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大学英语



阶梯阅读训练

College English
Reading Comprehension

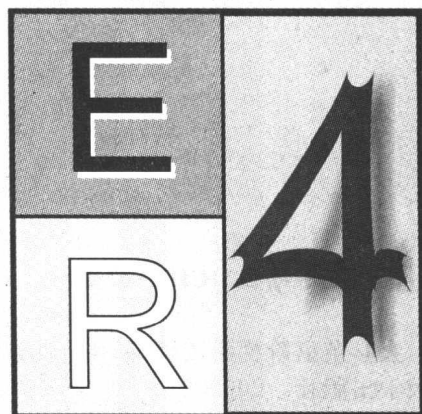
主编 沈素萍



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图书在版编目 (CIP) 数据

大学英语阶梯阅读训练. 4 / 沈素萍总主编. —天津: 天津大学出版社, 2002. 2
ISBN 7-5618-1454-2

I. 大… II. 沈… III. 英语-阅读教学-高等学校-教学参考资料 N. H319.4

中国版本图书馆 CIP 数据核字 (2002) 第 001138 号

出版发行 天津大学出版社
出 版 人 杨风和
地 址 天津市卫津路 92 号天津大学内 (邮编: 300072)
电 话 发行部: 022-27403647 邮购部: 022-27402742
印 刷 保定市印刷厂
发 行 全国各地新华书店
开 本 787mm×1092mm 1/16
印 张 9.25
字 数 232 千
版 次 2002 年 2 月第 1 版
印 次 2002 年 2 月第 1 次
印 数 1—6 000
定 价 12.00 元



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前 言

为了帮助学生更多地掌握一些英语阅读的素材,我们根据教育部最新修订的《大学英语教学大纲》,编写了这套英语泛读教材。

本套书共分4册,每册收录35~45篇文章。全套书配合英语分级考试以及大学英语四、六级的新题型,每课包括课文、生词和短语、课文注释及阅读理解、难句翻译、简短回答问题等内容。每册书为一级,共四级,适用于具有5000单词量以上的学生使用。

该书的特点是:

1. 内容新颖,题材多样。富有现代生活气息,介绍英美国家的风景名胜、社会现状、传奇故事、寓言故事、体育赛事、科技知识、名人轶事、文化教育、时事报道等内容。希望学生在学习语言的同时获得新信息和西方文化背景知识。

2. 幽默趣味,可读性强。选材注重内容生动活泼,能提高阅读的轻松感,降低学习压力。

3. 语言地道,原汁原味。文章皆选自近几年来有较大影响的国外期刊、书报,语言的规范性强,又体现了现代英语的新发展。

4. 循序渐进,难度适宜。同级各课的难度大体相当,学生可以通读全书,亦可选读部分课文。每册书的难易程度与英语分级考试相关性较强。练习答案附在课后,以便读者自测阅读效率。

目前,全国尚缺少能全面地配合分级考试的泛读教材。为落实教学大纲的新精神,对外经济贸易大学一线英语教师编写了这套教材,并充分考虑到对于自学者的适用性。

由于编者水平有限,至于书中存在的缺点和错误,还希望广大读者予以批评、指正。

编 者

2001年7月于北京

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Unit 1

The Gulf War (I)

Warm-up:

1. What was the fuse^[1] of the Gulf War?
2. What's your comment on the Gulf crisis before the War?

And then, in the summer of 1991, the United States was confronted with an international crisis that abruptly deflated^[2] the euphoria^[3] over the end of the Cold War. Suddenly it became clear that the world was still an uncertain and dangerous place and that Americans could not afford to put their heads in the sand.

Iraq Invades Kuwait. During the marathon Iraq-Iran War (1980-1988) the United States had tilted toward Iraq. (1) Although it was the aggressor in the war and although its leader, Saddam Hussein, was a brutal tyrant who used terror and poison gas against his own people, Iraq seemed preferable to an Iran controlled by the Shiite fundamentalists who had taken American hostages a decade before. American support had helped prevent Iraqi defeat and by 1988 the two countries had arranged a cease-fire. Yet Saddam had not disarmed. Instead, with the help of the Soviet Union and enormous arms purchases from France, Germany, and even the United States, he had constructed the most formidable^[4] military machine in the Mideast.

What the American government had not taken into account was that the same fierce urge to control the oil-rich Persian Gulf region that had led to the attack on Iran had not ceased. In fact, there was a new reason for Iraqi aggression against its Gulf neighbors: its need to pay the billions in debts incurred by its ill-starred^[5] war with Iran. For months Saddam had been denouncing^[6] the rulers of the small neighboring sheikdom^[7] of Kuwait for producing too much oil, thereby keeping the price low, while simultaneously demanding border adjustments in Iraq's

WORDS AND EXPRESSIONS

1. fuse *n.* 导火索
2. deflate *v.* 挫……之锐气
3. euphoria *n.* 高涨的情绪, 兴高采烈
4. formidable *a.* 可怕的, 令人畏惧的
5. ill-starred *a.* 命运坏的, 星宿不利的, 注定失败的
6. denounce *v.* 公开指责
7. sheikdom *n.* 酋长国

favor. Yet it came as a complete surprise when, on August 2, Iraqi troops and tanks plunged across the border into Kuwait and brutally seized control of the country.

(2) The Iraqi invasion shocked much of world opinion. Could the international community permit naked aggression to stand unchallenged? Could it tolerate an adventurer like Saddam having a choke hold on much of the world's petroleum supply? In short order^[8] the United Nations Security Council, with powerful American support, passed a series of resolutions condemning the unprovoked aggression against Kuwait and demanding that the Iraqis withdraw from their small neighbor. To back the resolution, the UN voted to impose an embargo^[9] on all goods and supplies to Iraq and to block export of Iraqi oil to markets abroad.

The Iraqi invasion forced some difficult choices on President Bush. The UN by itself could not enforce the sanctions^[10]; it lacked military power. Clearly the United States, the world's most powerful nation, must bear the primary burden of stopping Saddam, lest his appetite grow with the eating and his example inspire other aggressors. And there was a more immediate danger. Saddam's troops in Kuwait were just over the border from Saudi Arabia, the largest petroleum producer in the world. After gobbling up^[11] Kuwait, what would stop him from conquering the fabulously^[12] rich but militarily weak Saudi kingdom, a friend of the United States in the Arab world?

Finally, there was the hazard of nuclear arms. Iraq had long sought to acquire nuclear weapons, and although Saddam's drive to make Iraq a nuclear power had been set back for years by an Israeli air attack on his nuclear facilities in 1981, he had clearly resumed the quest. Now that Saddam had revealed his aggressive policies, the nuclear issue became urgent. If he succeeded in constructing a nuclear arsenal^[13] the entire Mideast would be destabilized in ways too frightening to contemplate^[14].

Yet U. S. intervention entailed^[15] serious risks at home and abroad. Ever since Vietnam, Americans had been wary of overseas military commitments beyond the defense of Europe through NATO. Would intervening in the Gulf produce another drawn-out, bloody war? As pessimists noted during the Gulf crisis: "Wait till the body bags start to arrive!" And if the war should prove costly, would the Americans people stay the course or would they demand withdrawal? Withdrawal without victory would, in turn, reinforce the post Vietnam self-doubt

WORDS AND EXPRESSIONS

8. in short order 迅速地
9. embargo *n.* 禁运
10. sanction *n.* 处罚, 制裁
11. gobble up 吞没
12. fabulously *ad.* 惊人地, 非常地
13. arsenal *n.* 军火库
14. contemplate *v.* 预料, 打算
15. entail *v.* 使承担
16. imponderables *n.* 其结果无法估计的东西

that still burdened the nation and further undermine its capacity for world leadership.

And there were other imponderables^[16] as well. What would be the reactions of the Arab peoples to an American intervention in the Gulf? (3) During the crisis various Western “experts” on the Mideast and Islam solemnly proclaimed that Saddam would incite a holy war against the American infidels. The United States would be depicted as a latter day crusader nation moved by hatred of Islam and by a desire to protect its client, the Zionist enemy, Israel. (4) Many skeptics also warned that any attempt to stop Saddam would ignite widespread terrorism by pro-Iraq Islamic groups. And their fears were widely shared.

Exercise:

I. Check Your Comprehension.

1. What did Iraq stand to gain by conquering Kuwait?
 - a. To gain a substantial portion of the world's petroleum resources.
 - b. To meet its need to pay the billions in debts incurred by its ill-starred war with Iran.
 - c. To gain the position of leadership against Israel.
 - d. Both a and b.
2. According to the passage, which of the following statements about the U. S is true?
 - a. From the beginning of the Iraq-Iran War (1980 – 1988) Saddam Hussein has been hostile to the United States.
 - b. The American Government had ignored the fact that after the cease-fire of the Iraq-Iran War, the fierce urge of Iraq to control its Gulf neighbors had not ceased.
 - c. Unable to enforce the sanctions on Iraq, the UN asked the United States to use its military power to stop Saddam.
 - d. None of the above.
3. What questions concerned the US and other nations of the world after Iraq's invasion of Kuwait?
 - a. If the naked aggression would not punished, Saddam's appetite would grow and nothing could stop him from conquering Saudi Arabia.
 - b. If the naked aggression would not punished, Saddam's example would inspire other aggressors.
 - c. Iraq had long sought to acquire nuclear weapons and his aggression policies made the nuclear issue urgent.
 - d. All of the above.
4. When the United States decided to invent the Gulf crisis, it must consider serious risk at home

and abroad, because_____.

- a. many Americans didn't want another bloody war overseas after Vietnam experience
- b. Americans was wary of the probability of withdrawal without victory although they were not afraid of the heavy cost to spend in war
- c. the reactions of the Arab people to an American invention in the Gulf was uncertain
- d. both a and c

II. Translate the Underlined Sentences into Chinese.

III. Short Answer Questions.

1. What excuse did Iraq assort to before it plunged across the border into Kuwait?
2. If international world had not intervened in the Saddam's naked aggression, What would have probably happened?
3. Before the Gulf War, why didn't some of the "experts" and skeptics advocate using military power against Iraq?

英语锦言妙语

书到用时方恨少,事非经过不知难。

——中国谚语

Only when you need books, can you think them insufficient;
only when you experience something can you understand the
hardship of it.

—— Chinese proverb

良好的开端,等于成功的一半。

——(古希腊)柏拉图

Well begun is half done.

——(Ancient Greece) Plato

经常使用的头脑像个滚动的雪球。

If one use his head frequently, he will acquire more and more
knowledge, just like rolling a snowball.

Unit 2

The Gulf War (II)

Warm-up:

1. What was the outcome of the war?
2. Do you know how Americans comment on the victory of the War?

War and Victory. Actual shooting war, called Desert Storm, began on January 16 in the early evening, eastern standard time, when, on signal from General Norman Schwarzkopf, the commander of the Gulf forces, the United States and its coalition partners launched a massive air offensive against Iraq. The targets of the initial attacks—conducted by radar-invisible stealth^[1] fighters, navy F-15s, low flying cruise missiles, and other high-tech weapons—were Iraqi command headquarters, communication centers, electric power stations, scud missile^[2] launchers, chemical weapons factories, and H-bombs development facilities. The results were spectacular^[3]. During the next few days the American public saw pictures of incredible pin-point hits on vital Iraqi facilities achieved with few if any coalition losses. A wave of euphoria and relief swept over the nation; the war, it seemed, might be won with air power alone without the need to use ground forces. (1) Coalition troops would not have to face the “elite” Republican Guard who, it was said, had proved deadly against the Iranians during the recent Iraq-Iran War.

Once the fighting started most public doubts fell away. A wave of patriotism swept the nation and Americans took to wearing red, white, and blue bunting^[4] and tying yellow ribbons around curbside trees to indicate support for the troops. In the Mideast, day after day coalition bombers, fighters, and missiles raced across the desert to drop their explosives on Iraqi troops, tanks, artillery, bridges, and communication facilities. Much of Iraq's water supply, sewage facilities, and electric generation plants were quickly destroyed. The coalition forces sought to

WORDS AND EXPRESSIONS

1. stealth *n.* 秘密行动, 隐形
2. scud missile 飞毛腿导弹
3. spectacular *a.* 惊人的
4. bunting *n.* 旗布, 旗帜

avoid hitting homes, shops, and offices, but inevitably mistakes occurred and Iraqi civilians died.

The Iraqis retaliated^[5] by releasing millions of gallons of oil into the Persian Gulf to deter amphibious^[6] landings on the Kuwaiti beaches and to foul^[7] desalination^[8] plants in Saudi Arabia. (2) The Iraqi air force showed little fight, however, and before long a large proportion of its best planes escaped to Iran where they were interned for the duration of the war. The only offensive weapons the Iraqis could wield were scud missiles, weapons of terror without military worth.

In the Wake of Victory. The Gulf victory brought jubilation at home. Americans felt a surge of pride for their fighting men and women. They also regained much of their confidence in their technical and military powers so badly eroded by Japanese industrial success and the catastrophic Vietnam War. Soon after the cease-fire, Bush declared that the victory had finally exorcised^[9] the ghost of Vietnam.

It also created a new sense of confidence in American leaders. President Bush's approval rating soared to over ninety percent, the highest ever recorded for a president. American also had two new heroes in generals Schwartzkopf and Powell. Rumors were soon circulating that both men might enter national politics. There were political losers as well, however. (3) Republican leaders accused the Democrats of poor judgment, if not worse, for opposing the use-of-force resolution and seeking to appease^[10] Saddam. The charges were no doubt unfair, but they put the Democrats on the defensive. Observers considered it significant that as late as the spring of 1991, months later than in past years, no Democratic candidate was actively campaigning for his party's presidential nomination.

Yet Democrats clearly had no intention of giving up without a fight. The president's weak suit was domestic policy, they said. While Bush was overseeing the Gulf crisis, problems at home continued to multiply. American education remained mediocre^[11]; crime on the streets continued; U. S. industrial competitiveness was still inferior; the economy was falling into a slump; American financial institutions were in crisis; racism seemed on the rise. Winning the war was all very well, but now that it was over, Democrats said, we would have to come back to reality. And it was here, in domestic affairs, that they had better answers than the Republicans.

And not all the country's international problems were settled. With

WORDS AND EXPRESSIONS

5. retaliate *v.* 报复
6. amphibious *a.* 两栖的; 水陆两用的
7. foul *v.* 污染, 阻塞
8. desalination *n.* 除去盐分
9. exorcise *v.* 驱除 (妖魔)
10. appease *v.* 绥靖; 姑息
11. mediocre *a.* 平庸的, 低劣的
12. indefinitely *ad.* 无限期的



the war over what would be the new shape of international affairs? Would Saddam Hussein survive in the Mideast? Would the Palestinian problem ever be solved? Would the United States have to keep a military presence in the Gulf region indefinitely⁽¹²⁾? (4) In the wake of the victory, moreover, turmoil in Iraq propelled thousands of Shiite and Kurdish refugees from their homes requiring a major international rescue effort to keep them from starving.

Exercise:

I. Check Your Comprehension.

1. The war, called Desert Storm actually began on January 16, 1991, when _____.
 - a. Saddam Hussein refused to pull out of Kuwait
 - b. the whole nation of the United States supported Bush to use force eventually
 - c. most of the Arab world proved the military invention in Mideast
 - d. Saddam Hussein launched another invasion to Israel
2. Which of the following statements is not the fact during the American invention?
 - a. Iraq released millions of gallons of oil into the Persian Gulf.
 - b. The allied coalition dropped explosions with deadly accuracy on Iraqi troops, tanks, artillery, bridges, and communication facilities, and no Iraqi civilians died.
 - c. The ground assault lasted one hundred hours and ended the war with a total defeat of the Iraqi army.
 - d. Both b and c.
3. What did Iraq hope to accomplish by releasing millions of gallons of oil into the Persian Gulf?
 - a. By doing so, Saddam hoped to prevent the coalition from amphibious landing on the Kuwaiti beaches.
 - b. By fouling desalination plants in Saudi Arabia, Saddam could make the area in serious lack of salt supply.
 - c. Polluting the Persian Gulf was just a trick Saddam played to cover his real intention of using scud missiles to Israel.
 - d. None of the above.
4. For the United States, the Gulf victory brought jubilation at home, but problems at home and abroad continued to multiply. What were the problems?
 - a. The fight between Democrats and Republicans seemed to find new excuses.
 - b. The Gulf victory didn't seem to help Bush improve economic situations and solve social problems in domestic affairs.
 - c. Internationally, Saddam Hussein was not totally destroyed, the Palestinian problem still existed.

d. All of the above.

II. Translate the Underlined Sentences into Chinese.

英语锦言妙语

读书要从薄到厚,再从厚到薄。

——华罗庚

When reading books, start from the easy to the difficult, and then from the redundant to the concise.

——Hua Luogeng

锲而舍之,朽木不折;锲而不舍,金石可镂。

——〔战国〕荀子

Lack of pep breaks no rotten wood. Patience wears out stones.

——(the Period of Warring States) Xunzi

千淘万漉虽辛苦,吹尽狂沙始到金。

——〔唐〕刘禹锡

All sufferings have their reward.

——(the Tang Dynasty) Liu Yuxi

即使天才,在生下来的时候的第一声啼哭,也和平常的儿童一样,决不会就是一首好诗。

——鲁迅

The first cry of a prodigy is the same as the cries of ordinary babies. It would never be a nice poem.

——Lu Xun

教诲如春风,日日沐我心。

My teacher's teachings are like the spring breeze, which caresses my heart every day.

Unit 3

Ordinary and Great

Warm-up:

1. Can you image how an American woman spent her whole life happily on an isolated rock as a lighthouse keeper?
2. What is your understanding in being ordinary and great?

A rising wind pitched^[1] breakers^[2] against the shore at Newport, Rhode Island. But in spite of the threatening weather, four reckless^[3] young men, hungry for excitement, launched^[4] a sailboat at dusk. (1) As they rode the rough water farther and farther out, they joked and shook their fists at the ominous thunderheads building in the western sky.

Suddenly a violent wind and a giant wave overturned the boat. The men screamed for help.

They would surely have drowned had not a sixteen-year-old girl been watching them from the Lime^[5] Rock Lighthouse doorway. Without considering her own safety, Ida Lewis immediately pushed off from Lime Rock Lighthouse in a rowboat to answer their cries for help. (2) More than once she feared the men were drowned when she lost sight of their bobbing (= moving quickly up and down) heads buried time and again beneath towering waves.

Finally, when she reached the first man, she discovered she had to fight his panic as well as the wind, rain, and waves. As he clutched^[6] at her boat, almost overturning it, she calmly shouted words of instruction and encouragement. The confidence in her voice quieted the man enough that she could pull him into her boat.

One by one, she struggled with the other three victims, managing to haul^[7] them aboard, too. Now the worst of the ordeal^[8] was over, but she couldn't let down. Not yet. She still had to row to safety.

WORDS AND EXPRESSIONS

1. pitch *v.* 投掷, 扔
2. breaker *n.* 激浪, 碎浪
3. reckless *a.* 莽撞的
4. launch *v.* 发射, 使船下水
5. lime *n.* 石灰
6. clutch *v.* 紧抓
7. haul *v.* 拖, 拉
8. ordeal *n.* 痛苦的
经历