

新东方学校英语文库

# TOEFL 阅读

吴强 编著



世界知识出版社

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图书在版编目 (CIP) 数据

TOEFL 阅读 / 吴强编著. —北京:世界知识出版社,2002.7

ISBN 7-5012-1780-7

I. T... II. 吴... III. 英语—阅读教学—高等教育—入学考试, 美国—自学参考资料  
IV. H319.4

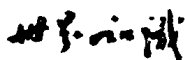
中国版本图书馆 CIP 数据核字 (2002) 第 051291 号

责任编辑 / 刘 岩

封面设计 / 文 敏

责任出版 / 王勇刚

责任校对 / 陈可望

出版发行 /  出版社

地址电话 / 北京市东城区干面胡同 51 号 (010) 65265933

E-mail: gcgjz@public.bta.net.cn

邮政编码 / 100010

经 销 / 新华书店

排 版 / 世界知识出版社电脑科

印 刷 / 北京科技印刷厂

开本印张 / 787×1092 1/16 21 印张 564 千字

版 次 / 2002 年 7 月第一版 2002 年 7 月第一次印刷

定 价 / 38.00 元

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## 第一部分

## 托福阅读应试技巧的培养

托福阅读理解题大致可以分为七种,即主题题(Topic)或中心思想题(Main Idea)、细节题(Details)、词汇题(Vocabulary)、指代题(Reference of Pronouns)、推论题(Inference)、目的题(Purpose)、作者态度题(Attitude or Tone)。下面分别就如何解答这七种题型进行详细阐述。

### 一、主题题(Topic)或中心思想题(Main Idea)

所有托福阅读理解部分的文章后面几乎都有关于主题(Topic)、中心思想(Main idea)或最佳 Title 的选择题。这些题目通常在每篇文章的第一题中出现,而答对这些问题有赖于对通篇文章的理解,因此只阅读或了解文章的某一段或一小部分是很难答对这类题目的。

但是应该用什么样的方法才能做到最快最好地了解全文呢?“快速浏览”的阅读技能将有助于对文章整体的宏观把握,特别适合回答关于“主题、中心思想、标题”之类的问题。

首先必须把握文章的逻辑结构,分析作者是怎样去组织材料,以什么层次展开中心内容的,把握了这一点,也就把握了文章的命脉和发展。

1. 文章有可能是先陈述具体的内容再进行总结的归纳题型,这样主题从最后的几句话中就能看出。
2. 文章也有可能是先提出观点,然后在以下段落中陈述论证的演绎题型,再继续在下面段落进行陈述论证的演绎题型,那么此时主题就在第一段的句首或者句尾(即第一段的归纳)。
3. 文章也有可能是由各个段落的主题句相加得到全文主题,或是由各个段落的中心思想综合得到全文主题。

.....

但是不管怎么说,具体做法可以分为以下四步:

- (1) 首先阅读文章的开头几句,因为这样做在许多情况下可以获得有关主题和中心思想的信息;
- (2) 然后阅读文章的最后几句,在这里通常可以获得一个结论,而主题和中心思想也常在这里重复;

(3) 接着浏览文章的其余部分,寻找能够证实主题、中心思想并能展示文章组织结构的关键词;

(4) 仔细审视每一个选项,从选项中可以获取一些讨论信息,迅速定位到与此相关的内容。排除明显错误的选项,再从剩下的选项中得出最佳选择。

除上述四步外,在实际考试中也可以把这类题目放到最后来做,许多托福取得高分的同学往往就是这么做的。因为在回答完后面的问题后,对文章的内容已经有了总体性的把握,这样就不必在一开始就把精力集中到四处找主题上面。当然,在开始做题之前先浏览一下文章是必要,也是必须的,这样可以做到心中有数,知道什么问题应该到什么地方去寻找答案,最后在对文章有较为完整、系统的了解后再做主题题就容易多了。

主题题或中心思想题常见的提问方式有:

1. What is the topic/main idea/subject of this passage?
2. Which of the following best states the theme of the passage?
3. Which of the following statements is supported by the passage?
4. The title that best expresses the ideas of the passage is ...
5. The passage mainly deals with/discusses ...
6. The passage is chiefly concerned about ...

我们通过实例来看一下主题题型的解答。

### Passage 1

With its radiant color and plantlike shape, the sea anemone looks more like a flower than an animal. More specifically, the sea anemone is formed quite like the flower for which it is named, with a body like a stem and tentacles like petals in brilliant shades of blue, green, pink, and red. Its diameter varies from about six millimeters in some species to more than ninety centimeters in the giant varieties of Australia. Like corals, hydras, and jellyfish, sea anemones are coelenterates. They can move slowly, but more often they attach the lower part of their cylindrical bodies to rocks, shells, or wharf pilings. The upper end of the sea anemone has a mouth surrounded by tentacles that the animal uses to capture its food. Stinging cells in the tentacles throw out tiny poison threads that paralyze other small sea animals. The tentacles then drag this prey into the sea anemone's mouth. The food is digested in the large inner body cavity. When disturbed, a sea anemone retracts its tentacles and shortens its body so that it resembles a lump on a rock. Anemones may reproduce by forming eggs, dividing in half, or developing buds that grow and break off as independent animals.

1. Which of the following is the main topic of the passage?
  - (A) The varieties of ocean life
  - (B) The characteristics of the sea anemone
  - (C) A comparison of land and sea anemones
  - (D) The defenses of coelenterates

**分析:** 第一题是主题题,回答该问题的方式如下:

1. 首先阅读文章的开头几句,即“With its radiant color and plantlike shape, the sea anemone looks more like a flower than an animal.”从第一句得知,本文是关于 the sea anemone 的。
2. 然后快速浏览一下后面的内容,我们可以发现全都是关于 the sea anemone 的形状、颜色、习性和繁殖的问题,因此很明显是选项 B 的表述。
3. 浏览一下四个答案可以很容易排除 A、C、D 三个选项,因此答案是 B。

## Passage 2

Barbara Kasten is an artist who makes photographs of constructions that she creates for the purpose of photographing them. In her studio she arranges objects such as mirrors, solid forms, and flat surfaces into what could be called large still life arrangements, big enough to walk into. She lights the construction, then rearranges and rephotographs it until she arrives at a final image. She also photographs away from her studio at various architectural sites, bringing camera, lights, mirrors, and a crew of assistants to transform the site into her own abstract image.

Kasten starts a studio construction with a simple problem, such as using several circular and rectangular mirrors. She puts the first objects in place, sets up a camera, then goes back and forth arranging objects and seeing how they appear in the camera. Eventually she makes instant color prints to see what the image looks like. At first she works only with objects, concentrating on their composition; then she lights them and adds color from lights covered with colored filters.

Away from the studio, at architectural sites, the cost of the crew and the equipment rental means she has to know in advance what she wants to do. She visits each location several times to make sketches and test shots. Until she brings in the lights, however, she cannot predict exactly what they will do to the image, so there is some improvising on the spot.

1. What does the passage mainly discuss?
  - (A) The techniques of a photographer
  - (B) The advantages of studio photography
  - (C) Industrial construction sites
  - (D) An architect who appreciates fine art

**分析:** 本题是主题题,根据技巧说明:

1. 首先阅读文章的开头几句,即“Barbara Kasten is an artist who makes photographs of constructions that she creates for the purpose of photographing them.”从第一句可以知道,本文是关于 Barbara Kasten, 一个为建筑物摄影的艺术家的。
2. 然后阅读文章的最后一段,可以发现“‘She visits each location several times to make sketches and test shots.’说明她在摄影之前所做的工作,即她的工作技巧。
3. 然后快速浏览中间一段的开头,即“Kasten starts a studio construction with a simple

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problem, such as using several circular and rectangular mirrors.”这也说明了她如何进行工作的。

4. 浏览一下四个答案可以很容易地排除 B、C、D 三个选项, 因此答案是 A。

### Passage 3

The first synthetic plastic was a thermosetting resin called ebonite, patented in 1843.

Plastics are divided into two broad categories, thermosets and thermoplastics. The thermosets are materials that, once heated, take on a permanent form that cannot be changed by reheating, while thermoplastics repeatedly soften on heating and harden on cooling.

Much of the early work on plastics was on thermosets, and it may have been this limitation that prevented them from becoming highly acceptable materials. Another reason is that they were looked upon as substitutes for existing materials, rather than as new materials requiring new ideas in design and usage. Part of this “substitute” outlook still survives, with people disparaging plastics as second-rate materials. However, with the major advances in formulation and use of plastics since the Second World War, this attitude is now passing out of fashion.

1. What does the passage mainly discuss?

- (A) The importance of plastics in the Second World War
- (B) Various uses for plastics
- (C) The early history of synthetic plastics
- (D) People's attitudes toward new materials

**分析:** 第一题问: 本文主要讨论了什么问题? 从题干可以看出这是一道主题题, 根据上面的技巧说明:

1. 首先阅读文章的开头几句, 即“The first synthetic plastic was a thermosetting resin called ebonite, patented in 1843.”从第一句可以知道, 本文是关于合成塑胶的, “最初的合成塑胶是一种热固树脂, 于 1843 年获得专利, 被称为硬橡胶。”
2. 然后阅读文章的最后几句, 即“However, with the major advances in formulation and use of plastics since the Second World War, this attitude is now passing out of fashion.”从最后一句可以知道时间已经到了二战, 并且提到“从二战以来随着塑胶的用途和制造方面的重大进步”, 说明本文讲述了塑胶的发展。
3. 再快速浏览文章的其余部分可以发现“Much of the early work on plastics...”能够印证前面“The first synthetic plastic”。

最后我们来看四个选项, 选项 A 和 B 很明显不是本文论述的内容; 选项 D 在文章中提到了人们对塑胶的态度, 但没有提人们对新材料的态度; 而且从文章总体看, 人们对塑胶的态度也不是主要讨论的内容。因此只有选项 C 是正确答案。从本题解答中我们也建议最后做主题题, 因为做完其他题目后, 对文章的大体内容已经有了了解, 进一步选出主题题的答案就相对容易多了。

## Passage 4

Human vision, like that of other primates, has evolved in an arboreal environment.

In the dense, complex world of a tropical forest, it is more important to see well than to develop an acute sense of smell. In the course of evolution, members of the primate line have acquired large eyes while the snout has shrunk to give the eye an unimpeded view. Of mammals, only humans and some primates enjoy color vision. The red flag is black to the bull. Horses live in a monochrome world. Light visible to human eyes, however, occupies only a very narrow band in the whole electromagnetic spectrum. Ultraviolet rays are invisible to humans, though ants and honeybees are sensitive to them. Humans have no direct perception of infrared rays, unlike the rattlesnake, which has receptors tuned in to wavelengths longer than 0.7 micron. The world would look eerily different if human eyes were sensitive to infrared radiation. Then, instead of the darkness of night, we would be able to move easily in a strange, shadowless world where objects glowed with varying degrees of intensity. But human eyes excel in other ways. They are, in fact, remarkably discerning in color gradation. The color sensitivity of normal human vision is rarely surpassed even by sophisticated technical devices.

11. What does the passage mainly discuss?

- (A) Ultraviolet rays
- (B) Human vision
- (C) Sight and smell
- (D) The environment of primates

分析: 第 11 题是主题题, 根据技巧说明:

1. 首先阅读文章的开头几句, 即“Human vision, like that of other primates, has evolved in an arboreal environment.”从第一句可以知道, 本文是关于 Human vision 的。
2. 然后阅读文章的最后几句, 即“The color sensitivity of normal human vision is rarely surpassed even by sophisticated technical devices”, 这一句又一次强调 human vision, 到现在几乎可以确定本文的主题就是 human vision 了。
3. 如果不放心, 可以再快速浏览文章的其余部分可以发现整篇文章都是关于 human vision 的, 所以答案是 B。

## Passage 5

Ancient people made clay pottery because they needed it for their survival. They used the pots they made for cooking, storing food, and carrying things from place to place. Pottery was so important to early cultures that scientists now study it to learn more about ancient civilizations. The more advanced the pottery in terms of decoration, materials, glazes, and manufacture, the more advanced the culture itself.

The artisan who makes pottery in North America today utilizes his or her skill and imagination to create items that are beautiful as well as functional, transforming

something ordinary into something special and unique.

The potter uses one of the Earth's most basic materials: clay. Clay can be found almost anywhere. Good pottery clay must be free from all small stones and other hard materials that would make the potting process difficult. Most North American artisan-potters now purchase commercially processed clay, but some find the clay they need right in the earth, close to where they work.

The most important tools potters use are their own hands; however, they also use wire loop tools, wooden modeling tools, plain wire, and sponges. Plain wire is used to cut away the finished pot from its base on the potter's wheel.

After a finished pot is dried of all its moisture in the open air, it is placed in a kiln and fired. The first firing hardens the pottery, and it is then ready to be glazed and fired again.

For areas where they do not want any glaze, such as the bottom of the pot, artisans paint on melted wax that will later burn off in the kiln. They then pour on the liquid glaze and let it run over the clay surface, making any kind of decorative pattern that they want.

22. What does the passage mainly discuss?

- (A) Different kinds of clay
- (B) The training of an artisan
- (C) The making of pottery
- (D) Crafts of ancient civilizations

分析: 第 22 题是主题题, 根据技巧说明:

1. 首先阅读文章的开头几句, 即“Ancient people made clay pottery because they needed it for their survival.”从第一句可以知道, 本文是关于 pottery making 的。
  2. 然后阅读文章的最后几句, 即“Then they pour on the liquid glaze and let it run over the clay surface, making any kind of decorative pattern that they want.”, 这一句还是关于 pottery 的制作过程。
  3. 再扫描其他段落的开始一句话, 可以发现都是关于 pottery making 的。
- 浏览一下四个答案可以很容易地排除 A、B、D 三个选项, 因此答案是 C。

## 二、细节题 (Details)

细节题是考原文提到的某个事物、事实、现象、观点或理论。托福阅读理解中有大量的问题与文中的具体细节有关, 并且这些问题的前后顺序通常都与文章中具体细节出现的先后相符, 因此在做题之前快速浏览一遍文章后就会知道应该到哪里去找答案。解答细节题一般有以下三步:

- (1) 快速浏览问题, 发现关键词或起主导作用的内容;
- (2) 快速扫描文章, 定位关键词或主导内容所在的句子 (注意: 作者在文章中使用的词有可能是问题中使用的词的同义词或相关词, 这也是出题者迷惑应试者, 让你对所读段

落的印象模糊的手段之一)；

(3) 快速浏览问题的选项, 检查文中的细节信息和哪一个选项相符。

注意, 有些细节题会进行间接提问, 特别是遇上有关年代、数字的题目, 有时是涉及文字表达的数字, 这样不像直接的阿拉伯数字表达那样直观; 有时则需要做简单的四则运算后才能够得到答案。

就做题的顺序来说, 细节题一般看到就做, 不必放到后面再做。细节题通常以下面几种形式出现:

1. According to the passage, which of the following statements is true?
2. According to the passage, why / who / when / where...?
3. Where in the passage does the author mention ...?
4. It is stated in line A-B that ...
5. All of the following statements are mentioned in the passage EXCEPT...
6. Which of the following statements is NOT mentioned in the passage?

我们通过具体的例子来看一下细节题的解答。

### Passage 1

During the nineteenth century, the mechanization of farming and the fencing of range land opened the agricultural heart of North America to intensive development. As the natural geographic center of this region, Chicago became the crossroads of a vast transportation network. The great waterway systems of the Mississippi valley and the Great Lakes were linked in Chicago in 1847, when the Illinois-Michigan Canal was opened to traffic. Within the next year, rail lines began to operate trains to and from the city. The rise of agricultural activity demanded facilities for the storage and milling of grain, the slaughtering of cattle, and the processing and shipment of meat. The manufacture of farm machinery branched out into the basic metal-fabricating and woodworking industries. This soon attracted banks and other financial institutions. Four years after the end of the Civil War, Chicago was already established as the focal point of the largest system of inland waterways in the world and the hub of a rail network that extended to the Atlantic, Gulf and Pacific coasts. The productive potential of the city was unparalleled, and the pace of its industrial expansion reached explosive proportions.

2. In the nineteenth century, the farming areas around Chicago developed rapidly because
- (A) new irrigation waterways were built
  - (B) men who had been soldiers provided a plentiful work force
  - (C) new machinery permitted farming on a large scale
  - (D) the slaughtering of cattle turned much rangeland into farmland

**分析:** 第二题问: “在 19 世纪, 芝加哥周围的农业面积迅速发展是因为什么?” 很明显, 这是一道需要从文章中找出答案的细节题。由于做题之前已经快速浏览了一遍文章, 因此现在只需快

速扫描定位“In the nineteenth century, the farming areas around Chicago developed rapidly”即可。而且细节题出现的前后一般与文章发展的先后是一致的,因此我们只要从文章的第一部分找就可以了。第一句“During the nineteenth century, the mechanization of farming and the fencing of range land opened the agricultural heart of North America to intensive development.”从这句话可以看出,虽然没有提到芝加哥,但有 19 世纪,北美的农业中心由于农业机械化和围起大片土地而有了迅速发展。后面一句“As the natural geographic center of this region, Chicago became the crossroads of a vast transportation network.”从这句话可以知道,芝加哥是这一地区的中心,那么这一地区除芝加哥之外的地域自然都是其周围地区了。因此,导致 19 世纪芝加哥周围的农业面积迅速发展的原因是由于新的机械允许大面积的耕作,正确答案应为选项 C。

## Passage 2

Researchers have found that migrating animals use a variety of inner compasses to help them navigate. Some steer by the position of the Sun. Others navigate by the stars. Some use the Sun as their guide during the day, and then switch to star navigation by night. One study shows that the homing pigeon uses the Earth's magnetic fields as a guide in finding its way home, and there are indications that various other animals, from insects to mollusks, can also make use of magnetic compasses. It is of course very useful for a migrating bird to be able to switch to a magnetic compass when clouds cover the Sun otherwise it would just have to land and wait for the Sun to come out again.

Even with the Sun or stars to steer by, the problems of navigation are more complicated than they might seem at first. For example, a worker honeybee that has found a rich source of nectar and pollen flies rapidly home to the hive to report. A naturalist has discovered that the bee scout delivers her report through a complicated dance in the hive, in which she tells the other workers not only how far a way the food is, but also what direction to fly in relation to the Sun. But the Sun does not stay in one place all day. As the workers start out to gather the food, the Sun may already have changed its position in the sky somewhat. In later trips during the day, the Sun will seem to move farther and farther toward the west. Yet the worker bees seem to have no trouble at all in finding the food source. Their inner clocks tell them just where the Sun will be, and they change their course correspondingly.

2. The author mentions all of the following natural phenomena that help animals navigate EXCEPT

- (A) the Sun
- (B) the stars
- (C) magnetic fields
- (D) wind direction

分析: 第二题问:“下面哪个是作者没有提到的帮助动物导航的自然现象?”这里的关键词是“help animals navigate”。文章的第一句就出现“帮助动物导航”的内容,继续往下看,有利用

太阳的,有利用星星的,有的既用太阳也用星星,还有的用磁场。回头浏览一下选项,只有选项(D) wind direction 没有提到,因此答案为 D。

### Passage 3

Taking natural objects such as rocks, bones, clouds and flowers for subject matter, Georgia O'Keeffe reduced them to their simplest form, often by employing a close-up view or some other unusual vantage point. With such techniques, including the use of thin paint and clear colors to emphasize a feeling of mystical silence and space, she achieved an abstract simplicity in her paintings. O'Keeffe spent a summer in New Mexico in 1929 and the bleak landscape and broad skies of the desert so appealed to her that she later settled there permanently. Cows' skulls and other bare bones found in the desert were frequent motifs in her paintings. Other common subjects included flowers, the sky, and the horizon lines of the desert. After O'Keeffe's three-month trip around the world by plane in 1959, the sky "paved with clouds" as seen from an airplane also became one of her favorite motifs and the subject of her largest work, a 24-foot mural that she began in 1966.

1. In the first sentence of the passage, the author explains O'Keeffe's
- (A) popularity with art critics despite her unusual choice of subject matter
  - (B) reasons for painting one kind of object rather than another
  - (C) skillful use of photography in selecting her subject matter
  - (D) efforts to portray the objects she painted in their simplest form

分析: 第一题问:“在文章第一句话中,作者解释了 O'Keeffe 的什么?”答案很明显就在第一句话中,我们看第一句话,“Georgia O'Keeffe 用像岩石、骨头、云朵和花儿等自然物体作为题材,经常用特写的观点或其他一些非同寻常的见解来将它们提炼到最简单的形式。”然后浏览选项,A 显然是不对的,因为第一句话中没有出现艺术批评家;B 也不对,因为它并没有解释为什么画一种而不画另外一种物体的原因;C 也不对,第一句话没有提到用摄影来选择题材的问题;那么剩下的自然是 D 了,而 D 本身也符合句意。

### Passage 4

The Alaska pipeline starts at the frozen edge of the Arctic ocean. It stretches southward across the largest and northernmost state in the United States, ending at a remote ice-free seaport village nearly 800 miles from where it begins. It is massive in size and extremely complicated to operate.

The steel pipe crosses windswept plains and endless miles of delicate tundra that tops the frozen ground. It weaves through crooked canyons, climbs sheer mountains, plunges over rocky crags, makes its way through thick forests, and passes over or under hundreds of river sand streams. The pipe is 4 feet in diameter, and up to 2 million barrels (or 84 million gallons) of crude oil can be pumped through it daily.

Resting on H-shaped steel racks called “bents,” long sections of the pipeline follow a

zigzag course high above the frozen earth. Other long sections drop out of sight beneath spongy or rocky ground and return to the surface later on. The pattern of the pipeline's up-and-down route is determined by the often harsh demands of the arctic and subarctic climate, the tortuous lay of the land, and the varied compositions of soil, rock, or permafrost (permanently frozen ground). A little more than half of the pipeline is elevated above the ground. The remainder is buried anywhere from 3 to 12 feet, depending largely upon the type of terrain and the properties of the soil.

One of the largest in the world, the pipeline cost approximately \$ 8 billion and is by far the biggest and most expensive construction project ever undertaken by private industry. In fact, no single business could raise that much money, so 8 major oil companies formed a consortium in order to share the costs. Each company controlled oil rights to particular shares of land in the oil fields and paid into the pipeline-construction fund according to the size of its holdings. Today, despite enormous problems of climate, supply shortages, equipment breakdowns, labor disagreements, treacherous terrain, a certain amount of mismanagement, and even theft, the Alaska pipeline has been completed and is operating.

3. How many companies shared the costs of constructing the pipeline?

- (A) Three
- (B) Four
- (C) Eight
- (D) Twelve

分析: 第三题问:“有多少公司来分担建造输油管的费用?”根据出题顺序,快速扫描文章定位已知信息。第四段才开始提到费用问题,第二句话:“实际上没有任何一家企业能够筹措这么多钱,所以八个石油公司组成一个联合放款团来分担这些费用。”很明显有八个公司,因此答案为C。

### Passage 5

Of the tens of thousands of ships on the ocean bottom, only a handful, less than 1 percent, contain negotiable treasure, such as gold and jewels. Most give us a different, priceless treasure-history. A sunken ship lies in trust, preserved in the airless environment of the sea, and those in deep water are especially well protected. No dry land sites anywhere-except perhaps Egyptian tombs-are in a better state of preservation than a vessel deep in the ocean. A sunken ship, therefore, can be a rare window through which a moment in time is glimpsed.

This is not to imply that sunken ships are always found intact. Most ships break up on the way down, hit the bottom at about 100 miles per hour, and become a chaotic, confusing jumble. I recall the chagrin of a novice diver who, after surfacing from an underwater tour of a 400-foot ship, asked his diving buddy, "Where was the wreck?" It takes experience to actually know a sunken ship when one sees it.



But no matter what its condition on the way down, a ship deteriorates much more slowly as it sinks deeper into protective layers of sand and mud. Ancient vessels have been found in remarkably good condition. In 1977 a group of marine archaeologists excavating a 900-year-old wreck recovered engraved glassware, Greek coins, bronze kettles, and amazingly, Greek jars containing seeds, almonds, and lentils-even a plate with chicken bones.

2. Where in the passage does the author discuss the financial rewards of finding sunken ships?

- (A) Lines 1-2
- (B) Lines 4-5
- (C) Line 7
- (D) Lines 10-11

**分析:** 第二题问:作者在文中什么地方讨论了发现沉船的经济报偿问题?按出题顺序,从前面快速扫描定位已知信息。第一句话“在海底成千上万的沉船当中,只有一少部分,少于百分之一的船里面有可以转让的财宝,像黄金和珠宝。”这里虽然没有直接说 financial rewards,但我们都知道黄金和珠宝等财富自然是 financial rewards。再考虑到出题顺序问题,因此可以确定答案为 A。该题要注意的是 financial rewards 中的 rewards 不是“奖励,奖品”,而是“报偿”的意思。

### 三、词汇题 (Vocabulary)

托福阅读主要难在词汇上,1995 年 8 月改题之后,取消了原来的词汇部分,而将词汇题融入阅读部分进行考查。现在阅读理解部分每篇文章之后有 3 到 4 个词汇题,也就是说,每次所考的词汇题在 13-15 个之间。

一般来说,托福中所考到的单词是比较简单的,而且考的意思很直接,往往考词的本义。如果应试者认识这个单词,从选项中找出与之意义最接近的词或短语即可。在这里我们也建议应试者多背一些单词,《全美托福词汇精选》(张敏琨著)就是一本比较好的托福词汇书,背完了这些词汇,阅读基本上就不会有太大问题。这也就是许多学生考完 GRE 后再去考 TOEFL 就觉得相当轻松的原因。

如果应试者不认识这个单词,那么就需要从上下文中推测词义,即尽快从文章中找到暗示和线索,推断出词的意义,然后将此意义代入到文章中看是否符合上下文的意思。不要担心文章会给单词带上附加意义,只有在极少数情况下,本意可能会与文章不符。我们往往会使用下面的方法来推测词义。

一、利用生词本身的构造(即构词法)来判断词义是一个基本的方法。英语中的许多词都由若干不同的部分构成:词根、前缀、后缀。如果了解一个词的词根,一般来说就可以推断出这个词的意义。例如:reprocess,如果认识词根 process(处理),知道 re 是前缀,有“再,又”的意思,那么这个词就不难猜测,是“再加工,再处理”的意思。但使用这种方法的前提是读者必须预先知道词根和词缀的意义。因此,读者在平时的学习中,就应该注意记忆一些词根和词缀。



二、利用生词和上下文的关系推测其意义。生词不是孤立的、封闭的,它所在的句子、段落都会提供出很多暗示和线索。这里介绍最常见的五种方法。

1. **定义线索**,即作者自己定义或解释一个生词。如:

A. Horology is the science of measuring time.

B. Folkways are informal customs regarding the correct way to behave.

从上面的例子可以看出,划线的单词都有比较清楚、直接的定义或解释。这是上下文中最为明显的线索类型。

2. **同义词或复述线索**,即作者在同一个句子中使用另外一个词,该词与生词具有基本相同的意义,或作者使用几个词来复述生词的意义,如:

A. Children often try to emulate *or* copy the behavior that they see on television.

B. Mr. Kelada was incredibly cocksure. *It was this* excessive self-confidence that made you want to prove him wrong whenever he gave an opinion.

从上面的句子中我们可以很容易得出 emulate 的意思与 copy 是差不多的,而 copy the behavior 意思是“模仿…行为”,因此 emulate 即“模仿”。同理,cocksure 也就是 excessive self-confidence 的意思,即“过分自信的,独断的”。

常见的定义或同义词词语有 refer to, that is, or, i.e. 等。

3. **例释线索**,即作者举出一些例子来解释或进一步说明生词的意思。如:

A. There was a kind of detachment about the old man's behavior. *It appeared* as if he didn't care what you were saying to him, as if what you were saying were of no interest to him.

B. Orthoptera, *such as* crickets, grasshoppers, and cockroaches, thrive in damp conditions.

从上面句子可以看出,“It appeared as if he didn't care what you were saying to him, as if what you were saying were of no interest to him.”这句话是用来解释说明 detachment 的,因此我们不难得出 detachment 是“超然、独立、分离”的意思。

而 orthopteran 包括 crickets, grasshoppers 和 cockroaches 等带翅的昆虫,因此也可以大致得出 orthopteran 的意思,从而不妨碍对整个句子的理解。

在带有例释的句子中,通常会有一些单词或短语来表示举例,如 *such as, including, for example, to illustrate, for instance* 等。

4. **比较/对照线索**,即有些句子中可能会包含与生词具有相反或近似意义的词,读者可以通过这些词来推测生词的意思。这种情况下,作者有时会使用像 *on the other hand, however, although, unlike, yet, but, like, while, despite* 和 *even though* 等词语,来提醒读者语气的变化和与前面表达相反的意义。如:

A. *Like* bright David, Richard was very intelligent.

B. During the concert the audience was quiet, *but* afterward the crowd became boisterous.

从上面句子中可以看出, *intelligent* 和 *bright* 是同义词,有“聪明的”意思。

而 *boisterous* 很明显与 *quiet* “安静的”是反义词,因此 *boisterous* 应该是“吵闹的,喧哗的”意思。