

# 最新英语文摘

## (一)

### ——设问高招

**Stardie Sportsware** v. **East Midlands**

Co. Reg. No. 2592985, t/o 6 Bruce Street

Birmingham, London N17. Co. Reg. No.

2729930, t/o 174 High Street, Hounslow

Middlesex, Middx. Co. Reg. No. 2592985

v. Co. Reg. No. 2729930, t/o 174 High Street

Hounslow, Middlesex, Middx. Co. Reg. No.

2592985, t/o 6 Bruce Street, Birmingham

Justice, Birmingham District Registrar, No.

68 of 1994. Date of Order: March 14 1994.

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**Fashion Magic Ltd** v. **East Midlands**

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# 最新英语文摘(一)

——设问高招

陈 岳 编

上海交通大学出版社

## 内 容 提 要

本书从英美新近出版的杂志和报纸上摘录能反映当今世界科技和社会等诸方面发展动态的文章,并根据我国读者的习惯整理分类,旨在让读者在了解社会和增长知识的过程中同时提高英语的阅读能力。此外,在若干文章之后还配有精彩小短文和幽默故事等,以使读者感受阅读的乐趣。

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## 前 言

现代科技,尤其是信息技术的日新月异已经对英语的发展产生了相当广泛的影响。仅英语词汇量的增加就足以证明这一点,即近 20% 的单词与表达方式是在过去一个世纪里产生的。基于这一事实,我们着手从近期出版的欧美主要杂志与报刊上选择近 40 篇文章,汇编成册,以使读者有缘在学习英文的同时又有机会领略英美社会的方方面面。

除了受科技发展的影响外,语言也是文化的一部分。因此,在选择时不仅考虑科技发展最新动态和未来趋势方面的文章,同时还考虑文化教育和社会科学各方面的文章。目的是使读者能够接触到最新的英语词汇和表达方式,让所学的英语更接近生活、接近社会实际,从而增加语言的实用性。

本书每篇文章的开始均设有一段概括性的中文导读说明,其目的是使读者在阅读之前心中有数,从而增强阅读的有效性和高效性。文章中部分单词和词组采用中英文注释,仅选择该单词或词组在此文章中的含义。若干文章之后附有一些幽默故事、精彩小短文或广告语等。

本书不足之处在所难免,恳请读者不吝赐教。

编 者

2001 年 5 月

# 目 录

## 未来技术

The 10 Smartest Machines (1)

10种最灵巧的机器

The Wet and Wild Future of Computers (6)

生化计算机前途无量

Lowering the Cost of Space Flight (11)

降低航天飞行成本

Incredible Shrinking Doctors (15)

小得不可思议的医生

Smart Bombs May Replace Nuclear Weapons (25)

智能炸弹可能替代原子弹

## 网络世界

Anonymity and the Internet (29)

匿名权和因特网

Web Wake-up Call (35)

网络安全警讯

Web Globalization and Financial Services Firms (41)

网络全球化与金融服务公司

Global Culture (46)

全球文化

Bad Web Parents (51)

糟糕的网上监管

Online Bill Paying is Still Waiting for the Big  
Payoff (56)

在线付费尚需时日

A Twisted Kind of Love (62)

扭曲的爱

The Internet and Gutenberg (66)

因特网和古腾堡

E-Books Struggle to Replace Type on Paper (73)

电子图书难以取代铅印书籍

Dot-coms Ready to Swoop in (79)

网站公司蓄势待发

More and Better Markets (84)

诱人的大市场

Online Loans — Click for Homes, Cars, and  
School (87)

轻轻松松网上借款

The Simple Life (91)

简单的生活

In Praise of Start-ups (95)

为创业公司唱赞歌

Rules for the New Era (102)

新时代的投资规则

## 科学世界

Research and Violence (107)

科研与暴力

Mind Games (113)

动物大脑探秘

**社会万象**

Power to More of the People (118)

财富共享

DNA from the Dead May Offer Little to the  
Living (123)

死者 DNA 保存之争

Lost in the Car Park (129)

车库迷宫

The Good-deed Doers (133)

乐善好施者

Money Laundering: What about the Lawyers? (137)

洗钱——律师也有责任?

Only the Rich Can Live? (142)

穷人不该活?

Let Them in — It'll Pay (148)

移民是宝

**CEO 智慧**

Achieving that “Everest Feeling” (153)

追求攀登珠峰之感觉

Do Your Employees Know the Plan? (158)

你的员工了解公司的发展计划吗?

**教育启迪**

Myths about Adolescent Suicide (163)

青少年自杀探究

Technology's Little Millionaires (171)

新技术造就的小百万富翁

Higher Quality Questioning (176)

设问高招

New Words in English (180)

英语新词

### 环保意识

Freezing Future (188)

严寒的未来

Get Wise to Global Warming (191)

全球变暖之危害

### 休闲领地

Swim into Great Shape (195)

水中健体

The Decline of Conversation (206)

面对面交流的减少

Living Faster and Faster (211)

日益紧张的生活

幽默故事 (10, 24, 34, 50)

短文汇粹 (61, 65, 72, 94, 112, 128, 141, 162, 170, 175, 187,  
194, 210)



## The 10 Smartest Machines

### 10种最灵巧的机器

新的技术使我们周围的一切更加智慧化。10种超智能的小型机器便是这样的产物，它们将勾画出不远的将来。这些小型机器就是：微型医疗仪、移动电话、自动喂食仪、配戴式电视机、项链式随身听、微型工厂、家庭安全系统、电子图书、自动驾驶系统、配戴式电脑。

Japan may have lagged behind<sup>1</sup> in the technology of the moment<sup>2</sup>, the Internet. But the country's traditional strength — designing and producing gadgets<sup>3</sup> that are chic<sup>4</sup>, convenient and comically<sup>5</sup> small — will likely become more and more important as consumers harness<sup>6</sup> the Net's power with devices other than the stodgy<sup>7</sup> personal computer. The high-tech wonders

pictured on the following are already taking shape in the R&D Labs and design centers of Japan Inc. What they promise is a future where so-called “smart” machines really can do it all — a world of radical advances not just in consumer electronics but in manufacturing and medicine and even in the nation's mighty auto industry. Here is a look at 10 gizmos<sup>8</sup> that will shape that world:

**Micromedical Device** Swallow this capsule and it will cruise<sup>9</sup> through your body scouting for<sup>10</sup> disease, taking

snapshots<sup>11</sup> of trouble spots and even performing microsurgery<sup>12</sup> where needed. Some will be tiny enough to navigate the bloodstream and deliver small doses of drugs.

**Cell Phone** The hand-held device of the future combines a cell phone, a personal digital assistant and a virtual “secretary.” Ask “her” (nicely) to read out your schedule, dial a number or order flowers over the Net. Broadband pipes will eventually allow real-time video conferences and CD-quality sound.

**Hands-free Feeding Device** Secom’s feeding robot could be a boon<sup>13</sup> to the disabled. More the beam fixed to your head to highlight an electronic image of the grilled<sup>14</sup> eel that’s in your lunch box. Then push the “eat” button and the robot arm swoops down a fork and spoon to grab the real thing for you.

**Wearable TV** Hang Sony’s slim designer television set around your neck and catch the news as you wait for the bus. Pop in a memory stick and screen a video or clips of junior’s birthday party. The cord functions as an antenna.

**Choker<sup>15</sup> Walkman** Sony’s diminutive<sup>16</sup> next-generation Walkman is worn around the neck like a choker. Call up music on demand with voice commands or download songs from the Net. Your choker will also include a mini-camcorder<sup>17</sup> and possibly a baby cell phone.

**Microfactory** The factory of the future will fit on a desk and turn our Lilliputian<sup>18</sup> stuff like microgears<sup>19</sup> and cell phone chips. Made-to-order<sup>20</sup> consumer goods, too: your local pharmacist will have one to customize<sup>21</sup> your heart medi-

cation<sup>22</sup>, while your optometrist<sup>23</sup> will use one to make your contact lenses right in the shop.

**Home Security System** Mitsubishi Electric's electronic "eyes" will watch over pets, check out the delivery boy and spot burglars<sup>24</sup> while you are out. If anything's amiss, you'll get a warning and live footage<sup>25</sup> of the action on your video-capable cell phone.

**Electronic Book** The print in Toshiba's electronic book will look as sharp as it does on good paper, and of course it's enlargeable. Better still, the book can read out loud to you. Choose from hundreds of texts and illustrations stored in memory, or download a fresh tale from the Net.

**Automated Driving System** Flip a switch and the Mitsubishi Electric driving system will take over your car — steering, keeping the right distance behind the next vehicle and swerving<sup>26</sup> to avoid obstacles — relying on sensors aboard the car and imbedded<sup>27</sup> in the road. Satellite feeds to the navigation system tell the auto how to get you where you want to go.

**Wearable Computer** Tape Olympus' tiny computer to the back of your hand, and you'll be ready to search files or surf the Web with a snap of the fingers<sup>28</sup>. Worn with a small screen attached to a headset<sup>29</sup>, it will let aircraft maintenance technicians, for instance, dispense with<sup>30</sup> heavy manuals when they're working in tight corners.

**Useful Words and Expressions**

1. lag behind — fail to keep pace with others 落后
2. of the moment — of importance or consequence at the present 当前很重要的、举足轻重的
3. gadget — small mechanical device or tool 小机械, 小装置
4. chic — elegant and stylish 高雅的, 时髦的
5. comically — funny and amusing 逗人发笑地
6. harness — control and make use of 控制, 利用
7. stodgy — heavy and dull 笨重, 乏味
8. gizmo — small device 小装置, 小玩意儿
9. cruise — to travel in a specified area for something 巡查
10. scout for — to make a search, hunt 寻找
11. snapshot — a photograph which is taken quickly 快照
12. microsurgery — any surgery performed under magnification and with small specialized instruments 显微外科手术
13. boon — something very useful 非常有用的东西
14. grill — to broil over a fire 烤炙
15. choker — a short necklace 短项链
16. diminutive — small, tiny 小的, 微小的
17. mini-camcorder — tiny television camera with a VCR 微型摄像放像机
18. Lilliputian — extremely small like in Lilliput (像小人国里使用的) 极小的
19. microgear — tiny tools or apparatus 微型工具或设备
20. made-to-order — to produce according to customer's specifications or requirements 定制的

21. customize — to modify or build according to personal specifications or preference 按顾客具体要求制造或改造等
22. medication — the use or application of medicine 药物治疗
23. optometrist — a licensed professional who practices optometry 验光师
24. burglar — a person who breaks into a house at night with intent to steal 夜盗, 破门盗窃者
25. footage — a motion-picture scene or scenes (影片的)连续镜头
26. swerve — to turn aside abruptly in movement or direction (突然)转向一边
27. imbed — to fix into a surrounding mass 把……嵌入(或插入、埋入)
28. with a snap of fingers — easily 很容易地
29. headset — a device consisting of one or two earphones with a headband for holding them over the ears and sometimes with a mouthpiece attached 头戴式受话机
30. dispense with — to do without 省掉

## The Wet and Wild Future of Computers 生化计算机前途无量

The element silicon is so closely identified with computers that most people would be likely to associate it more readily with California's high-tech valley than with the periodic table. But such thinking may soon have to be radically revised, as high-speed computation moves beyond chips and machines to include the tools of biochemistry and genetics: test tubes, slides<sup>1</sup>, solutions — even DNA.

DNA is present in every living organism, and the appeal of the molecule as a supercomputer mechanism lies in its demonstrated ability to store a vast amount of information — indeed, all of the instructions for replicating<sup>2</sup> life. Although the chemistry set

提起计算机,人们往往将其与硅元素联系起来。这样的思维方式不久就会改变。未来高速计算机将不再仅仅由芯片和机器组成,而是将利用生物化学技术,即DNA技术来制造。DNA存在于每个生命体中,它存储和处理信息的能力远远高于普通芯片,能够满足制造超级计算机的需要。但专家们也指出生化计算机的开发尚处在婴儿期,离实际应用还相当遥远。

won't be replacing your PC anytime soon, two groups of scientists demonstrated last month how these information-laden<sup>3</sup> molecules might perform calculations in future computers.

Instead of using zeroes and ones to encode<sup>4</sup> information using electrical current, the “memory” in a DNA computer takes the form of thousands of DNA strands<sup>5</sup> that are synthesized in a lab. Each strand contains a different sequence of the chemical bases — symbolized by the letters A, C, T, and G — that make up all DNA molecules. To sift through all these strands, scientists subject the DNA memory to various enzymes<sup>6</sup> that eliminate certain strands of DNA, leaving only the strands of bases that represent correct answers (graphic).

In January, scientists at the University of Wisconsin reported in the journal *Nature* that they had found a way to perform a simple calculation using strands of DNA that had been attached to a gold-plated surface. Previous experiments with DNA computing had allowed the DNA to float freely in a test tube, but Lloyd Smith, a chemist and leader of the Wisconsin research team, hopes his method will allow the wet chemical steps required for a calculation to be automated. “It’s a route to scaling up DNA computing to larger problems,” says Smith of his experiment.

Chess and chemistry. Another group, led by biologist Laura Landweber at Princeton University, reported on a way to use RNA<sup>7</sup> — a chemical cousin of DNA — to perform a similar calculation. To demonstrate that their technique

works, Landweber's team calculated the answer to a simple version of a classical chess dilemma called the "knight problem." The computer must determine in which positions a chess player can place the knights on the board so that none can attack another. The scientists encoded each strand of RNA to represent a possible configuration of knights. Then, they performed a series of steps in a test tube with chemicals designed to eliminate RNA strands representing wrong answers, and then they analyzed the remaining RNA strands to see if they all corresponded to correct answers. Almost 98 percent of the supposedly<sup>8</sup> "correct" strands did in fact correspond to correct chess configurations — a surprisingly high success rate for a preliminary<sup>9</sup> experiment.

At the moment, it is still much faster to use a PC to perform such calculations. But silicon-based computers perform their magic simply by running through every possible answer one by one at the speed of electrical current. Because of DNA's power to store information — a few grams of the material could store all the data known to exist in the world — some scientists believe that such biochemicals will eventually be the most efficient medium of storing and manipulating information. But its real advantage over a conventional computer is that rather than analyzing each possible answer in sequence, the DNA computer would act on the entire library of molecules — or answers — simultaneously.

Although Landweber is optimistic about the ability of the technique to find the right answers with 100 percent accuracy in the future, she and other researchers are quick to



point out that the field is in its infancy<sup>10</sup> compared with conventional computing methods and that for many applications, silicon-based microchips will always be better. “Silicon computing won’t go away, and the applications that it’s used for won’t go away,” says John Reif, a computer scientist at Duke University and director of the Consortium of Biomolecular Computing.

What’s really needed, according to most researchers in the field, is a “killer” application particularly suited for the way DNA computing solves problems. Such real-world problems might involve the encryption<sup>11</sup> of large amounts of military information, or they might involve some combination of silicon and DNA computing, says Reif. “We’ll just have to see how far we can push the technology — see how far we can take it,” says Landweber.

### **Useful Words and Expressions**

1. slide — a usually rectangular plate of glass on which objects are placed for microscopic examination (显微镜用) 载物玻璃片
2. replicate — to reproduce 再生产, 复制
3. laden — burdened, loaded down 载满, 加沉重负担于
4. strand — a fiber of filament, as in animal or plant issue (动物或植物组织的) 纤维, 丝状体
5. encode — to convert (a message, information, etc.) into code 把(电文、情报等)译成电码(或密码)
6. enzyme — a kind of biochemical catalysts 酶
7. RNA — a polymeric constituent of all living cells and