

PRACTICAL READING SKILLS

大学英语 阅读技巧与实践

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UNIT 1 MAKING PREDICTIONS

预测阅读内容

预测(prediction)能力是指在阅读理解过程中,读者利用语法、逻辑及文化线索来预测下文将可能出现什么信息,从而主动、积极地去理解、接收信息的能力。可以说阅读的过程就是一个不断预测(prediction)—证实/修正(verification/ revision)—理解(comprehension)的过程。本单元将侧重训练正确预测的一些技巧。

正确的预测可以从以下三方面着手:

1. 方向预测(Orientation Prediction);
2. 结构预测(Structure Prediction);
3. 词汇预测(Vocabulary Prediction)。

Practice 1: Orientation Prediction

方向预测

所谓方向预测,即借助于文章的标题(title),激发记忆中的有关信息,预测出该文章的体裁(记述、描写、说明、议论)和主题(说什么事),以及文章段落间的相互关系等。例如,在阅读一份题为“Education in the USA”的材料时,读者可能会立刻猜测出该材料的体裁是说明文,内容是关于“教育”的,而不是关于“计算机”或“国际贸易”的。其次是关于美国的情况,而不是关于澳大利亚或德国的情况等。根据自己的背景知识和常识,可以预测该材料不外乎介绍关于美国初等、中等、高等三个阶段的教育现状、存在的问题以及未来的发展趋势,等等。有了这种方向性、框架性的预测,就可更快地阅读和获取这份材料的信息了。

Task 1

1. Look at the title of the passage below. Try to predict the type of the passage and what is likely to be involved in it.

2. Read the passage and then tick your choices.

Body Language

Ever since humans have inhabited the earth, they have made use of various forms of communication. Generally, this expression of thoughts and feelings has been in form of oral speech. When there is a language barrier, communication is accomplished through sign language.

Body language transmits ideas or thoughts by certain actions, either intentionally or unintentionally. A wink can be a way of flirting (调情) or indicating that the party is only joking. A nod signifies approval, while shaking the head indicates a negative reaction.

Other forms of nonlinguistic (非语言的) language can be found in Braille (布莱叶盲文), signal flags, Morse code (摩尔斯电码), and smoke signals. Road maps and picture signs also guide, warn, and instruct people.

While verbalization (用语言表达) is the most common form of language, other systems and techniques also express human thoughts and feelings.

- 1) The type of the passage is _____.
 - a) description
 - b) narration
 - c) exposition
 - d) argumentation
- 2) Which of the following statements best summarizes this passage?
 - a) When language is a barrier, people will find other forms of communication.
 - b) Everybody uses only one form of communication.
 - c) Nonlinguistic language is invaluable to humans.
 - d) Although other forms of communication exist, verbalization is the fastest.
- 3) How many different forms of communication are mentioned here?

- a) 5. b) 7. c) 9. d) 11.

Task 2

- Look at the title of the following passage and predict what the passage is about. Tick the choices below.
 - Definition of Superstitions
 - Types of Superstitious People
 - Kinds of Superstitions
 - Writer's Attitude Towards Superstitions
 - Numbers of Superstitious People
 - Reasons for Superstitions
 - History of Superstitions
 - Fears for Superstitions
 - Examples of Superstitions
 - Solutions to Superstitious Problems
- Now read the following passage carefully and answer the questions below.

Superstitions

A superstition is a belief that supernatural powers operate through practices surviving from primitive states of culture. These practices were part of past organized rituals (典礼), but most of them no longer exercise this function in modern societies. To many people superstitions are merely the result of fearing the unknown.

When metals were first discovered, they were considered holy because they were unfamiliar and peculiar. Consequently metal-workers and their handicraft were subject to certain taboos. Knives were never to be left edge upwards, otherwise they might cut any spiritual beings who may be hovering about. This practice was particularly important at birth or death when the soul of a child or de-

parting ghost was liable to be injured. It was also dangerous to pick up a knife that had been dropped, since by so doing there was always the risk of attack from the spirit that dwelt inside. On the other hand, because of their holy nature, knives were also thought to be a safeguard against ghosts, demons(精灵), and other dangerous spirits.

When mirrors were introduced, people were again afraid of the unfamiliar, giving rise to a number of superstitions connected with mirrors. There was a widespread belief that a man's soul is visible in the likeness seen in his reflection. At the time of a death mirrors were often covered up or turned to the wall to prevent the reflection-souls of the family members from being carried off by the departing ghost of the dead. Similarly it is thought to be dangerous for a sick person to see his reflection in a mirror, for the soul would thereby be projected out of the body and might never return. A bride, being also in a state of transition, should refrain from seeing her reflection at the time of her marriage. Obviously, since a mirror contains the soul it is also unlucky to break a looking-glass.

Because a sense of holiness is attached to certain numbers, numerous taboos were attached to the numbers three, seven, twelve, thirteen, sixty-three, and seventy. The numerous superstitions connected with three, or some multiple of it, may have survived in Christendom through the doctrine of the Trinity-the belief that God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are unified in One. So some believed that bad luck would fall upon the third person in a group because he had violated the number's special holiness. The reputation of the number thirteen is attached to the number of people at the Last Supper, a gathering of Jesus and his twelve disciples. Therefore, thirteen is evil because of the subsequent betrayal of Jesus by

one of his disciples, Judas.

Cats were connected with the spirit of the harvest as symbols of fertility and productivity, so they were originally very lucky animals. It was thought lucky for a bride when a cat sneezes on the day before her wedding. Also, killing a cat was generally regarded as unlucky, even though it could be sacrificed to the spirits to promote greater abundance and expel evil.

Because of these associations with paganism, though, cats later became associated with witches and the devil, leading some people to turn them alive. Also, it is commonly believed that a bad curse will fall on a person who sees a black cat on Friday the thirteenth.

The character of these beliefs shows that they are attempts to deal with the presence of supernatural unknowns. And because these beliefs seem to make those supernatural unknowns more concrete, some people feel that superstition has a place in society. One should realize, though, that people tend to emphasize superstitions chiefly under unusual circumstances such as in times of war, epidemic, or at other occasions of great provocation. And although any superstitions also survive in folk festivals and religious observances (仪式), only a minority still treat them seriously, usually when they occur in the form such as fortune-telling and palmistry.

Questions:

1) What is the writer's definition of superstition?

2) What is the writer's attitude toward superstitions?

3) Explain with examples the nature of superstition beliefs mentioned in the passage. (用例子解释下列物品所代表的迷信含义。)

a) Metals: _____.

b) Mirrors: _____.

c) Numbers: _____.

d) Cats: _____.

Task 3

The Model Millionaire is a short story by Oscar Wilde. Here are some parts taken from the story. Read them carefully and make predictions of what happens. Then answer the questions.

The Model Millionaire

1. Please write the ideas that the title suggests to you on the lines provided below.

2. Part I of the story is omitted here. Please read Part II first and then come back to guess what is in Part I and write down your ideas on the lines below.

Part II

To make matters worse, he was in love. The girl he loves was Laura Merton, the daughter of a retired Colonel who had lost his temper and his digestion in India, and never found either of them again. Laura adored him, and he was ready to kiss her shoestrings. They were the handsomest couple in London, and had not a penny-piece between them. The Colonel was very fond of Hughie, but would not hear of any engagement.

"Come to me. My boy, when you have got ten thousand pounds of your own, and we will see about it," he used to say; and Hughie looked very gloomy in those days, and had to go to Laura for consolation.

3. What is going to happen in Part III? Which of the following predictions is right?
- a) Hughie unexpectedly meets his friend Trevor.
 - b) Hughie decides to pay a visit to his friend Trevor.

Part IV

When Hughie came in he found Trevor putting the finishing touches to a wonderful life-size picture of a beggar-man. The beggar himself was standing on a raised platform in a corner of the studio. He was a wizened old man, with a face like wrinkled parchment and a most piteous expression. Over his shoulders was flung a coarse brown cloak. All tears and tatters; his boots were patched and cobbled, and with one hand he lent on a rough stick, while with the other he held out his battered hat for alms.

4. What is going to happen in Part V? Which of the following prediction is right?
- a) Hughie is sorry for the beggar because he is so poor.
 - b) Hughie envies the beggar.
 - c) Hughie tells Alan Trevor he works too much.
 - d) Hughie shows he is kind and generous.

Part VI

"Well, I think the model should have a percentage," cried Hughie, laughing, "They work quite as hard as you do."

"Nonsense, nonsense! Why, look at the trouble of laying on the paint alone, and standing all day long at one's easel! But you mustn't

chatter, I'm very busy. Smoke a cigarette and keep quiet."

After some time the servant came in, and told Trevor that the frame-maker wanted to speak to him.

5. What is going to happen in Part VII? Which of the following predictions is right?

After Trevor leaves the studio _____.

- a) Hughie tells the beggar he admires him
- b) Hughie tells the beggar Trevor takes advantage of him
- c) Hughie gives money to the beggar
- d) Hughie gives his scarf to the beggar so that he won't be cold

Practice 2: Structure Prediction

结构预测

所谓**结构预测**,即利用文章段落发展的方法,如序列法、例证法、定义法、因果法、对比法、演绎法、归纳法等,预测寻读全篇的主题段和段落的主题句及其它所需信息。如作者用演绎法时总是先提出论点,然后再详细论证。而因果法常由原因和结果两大部分构成。例如下面的这篇文章是用演绎法写成的,读者若能较快地寻读到其主题句(第一句),就能预测到它后面的句子可能就是例证。

One reason why people over 75 should not be allowed to drive is that they are hazard on the road. By that age most people's vision and hearing have become worse; thus, they cannot see cars, and traffic signs as well as they could in their youth. In addition, they have slower reaction times. This is particularly problematic because while driving one must be constantly on the alert to the need to stop or swerve (转向) suddenly to avoid a collision (撞车). These physical and mental impairments (减弱) lead to a lot of accidents.

Task 1

1. The sentence below is the topic sentence of a paragraph.

Read it carefully and predict what the writer is going to say next.

“For most students the transition from high school to college-level classes is a shock.”...

Now write your predictions on the lines below.

2. Read the passage below carefully and then answer the questions.

For most students the transition from high school to college-level classes is a shock. It takes some freshmen many months to adapt to the lecture and note-taking system. Preparation for this change gives the student confidence and competence from the beginning and makes him an effective and attentive listener. Listening skills can be developed and note-taking techniques learned; together they bring order to the confusion frequently experienced by new freshmen.

- 1) What words does the writer use to describe the “shock”?

- 2) What preparation should be made by freshmen?

Task 2

1. Read the topic sentence of a paragraph below. What is the writer going to say after it?

What effect does your voice have on others?...

Write your answer now.

2. Circle your choice by careful reading.

What effect does your voice have on others? Does it persuade or irritate, attract or repel? Unfortunately, few of us are sensitive to the sounds we make. One of the worst voice qualities is harshness. If you ever get the feeling that people are uncomfortable when you speak, it may be that your harsh tones are jarring (刺耳) their eardrums (耳膜). Your voice will sound unpleasant if it is shrill, grating (刺耳的), hard, piercing, brassy, too loud, or too nasal. Harsh voice qualities usually come from too much tension in the throat and jaw. Tension tightens muscles and blocks the relaxed voice tones essential to a pleasing impression. Because tension shows up more in higher-pitched (声调) voices, women tend to be more shrill than men.

- 1) A calm, relaxed voice is specially important to _____.
 - a) a newscaster reporting the evening news
 - b) a sportscaster covering a boxing event
 - c) a politician addressing a political event
- 2) A harsh voice is caused by _____.
 - a) over-tension in the throat and jaw
 - b) too much muscle tension
 - c) much tension of one's throat and jaw

Task 3

1. Read the following topic sentence. *In what way* is the writer going to organize his writing? Tick your predictions.

"Shyness is the cause of much unhappiness for a great many people."...

- a) comparison and contrast
 - b) exposition
 - c) cause and effect
 - d) narration
2. Read following passage and mark your choice.

Shyness is the cause of much unhappiness for a great many people. Shy people are anxious and self-conscious; that is, they are excessively concerned with their own appearance and actions. Worrisome thoughts are constantly occurring in their minds: What kind of impression am I making? Do they like me? Do I sound stupid? Am I wearing unattractive clothes?

It is obvious that such uncomfortable feelings must affect people adversely. A person's self-concept is reflected in the way he or she behaves, and the way a person behaves affects other people's reactions. In general, the way people think about themselves has a profound effect on all areas of their lives.

Shy people, having low self-esteem, are likely to be passive and easily influenced by others. They need reassurance that they are doing "the right thing". Shy people are very sensitive to criticism; they feel it confirms their inferiority. They also find it difficult to be pleased by compliments because they believe they are unworthy of praise. A shy person may respond to a compliment with a statement like this one: "You're just saying that to make me feel good. I know it's not true." It is clear that, while self-awareness is a healthy quality, overdoing it is harmful.

Can shyness be completely eliminated, or at least reduced? Fortunately, people can overcome shyness with determined and patient effort in building self-confidence. Since shyness goes hand in hand with lack of self-esteem, it is important for people to accept their weaknesses as well as their strengths. For example, most people would like to be "A" students in every subject. It is not fair for them to label themselves inferior because they have difficulty in some areas. People's expectations of themselves must be realistic. Living on the impossible leads to sense of inadequacy.

Each one of us is a unique, worthwhile individual. We are interested in our own personal ways. The better we understand ourselves, the easier it becomes to live up to our full potential. Let's not allow shyness to block our chances for a rich and fulfilling life.

- 1) The first paragraph is mainly about _____.
 - a) the characteristics of shy people
 - b) the cause of shyness
 - c) the questions in the minds of shy people
 - d) the effect of shyness on people
- 2) According to the writer, self-awareness is _____.
 - a) harmful to people
 - b) a weak point of shy people
 - c) the cause of unhappiness
 - d) a good quality
- 3) What is the shy people's reaction to compliment?
 - a) They are pleased by it.
 - b) They feel it is not true.
 - c) They are very sensitive to it.
 - d) They feel it confirms their inferiority.
- 4) Which of the following statements is TRUE?
 - a) Shyness helps us to live up to our full potential.
 - b) Shyness enables us to understand ourselves better.
 - c) Shyness blocks our chances for a rich life.
 - d) Shyness has nothing to do with lack of self-esteem.
- 5) We can infer from the passage that the writer is _____.
 - a) a shy person
 - b) a realistic person
 - c) a sensitive person
 - d) a reserved person

Practice 3: Vocabulary Prediction

词汇预测

所谓词汇预测,是指根据出现在前面的词汇预测分析后继词汇。词