



普通高等教育“十一五”国家级规划教材

# College English *Speed Reading* 4

## 新通用大学英语 快速阅读 4

总主编 赵 雯  
主 编 王爱东 佟玉平  
副主编 张 宁 郝丽霞



内附趣味训练  
多媒体学习光盘



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# 前言

《通用大学英语》是国家“九五”重点科技攻关项目，最早出版于1998年8月，是国内开发较早的一套面向学习者需求的系列电子教材。《新通用大学英语》是在《通用大学英语》的研究、开发与应用的基础上，依据教育部颁布的《大学英语课程教学要求》重新研发的一套供大学基础阶段英语教学使用的立体化系列教材。本系列教材共分四级，每级由《综合教程》、《听说教程》、《阅读教程》、《综合技能训练》、《快速阅读》、《教学参考书》以及配套的电子教案和网络课程等组成。

英语阅读是获取信息的主要手段，也是学习和掌握语言的有效途径，阅读能力的培养是大学英语教学的一项重要任务，《大学英语课程教学要求》对其做出了定性与定量的要求。对于广大非英语专业大学生而言，只有通过大量阅读，才能获得足够的语言输入，打下扎实的英语基础，形成较强的英语语感，从而提高英语综合应用能力。英语阅读能力包含诸多要素，而快速处理阅读材料所含信息的能力是其中极其重要的微技能。在当今这个“信息爆炸”、新知识呈几何级数增长的时代，快速阅读技能的重要性愈加突出。而快速阅读技能的培养需要有适当的语料与教材作支撑，《新通用大学英语快速阅读》的编写正是为满足目前国内大学英语教学的这一现实需求。

根据《大学英语课程教学要求》，一般要求的阅读理解部分要求学生“能基本读懂一般性题材的英文文章，阅读速度达到每分钟70词。在快速阅读篇幅较长、难度略低材料时，阅读速度达到每分钟100词。能就阅读材料进行略读和寻读。能借助词典阅读本专业的英语教材和题材熟悉的英文报刊文章，掌握中心大意，理解主要事实和有关细节。能读懂工作、生活中常见的应用文体的材料。能在阅读中使用有效的阅读方法。”本教程的编写正是以《大学英语课程教学要求》为依据，采取“主题与技能”相结合的编写模式，即单元内容设置围绕单元主题，练习设计针对阅读技能，并通过先进的计算机技术和有趣的游戏设计来有效训练并提高阅读技能。编写组期望通过本系列教程的学习与操练，学习者的快速阅读速度能得到快速提高，从而能在较短时间内获取并处理大量的文字信息。

本系列教材每级后附有一张配套的趣味训练多媒体学习光盘，可供大学英语教学1~4学期使用。每册教材由16个单元组成，每个单元有三篇文章，其中两篇在纸质教材中，一篇在趣味训练多媒体学习光盘中。每个单元在原有《综合教程》主题的基础上，又进行了适当扩展，增加了一些与学生的日常生活和学习、社会、文化等相关的主题。

本系列教材在设计时，充分考虑了快速阅读的主要特点，即限时阅读、略读和寻读。由于快速阅读是限时阅读，需注意阅读时限，因此纸质教材的每篇文章后均给出了文章的词数，学习者可根据阅读所花的时间，计算出自己的阅读速度，有意识地逐步提高阅读技能。





此外,本系列教材的编写目的在于培养学生的略读和寻读技能,即培养学习者快速获取文章大意和查找特定信息的能力,如通过以意群为单位的视读、利用文章标题和小标题等印刷细节、阅读文章的首尾段,和通过数字、专业名词、专业术语、段首或段尾词、上下文语境线索等快速获取信息的能力。学习者可以根据对文后问题的回答,了解自己对阅读内容的理解和掌握的准确率。

本系列教材纸质教材中所采用的练习形式主要分为三种:是非判断题、句子填空题、多项选择题。学习者可以在快速阅读练习中采用一些有效的方法,如推断法、关键词句法、强记法等,来提高自己的快速阅读能力。

《新通用大学英语快速阅读》由东北大学、四川师范大学、内江师范学院、西南科技大学、北京城市学院、沈阳化工大学等多所院校的教授与英语教学专家编写而成。本系列教材在策划、设计与编写过程中得到了高等教育出版社外语出版中心的大力支持与帮助,在此一并表示感谢。由于水平、经验有限,这套教材中难免有一些不尽如人意之处,我们热诚欢迎广大师生在使用本教材时提出宝贵的意见。

《新通用大学英语快速阅读》项目组

2010年3月

## 趣味训练多媒体学习光盘使用说明

趣味训练多媒体学习光盘为学习者进一步提供了多样化的速读训练活动，供学习者针对某一主题进行进一步的阅读训练。光盘上的每一单元由两个部分组成：速读训练和测试。

速读训练部分集中对分组、节奏和单词识别三种阅读技能进行综合训练。分组、节奏技能训练部分主要在以下三个部分进行训练：Blockbuster, Pyramid Pages和Timed Lines。

- Blockbuster旨在使学习者能够瞬间阅读4~7个单词，单词意群按照母语阅读者的阅读习惯加以划分。
- Pyramid Pages将训练学习者以行为单位阅读单词意群。每组单词的个数从上至下逐行增加，共9行，呈金字塔形，该活动可以训练学习者扩大阅读视幅。
- Timed Lines将训练学习者一次阅读两行文字，从而使学习者能够阅读更大的单词意群。

上述所有的练习有两种模式供学习者选择——自动模式和手动模式。在Automatic mode（自动模式）下，单词意群自动显示，强迫学习者按照一个既定的节奏进行阅读。这种模式清除了速读过程中的两个重要障碍：默读（不出声地读单词）和重读。在Manual mode（手动模式）下，单词意群需要手动点击才能显示。这样，学习者可以自己控制阅读速度，并且可以在练习条件下进行自我测试。此外，学习者能在这些练习中接触到常用的词语搭配，从而提高自己的词汇运用技能。

单词识别技能训练部分主要在以下三个部分进行训练：Reading Boat, Word Flash和Speed Scan。

- 在Reading Boat中，有3个单词会分别在屏幕的左、中、右迅速闪过。学习者需要快速辨认这3个单词是否相同。单词的屏幕布局会让学习者不自觉地扩大视幅，而时间限制会令学习者提高单词识别速度。游戏的目的在于提高学习者的学习积极性，加快单词识别速度。
- 在Word Flash中，会有一个单词在屏幕上迅速闪过。学习者需要辨认并正确拼写出该单词。此项训练旨在培养学习者快速辨认单词的能力。

在上述两项活动中，学习者可以选择Normal mode（正常模式）或者Hard mode（高级模式），后者难度较高。

- 在Speed Scan中，学习者需要在文章中快速找出某个单词。这些单词在文章中随机出现。另外，练习中还有一个提示工具，可将该单词所在的行标注出来。该活动完全复制了母语阅读者快速寻找信息的方法，可以提高单词识别的速度和眼睛定位的准确性。同时，它还可以促使学习者提高阅读节奏。此外，该活动中的单词均来自于阅读文章，可以让学习者进一步巩固常用的词汇。

测试部分旨在评估学习者在速读训练中所练习的各项技能。其操作程序如下：

开始阅读：学习者将根据速读训练所读文章的原文，完成一个计时测试。学习者必须仔细阅读文章，然后回答5个细节问题。由于问题在阅读完成后才出现，因此它还能测试学习者的注意力集中程度和记忆力。

开始答题：点击Start questions，计时停止。如果学习者想再次阅读文章的某些部分，可以点击Return to text。每次回到原文重新阅读，计时都将在上一次时间记录的基础上继续进行。点击Return to questions后，计时再次停止。

测试提交：完成答题后，点击Submit，提交答案。在测试中，答案只能提交一次。

此外，在本部分尚有两点需要注意：

最短阅读时间：每篇文章都有一个最短阅读时间。该时间是根据每分钟800个单词的最快阅读速度来设定的，相当于母语速读者的阅读速度。学习者必须等最短阅读时间结束之后，才能开始答题。



成绩报告：测试完毕，学习者将收到一份综合评估其阅读速度与阅读理解能力的成绩报告。学习者的速读速度测试成绩，即每分钟阅读的单词数(WPM) = 文章内的单词总数 / 阅读总时间。学习者可参照母语阅读者的阅读效率标准。

母语阅读者的阅读效率分为四个标准：

(1) 普通阅读者 (200~350 WPM)：阅读速度一般，通常能够理解一半以上的阅读内容，有默读习惯并经常返回原文阅读，有时集中注意力较为困难。

(2) 有效阅读者 (350~500 WPM)：阅读速度高于一般水平，理解能力较好，能够阅读单词意群而不默读。有时需要返回原文阅读。

(3) 快速阅读者 (500~650 WPM)：阅读速度大大高于一般水平，理解能力很好。偶尔需要返回原文阅读，对于大多数单词能直接识别而无需默读，能够出于学习或娱乐目的而进行有效阅读。

(4) 高速阅读者 (650+ WPM)：阅读速度极快，几乎能够100%理解文章内容，几乎不默读或重读，短时间内可以处理大量信息，可能参加过阅读提高培训。

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## Introduction to Important Reading Strategies and Skills

The following is a summary of some important reading strategies and skills which can be applied to all forms of English reading. While learning to read English, make a conscious effort to put into practice these strategies and skills.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1. Reading in sense groups                     | 8. Inferring                           |
| 2. Predicting                                  | 9. Understanding the text organization |
| 3. Skimming                                    | 10. Recognizing the signal words       |
| 4. Scanning                                    | 11. Understanding figurative language  |
| 5. Guessing the unknown words                  | 12. Assessing the author's purpose     |
| 6. Understanding the main ideas                | 13. Evaluating the author's attitude   |
| 7. Recognizing the important facts and details |  |

### 1. Reading in sense groups

Understanding what you are reading is important; but the speed at which you read is important, too. While making constant efforts to improve your reading comprehension, you should try consciously to increase your reading speed. Reading in sense groups is an easy, yet effective, way of picking up speed and fluency.

How should you read this sentence?

Example 1: *He could not help thinking that if anything should happen, the nearest person he could contact by radio, unless there was a ship nearby, would be on an island 885 miles away.*

A poor reader is apt to move his eyes *from word to word*, while an efficient reader will move his eyes *from sense group to sense group* so that he will be able to acquire sufficient speed to read fluently with good comprehension:

*He could not help —*

*thinking that —*

*if anything should happen, —*

*the nearest person —*

*he could contact by radio, —*

*unless there was a ship nearby, —*

*would be on an island —*

*885 miles away.*

### 2. Predicting

Before you read a text in detail, it is possible to predict what information you may find in it. You will probably have some knowledge of the subject already, and you can use this knowledge to help you anticipate what a reading text contains.

After looking at the title, for example, you can ask yourself what you do and do not know about the subject before you read the text. Or you can formulate questions that you would like to have answered by reading the text. These exercises will help you focus more effectively on the ideas in a text when you actually start reading.

To help you predict, you may also use skimming and scanning strategies as described below.



### 3. Skimming

Skimming involves reading quickly through a text to get an overall idea of its contents. Features of the text that can help you include the following:

- (a) Title
- (b) Subtitle(s)
- (c) Details about the author
- (d) Abstract
- (e) Introductory paragraph
- (f) First, second and last sentences of body paragraphs
- (g) Concluding paragraph

A text may not contain all of these features — there may be no abstract, for example, or no subtitles — but you can usually expect to find at least (a), (e), (f) and (g). Focusing on these will give you an understanding of the overall idea or gist of the text you are reading — in other words, a general understanding as opposed to a detailed reading.

Another term for this kind of reading is **surveying**. Surveying can be described as looking quickly through a book, a chapter of a book, an article from a journal, etc., to decide whether or not it is suitable for your purpose.

### 4. Scanning

When you scan a text, again you look quickly through it. However, unlike skimming, scanning involves looking for specific words. Scanning involves rapid reading for the specific rather than the general; for particular details rather than the overall idea.

When you read a text, for example, you may want to find only a percentage figure or the dates of particular historical events instead of the main ideas. Scanning will help you find such information more efficiently.

### 5. Guessing the unknown words

It is unlikely that you will understand 100 percent of the vocabulary in a text, especially at a first reading.

Use first the context and then your own knowledge of the subject to help you guess the meaning of the unknown words. At your first reading of a text it is usually best not to stop and consult your dictionary. This will interrupt your process of reading and understanding. Often the meaning of the unfamiliar words and phrases becomes clear as you continue to read through the text. The dictionary can be used at a later stage.

In using context to help you guess the unknown vocabulary, refer first to the **immediate context** and then to the **wider context** in which a word is found. The immediate context is the sentence in which a word is found, and sometimes the sentences immediately before and after it. The wider context can include other sentences and even other paragraphs in a text. Both forms of context can often provide important information that helps you guess the meaning of unfamiliar words. It is possible to find hints or clues about a word's meaning from the context. *Definition, restatement, general knowledge, related information, examples, comparison, contrast and word formation* could give you some hints or clues to the meaning of unfamiliar words.

Example 2: This includes *poultry* for the main course (e.g. chicken, turkey, duck, goose), salads, breads, and vegetables, and features a variety of desserts, for example, pies, puddings, and ice cream.

### 6. Understanding the main ideas

You will practice recognizing the main ideas contained within a text. In the process of skimming you will

already have identified some of these main ideas. Each paragraph will usually contain one main idea, sometimes referred to as the paragraph topic.

The reading materials provide several exercises which help you identify and understand the main ideas in a text. Knowing the key points in a reading text is vital in assessing its importance and relevance for your needs.

Understanding the main ideas will also lead you to an understanding of the author's organization.

## **7. Recognizing the important facts and details**

To understand the main idea thoroughly, however, you must recognize the important facts or details which help develop or support it. These facts and details give you a deeper understanding of the main idea. They may prove a point, show a relationship between ideas, or serve as examples to help you understand the main idea more fully. Here are some ways to help you recognize important facts or details:

- (a) Read for the main idea. If you have identified the main idea, you can more easily recognize the important facts that support it.
- (b) Keep it in mind that not all facts or details are equally important. Look only for the facts that relate to the main idea.
- (c) To check on your understanding of the material you have read, review the facts or details which you have identified as the main idea. If adding up the facts or details does not lead logically to the main idea, you have failed either to identify the main idea or to recognize the important supporting details.

## **8. Inferring**

Sometimes the author will suggest or express something indirectly in a text. In other words, the author will imply something and leave it to the reader to infer or understand what is meant. When authors do this, they rely to some extent on the knowledge of their readers — knowledge of a subject or cultural knowledge, for example.

Inferring the author's meaning is sometimes important in the process of understanding a reading text. Readers have to read between the lines for complete understanding of a passage. Compare the following examples:

Example 3: When the phone finally rang, Joe leaped from the edge of his chair and grabbed for it.

Example 4: Joe was very nervous and anxious as he waited for an important phone call. Unable to relax for a moment, he sat on the edge of his chair. When the phone rang, Joe reached for it with great eagerness.

## **9. Understanding the text organization**

Authors structure, or organize, their writing in many different ways. Recognizing the way in which a text has been organized will help you understand its meaning more fully. The author may want, for example, to outline a situation, discuss a problem and propose a solution. This will usually result in a particular pattern of organization. Or the author may want to compare and contrast two ideas and will choose basic structures commonly used to compare and contrast.

Another feature related to organization is the author's use of time. To give an account of events or describe a process, authors will often use a chronological order, in which events are recounted in the order in which they have occurred. Other authors will choose to organize an account of events in different ways, perhaps with repeated contrasts between past and present time.





## 10. Recognizing the signal words

Signal words, which authors use in writing, provide an aid for the reader to grasp the thread of thought in the material. By using signal words to predict what may come next, the reader can decide whether he should speed up his reading, slow down or pause to make sure what is being read is understood. Recognizing the signal words, therefore, becomes important to improvement both in reading speed and in comparison.

There are five basic groups of signal words. You probably know all of them as words, but perhaps you've never realized their important function in reading and writing. The five groups are:

- (a) words that signal more of the same, including *furthermore, and, more than that, also, likewise, moreover, in addition, what is more, for instance, for example*;
- (b) words that change the direction of thought, including *although, however, on the contrary, but, in spite of, otherwise, despite, nevertheless, yet*;
- (c) words that signal an order or sequence of events, including *first, second, third, and so on, then, after, before, next, last, afterwards, finally*;
- (d) words that signal a summary, including *as a result, finally, therefore, accordingly, in short, thus, consequently, in conclusion, so, in brief, in a word*;
- (e) words that signal cause and effect, including *because, for this reason, so, therefore, as since, consequently*.

## 11. Understanding the figurative language

Authors use figurative language — language that compares — to produce images in their descriptions or narrations. Sometimes non-human things are given human features (**personification**); sometimes comparisons are made using the words *like* or *as* (**simile**); more often comparisons are not stated but suggested (**metaphor**).

Example 5: Time and tide wait for no man.

He is as stupid as an ass.

All the world's a stage, and all the men and women merely players.

Figurative language is an important stylistic device that authors use. It makes their description or narration more vivid and interesting. Understanding figurative language is an important reading skill which helps readers to recognize the "secret power" of words and appreciate the sensory impression and emotional reactions created by authors.

## 12. Assessing the author's purpose

Once you understand the organization of a text, you can then recognize the author's purpose more clearly. The text organization the author selects will partly depend upon his or her particular purpose. The author may want to inform or persuade, and he or she will select a structure or pattern of organization according to this purpose.

The author may also intend to do both of these things in a written text — to inform as well as persuade. In such cases it is often helpful to try to assess which of these purposes seems to be more important or dominant.

## 13. Evaluating the author's attitude

Authors are not necessarily neutral or objective when they write, particularly if they are trying to persuade readers to agree with their opinions. It is important that you recognize what the author's attitude is in relation to the ideas or information being presented. This is because such attitudes can influence the ways in which information is presented. You will be looking at ways in which the author's attitude may be identified. You will also practice evaluating how relatively neutral or biased his or her attitude may be.

# ***Unit One***

## ***New Perspectives***

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### **Passage 1**

#### ***Shyness***

### **Passage 2**

#### ***Born to Win***



## Passage 1



### Shyness

When I was small, I was somewhat shy. I remember that once, when I was in first or second grade, my mother attended a conference at the school. The teacher felt that I was too timid and that some kids were taking advantage of me by getting me to watch their coats during recess while they played. I was too shy to stand up for myself and tell them that I wanted to play too.

I still remember how fear gripped me when I thought that I might have to confront someone publicly. It was a physical thing! My muscles tightened up, my stomach was in knots, and sometimes I even felt like I could not breathe. Once, I was actually so nervous that I got dizzy and almost fainted.

Fortunately, I outgrew much of my shyness by junior high school, but even now I still feel slightly uncomfortable when I realize that I will have to contact a new individual face-to-face, or even by telephone. I would much rather use e-mail to communicate.

Shyness is painful for anyone, but if we are a freelancer, being too shy can be a serious problem. Shyness can damage our freelancing business because being a freelancer requires a certain amount of customer contact and self-promotion if we want to succeed. A business owner who is too shy could pay a steep price.

Luckily, for most people it does not have to be that way. Shyness does not have to hold us back. If we are shy, we may be able to overcome it. Here are some ideas:

**1. Focus on what we enjoy.** The excitement of excelling at something that we love can help us forget our nervousness about appearing publicly. In particular I have seen this happen with children who "forget themselves" as they get immersed in music, theater, or sports.

**2. Address the problem directly.** For me, addressing the problem meant taking speech classes when I got to high school. I even reached the point where I could participate in speaking competitions. There are speaking programs, such as Toastmasters

Suggested reading time: 6 minutes.

How fast do you read?

601 words ÷ \_\_\_\_\_ minutes = \_\_\_\_\_ wpm

International, to help adults address the fear of public speaking.

**3. Keep it in perspective.** It sounds weird, but what is the worst that could happen if we blew it? There is the possibility that we might be laughed at or humiliated. But the truth is that it is equally likely that others will not even notice our mistake. Our imagination about what could happen is usually worse than the reality of what does happen.

**4. Start with something small.** If making a telephone cold call for our freelance business seems too daunting, try something easier first. Maybe we could make a customer service phone call to an established client who is satisfied with our work. After that success, the cold call may not seem as scary.

**5. Focus on past successes.** Whether it is making a successful business presentation or successfully completing a cold call, remembering past successes can help inspire us to future success. These successes are "proof" that we can do it. If we succeeded in the past, then we can succeed again!

**6. Do not be afraid to ask for additional help.** For whatever reason, sometimes the fear may be too great for us to overcome on our own. If we have tried everything and nothing seems to work, then do not be afraid to find professional help.

It is actually natural to be a little bit nervous about meeting new people, making cold calls, or giving a presentation. That nervousness does not have to keep us from succeeding.

(601 words)

## Exercises



For questions 1–6, mark

**Y**

(for YES) *if the statement agrees with the information given in the passage;*

**N**

(for NO) *if the statement contradicts the information given in the passage;*

**NG**

(for NOT GIVEN) *if the information is not given in the passage.*