

大学英语

阅读教程

主编 郭红 王伟

主审 朱维举



第 3 册

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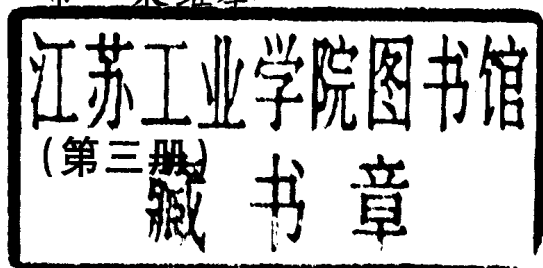
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College English Extensive Reading Course

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前 言

1999 年颁布的新《大学英语教学大纲》明确要求“大学英语教学的目的是:培养学生具有较强的阅读能力和一定的听、说、写、译能力,使他们能用英语交流信息”。根据这一要求,我们针对非英语专业学生的实际水平编写了这套阅读教程。

本书选材广泛,涉及面广。有科普常识、英语国家的风土人情、日常生活知识、教育、社会问题、环境污染、人口、文化等方面的内容。体裁多样,有叙述文、说明文、议论文等。文章语言幽默,由浅入深,循序渐进,并加注超纲词汇的汉语释义。

本书还根据大学英语四级考试新题型的要求,设置了翻译、简答等新题型,目的是培养学生语言综合运用能力。

全书共四册,按四级编排,可做精读教材的配套教材,也可单独用做泛读教材或自学用书。

编 者

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Unit One

Passage 1

An Unusual Adventure

Perhaps the most fantastic of the true stories of escapers is found in a book called *No Picnic on Mt. Kenya* by Felice Benuzzi. With many other Italians, Benuzzi was confined in a British P. O. W. camp at Nanyuki, which is at the foot of Mount Kenya. The chances of permanent escape were negligible. The route to neutral or friendly territory lay across hundreds of miles for which the prisoners could never hope to equip themselves. It is one thing to escape in Germany or Italy where trains and cars offer speedy transport and where clothes and food can be easily stolen at night. But it is quite a different proposition to trudge for hundreds of miles in East Africa. Transport, food and the heat are only three of the many problems.

Because of this, Benuzzi never attempted to escape permanently from his camp. Instead, he planned to take a short holiday from it, to climb the 17,000 feet of Mount Kenya and to return quietly to the camp at the end of his adventure. Benuzzi had always been an enthusiastic mountaineer and the sight of Mount Kenya presented a strange challenge to him. He found two companions and started to prepare for the adventure.

For months the men worked secretly and with great resourcefulness. They obtained the clothes, food and equipment which were necessary for such an undertaking. They made a rope seventy feet long by taking the ropes which fastened the bed-nets to their frames. They made or borrowed a tent, a boiler which used alcohol as its fuel, special climbing boots with spikes, and a variety of other things. The food was collected patiently from a number of interesting sources. When they were ready to go, they had to take sufficient food for three men for ten days, and this alone weighed over thirty pounds.

On the agreed day, the three men left a note for the prison authorities. They explained that they were not escaping permanently from the camp and that they expected to return within fourteen days. They then escaped by pretending to work in a vegetable garden. They made a key to the gate into the garden, a friend pretended to be a prison officer marching them to work, and they were soon free.

The journey up Mount Kenya was exhilarating but testing. The three unarmed men met a leopard, a rhinoceros and an elephant but wisely avoided fighting any of them. Their route up the mountain was a severe test for any explorer or mountaineer, however well equipped. But at last the men achieved their aim and returned to the camp.

On the eighteenth day after their escape, the three men crept quietly back into their prison, returning by the same method they had used to escape. They spent the next day eating as much as they could, resting and putting on clean clothes, then they reported to the prison authorities. Their reward was a sentence of twenty-eight days in solitary confinement, but they spent only seven days in the cells because the Camp Commandant "appreciated their sporting effort". Of the many fantastic escape stories which came out of the 1939-45 war, few can equal this bizarre adventure.

Notes:

1. P. O. W. *abbr.* (prisoner of war) 战俘
2. negligible *a.* 可忽略的; 极小的
3. proposition *n.* 提议, 建议; (要对付的或须注意的) 事情, 问题
4. trudge *v.* 步履艰难地走
5. spike *n.* 尖铁, 墙头钉; (防滑的) 鞋钉
6. exhilarating *a.* 令人高兴的; 令人兴奋的
7. leopard *n.* 豹
8. rhinoceros *n.* 犀牛
9. bizarre *a.* 奇形怪状的; 异乎寻常的; 怪诞的

Reading Comprehension:

1. To Benuzzi, Mount Kenya was _____.
A. something he disliked intensely
B. a good opportunity for returning to his own country
C. an uninteresting sight
D. something to be conquered if possible
2. Why was Benuzzi in the camp?
A. He was exploring Africa.
B. He had been captured by Italian soldiers.
C. He had broken the law and had been sent to the camp by a judge.
D. He had been captured by British troops.
3. The major obstacle to permanent escape from the camp was probably _____.
A. its comparative isolation
B. patrol dogs and an electrified fence

- C. a very strict security force
D. the lack of suitable clothing
4. The personal quality which particularly helped the men to equip themselves for the adventure was _____.
A. secrecy B. patience C. honesty D. resourcefulness
5. The phrase "in solitary confinement" in the last paragraph means _____.
A. locked up together in a prison cell
B. forced to do extremely hard work, such as breaking stones
C. kept in separate cells
D. left under difficult conditions

Passage 2

Flicker

Walter examined hundreds of people who had never had any kind of fit or attack and found that about one in every twenty responded to carefully adjusted flicker. They experienced "strange feelings" or faintness or swimming in the head; some became unconscious for a few moments or their limbs jerked in rhythm with the light. As soon as any such sensation was reported, the flicker was turned off to prevent a complete convulsion. In other subjects, the flicker had to be exactly matched with the brain rhythm to produce any effects. A feedback circuit, in which the flashing light was actually fired by the brain signals themselves, produced immedi-

ate epileptic seizures in more than half the people tested.

Driving down a tree-lined avenue with the sun flickering through the trunks at a certain rhythm can be very disturbing. There is a record of a cyclist who passed out on several occasions while travelling home down such an avenue. In his case the momentary unconsciousness stopped him from pedalling, so he slowed down to a speed at which the flicker no longer affected him and came round in time to save himself from falling. But a motor-car has more momentum, and the chances are that it would keep going at the critical speed and influence the driver long enough to make him lose control altogether. There is no way of knowing how many fatal crashes have occurred in this way.

In another case, a man found that every time he went to the cinema he would suddenly find that he was consumed by an overwhelming desire to strangle the person sitting next to him. On one occasion he even came to his senses to discover that he had his hands clutched around his neighbour's throat. When he was tested, it was found that he developed violent limb jerking when the flicker was set at twenty-four cycles per second, which is exactly the rhythm of film recorded at twenty-four frames a second.

The implications of this discovery are enormous. Every day we are exposed to flicker in some way and run the risk of illness or fatal fits. The flash rate of fluorescent lights at 100 to 120 per second is too high for convulsions, but who knows what effect it may be having on those exposed to it for many hours each day?

Notes:

1. jerk *v.* 猝然一动, 急推(拉、抽、扭); 抽搐

- C. he responded to the flicker of the film
 - D. he was mentally unsound
5. The author is worried about the effects of light because ____.
- A. fluorescent lights can produce fits
 - B. we are all exposed to too much flicker
 - C. we may be affected by flicker without realizing it
 - D. the flash rate of fluorescent lights is too high

Passage 3

Black Holes

What is a black hole? Well, it's difficult to answer this question, since the terms we would normally use to describe a scientific phenomenon are inadequate here. Astronomers and scientists think that a black hole is a region of space (not a thing) into which matter has fallen and from which nothing can escape — not even light. So we can't see a black hole. A black hole exerts a strong gravitational pull and yet it has no matter. It is only space — or so we think. How can this happen?

The theory is that some stars explode when their density increases to a particular point; they collapse and sometimes a supernova occurs. From earth, a supernova looks like a very bright light in the sky which shines even in the daytime. Supernovae were reported by astronomers in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Some people think that the Star of Bethlehem could have been a supernova. The collapse of a star may pro-

duce a White Dwarf or a neutron star — a star, whose matter is so dense that it continually shrinks by the force of its own gravity. But if the star is very large (much bigger than our sun) this process of shrinking may be so intense that a black hole results. Imagine the earth reduced to the size of a marble, but still having the same mass and a stronger gravitational pull, and you have some idea of the force of a black hole. Any matter near the black hole is sucked in. It is impossible to say what happens inside a black hole. Scientists have called the boundary area around the hole the “event horizon.” We know nothing about events which happen once objects pass this boundary. But in theory, matter must behave very differently inside the hole.

For example, if a man fell into a black hole, he would think that he reached the center of it very quickly. However, an observer at the event horizon would think that the man never reached the center at all. Our space and time laws don't seem to apply to objects in the area of a black hole. Einstein's relativity theory is the only one which can explain such phenomena. Einstein claimed that matter and energy are interchangeable, so that there is no “absolute” time and space. There are no constants at all, and measurements of time and space depend on the position of the observer. They are relative. We do not yet fully understand the implications of the relativity theory; but it is interesting that Einstein's theory provided a basis for the idea of black holes before astronomers started to find some evidence for their existence. It is only recently that astronomers have begun specific research into black holes. In August 1977, a satellite was launched to gather data about the 10 million black holes which are thought to be in the Milky Way. And astronomers are planning a new observatory to study the individual exploding stars believed to be black holes.