving the gym? Of course it should.

5. Do you agree or disagree: assignments handed in after the deadline should receive a lower score?

Yes, absolutely. If not, that would be so much unfair to students who finish the work just on time. I have this terrible experience. Once, I needed to work on a report, and the professor just gave us 5 days. I worked really hard on that, and the night before the due day I even worked overnight! I got an A, of course, but later I heard that my classmate Sophia also got an A, but you know what, she handed in the report even a week after the deadline! How am I supposed to feel? It was so unfair! I mean, if one can also get a good grade like this, why is there even a deadline?

各位同学，看完以上几个独立口语段子，你怎么想？你觉得以上段子在考场中的得分区间是？

其实，以上几个段子都是满分段子。那么我们来分析一下这几个段子的共性。

1. 内容

(1) 讲小故事。以上几个段子中没有那么多逻辑严谨的“为什么”，有的只是紧密结合自身经历的小故事。关于学校应该把钱花在图书馆还是健身房，没有探讨健身房的好处一好处二，就是说自己学校图书馆已经足够好了，而健身房却显然没有满足学生的需求。通过自己的经历具体刻画一下学校的图书馆有多好，以及目前的健身房有多糟，这个段子就形成了。同样的，为什么要在图书馆学习，而不是在宿舍学习？不是去探讨在图书馆学习的种种好，而是通过自身经历，告诉听者一个故事，这个故事揭露了在宿舍里面多么容易被其他事情干扰。同样，你所需要做的就是把这个被分心的过程描述出来就可以了。

为什么这种故事的形式是好的？其实就是两个字：好想。在回答独立口语任务的时候，我们只有极其有限的 15 秒的准备时间，因此思维就往那个更容易的地方走，才能够避免我们面临无话可说的窘境。而大部分情况之下，我们之所以

更加喜欢 A 而不是 B，就只有一个理由（A 的好，或者 B 的不好），所以根据这个理由编故事反而在考场上更加容易。

- (2) 重复情感。观察以上段子你可以发现，段子的结尾部分经常出现类似的表达：“it’s really driving me crazy”，“how am I supposed to resist that?”，“I was really disappointed”，等等。

为什么需要去重复情感呢？其实就是用这些更容易说的“I feel great”、“I feel amazing”等等，来填充起我们的时间。我们在编故事的时候，那么短的时间很难想出很多细节。在这个时候，去表达和重复自己的情感，是一种不错的填充时间又拿分的方式。

现在我们来查看一些例题：

例 1：你喜欢在家吃饭，还是在外边吃饭？

Step 1 选择：在家吃饭

Well, I surely would like to have meals at home.

Step 2 第一反应的理由：家里的饭好吃，外面的饭难吃

Coz... um, you know, the food outside is, um... it just tastes awful.

Step 3 讲个故事：有一个月常在外边吃饭，菜特别咸（这里如果你可以想到，也可以添加类似“宫保鸡丁一点辣味都没有”等等的细节）

Well, last month I kept dining out because of my tight studying schedule... but you know what? I just found the food outside very very salty. It’s very different from what I can have at home, you know? I couldn’t help but wonder how those restaurants managed to make profit. (Also, the Kung Pao Chicken outside is even more sweet than spicy.)

Step 4 情感：失望，恶心，崩溃，沮丧……

Anyway, I just felt very disappointed and frustrated, and if I can have a chance to choose, definitely dining at home would be better.

例 2：政府是否应该花钱在一些能够鼓励民众健康生活的项目上？

Step 1 选择：应该

Yes, of course the government needs to do so.

Step 2 第一反应的理由：这样民众可以更加健康（不这样民众不健康，不好）

Coz um, if not, the citizens will not be healthy, which surely is not so good.

Step 3 讲个故事：我搬家到一个街区，周围根本没有公共运动场所，所以我不断长胖，体能下降。

You know, last year I moved to a neighborhood, and you know what? I couldn't even find any public playground around! And of course, I kept gaining weight. I'm now really much fatter than one year ago! And um, now I really get poor physical condition as well. I can't even climb up to the 6th floor!

Step 4 情感：失望，崩溃，郁闷

Well, how should I feel? Of course, I'm frustrated, and it's like I'm not even optimistic towards life anymore! Surely the government should do something to encourage a more healthy life.

例 3：员工在办公地点应该穿套装，还是应该穿休闲服？

Step 1 选择：穿套装

Well, of course they should wear suits.

Step 2 第一反应的理由：职业，给客户印象好（休闲服不职业，给客户印象不好）

Coz um... if not, they might fail to leave a good and professional impression on the clients.

Step 3 讲个故事：有一次我见客户，起晚了，匆忙之下忘了穿套装直接穿了休闲服。客户很不爽，生意没谈成。

You know, once I had an appointment with an important client, but um...that morning I just overslept. Well, I was in such a hurry that I totally forgot to wear the suit! I just grabbed some casual clothes and put them on. But the first second the client saw me, I could tell he was not satisfied. And no matter what I said, he simply kept silent and refused to talk to me! Anyway, I didn't successfully cooperate with that client.

Step 4 情感：失望，崩溃，郁闷，囧

You know, I was really frustrated, oh, and I guess it must be the outfit. So um... I think suits are a must in the working settings.

看完以上故事，大家觉得如何？其实一个又好又容易想的口语段子是很容易构造的。每个人都有这个能力。

2. 语言

高分口语段子的语言是怎么样的？一定要用词很“高大上”吗？一定要语法结构很复杂吗？