



“十二五”普通高等教育本科国家级规划教材

21

English 世纪大学英语

for Interactive Purposes



汪榕培 石坚 邹申 ◆ 总主编

应用型 综合教程

教学参考书 (第3版) **1**

 复旦大学出版社



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《21世纪大学英语应用型阅读教程》(1—4册)。

一、编写原则

1. 体现“中国英语能力等级量表”、《大学英语教学指南》,以及英语能力等级考试和四、六级考试大纲的原则和精神

本系列教材在设计编写宗旨、单元主题、材料选择、课堂活动和课堂练习时充分诠释“中国英语能力等级量表”和《大学英语教学指南》的各项指标,培养大学生的听、说、读、写、译能力和语用能力,开拓新时代大学英语教与学的新领域。

2. 体现课堂教学与测试的有机结合

本系列教材顺应英语能力等级考试和现行大学英语四、六级考试要求,在纸质教材和网络平台上覆盖现行大学英语四、六级考试题型,并紧密结合雅思、普思、托福等国际化英语水平测试。

3. 体现现代信息技术与英语教学的整合运用

本系列教材建立在英语课堂教学与移动互联网络教学全面整合的基础之上,充分利用现代信息技术,培养学生的英语综合应用能力,尤其是视听说能力。

二、教材特色

1. 主题新颖,选材独特,抓取新时代大学生的关注点,提升学习语言的兴趣

兴趣是最好的老师,英语学习也是如此。本教材的单元主题是编写者通过调查问卷广泛征求学生的意见,并根据时代的发展需要而确定的,即从学生学习的视角出发,而不是编写者想当然地确定主题。因此单元内的主题和选材能够吸引学生极大的注意,并引发热烈讨论,使得课堂教学生动活泼。例如,针对绝大部分学生都会遇到的“Campus Love”这个热门而经典的话题,《综合教程》第1册Unit 2的Text A “Can’t Forget Your First Love”讲述了初恋对一个人一生的影响,提醒大家珍惜和正确对待初恋。而Text B “College Dating Tips for Student Couples”则讨论大学生应如何处理校园爱情和学习生活之间的关系。这样生动活泼又具有现实意义的话题还有很多:Unit 3 Human & Artificial Intelligence选择了当今最热门话题“人工智能”,教会学生如何应对人工智能时代的学习和工作;Unit 7则选择了2016年美国民谣歌手Bob Dylan在诺贝尔颁奖典礼上的致辞,讨论Pop Culture对大学生的意义。

另外,本系列教材的《视听说教程》和《综合教程》的单元主题保持同步,这样可以使学生从不同的视角深度讨论同一个问题,并通过音频、视频和文章等不同形式的学习媒介,提高学生听、说、读、写、译各方面的能力。

2. 教学辅助模块

“21世纪大学英语应用型系列”教材的教学辅助课件,包括PPT、电子教案、教学观摩视频材料,以及移动终端学习平台,都将与师生共享。

3. 教学评价模块

本模块包含教学监督、教学测评、师生互动等。教师可根据需要从试题库中选择题目,组织一个单元、几个单元或某一教学阶段后的测试,或组织期末课程测试,还可以组题进行水平测试。就考试形式而言,教师可以在局域网上组织多个教师同步测试,或从试题库选择和整合试卷,提取录音,打印试卷之后,组织现场测试。

4. 网络管理模块

网络教学管理模块能为组织教学评估提供方便。详细的学习进程记录和作业/成绩记录使教师能够随时了解学生的自主学习情况。在网上可实施学生自我评估、学生间的评估、教师对学生的评估等。通过教学、管理与测试相结合,形成性评估和终结性评估相结合,教师能够全面、客观、准确地获取反馈信息,改进教学管理,学生也能及时调整学习策略,提高学习效率。

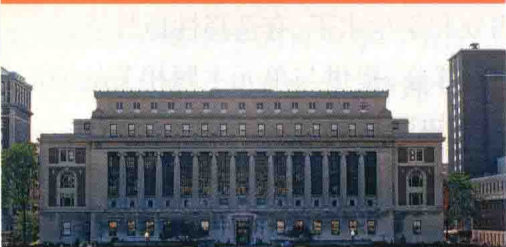

5. 教师之间、学生之间互动模块

使用“21世纪大学英语应用型系列”教材的教师可以在这个平台上相互沟通教学经验,分享教学资源;全国的学生可以在这个平台上交友,分享学习经验。

本系列教材是编写队伍在长期科研和教学经验积累的基础上,由国内外专家和教师共同努力编写而成。编写者分别来自复旦大学、四川大学、北京师范大学、中山大学、上海外国语大学、大连外国语大学、中国海洋大学等国内知名院校,以及多位来自美国和加拿大知名大学的学者和教师。他们具备深厚的语言学、二语习得及外语教学理论功底,并长期在英语教学一线工作,有着丰富的教学经历。

愿本系列教材能以其时代性、趣味性和实用性,为推动我国新时代大学英语教学助一臂之力。

本系列教材编写组

Unit	Theme	Part A	
		Warm-up	Text A
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	Love 	Can't Forget Your First Love	
3 Page 95	Human & Artificial Intelligence 	Technology in Science Fiction	
4 Page 137	Education 	We Are Raising Children, Not Flowers!	

《21世纪大学英语应用型综合教程 教学参考书(第3版)1》

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Unit	Theme	Part A	
		Warm-up	Text A
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Unit 1 College Life

Starter

Put the words/expressions in the box into the correct categories.

pencil case	engineering	handout	master's degree (硕士学位)
notebook	textbook	primary/grade	chemistry
reading	PhD	business	backpack
notes	postsecondary	agenda	humanities (人文学科)
bachelor's degree (学士学位)			

设计思路

- 该部分列出了有关大学学习生活的词汇,其目的是让学生巩固并掌握与本单元主题相关的词汇,同时导出本单元“大学生活”这个话题。

参考教法

- 建议1: 让学生分组进行比赛,最短时间内正确完成该部分的小组为胜;
- 建议2: 教师提供有关大学学习生活的图片,让学生从该部分中选出与图片有关的词汇,同时鼓励学生说出更多的相关词汇;
- 建议3: 该部分可作为词汇翻译训练,先让学生指出每个单词的中文意思,然后进行词汇归类。

Words/expressions for school supplies: pencil case, notebook, backpack, agenda


Words/expressions for school levels/titles: master's degree, primary/grade, PhD, postsecondary, bachelor's degree

Words/expressions for courses/majors: engineering, chemistry, business, humanities

Words/expressions for studying: handout, textbook, reading, notes

Part A

Warm-up

- I.  Watch the video clip and fill in the blanks with the words or expressions you've heard.



Dean Lewis: You know that a lot of people say that college is the time when young men and women expand the way that they look at their world, when they 1 to new ideas and experiences, and when they begin that long journey from the 2 to the responsibilities of 3. Now isn't that a load of horseshit? Ha ha ...

Bartleby: W ... What?

Father: Could you explain that to us a little more?

Bartleby: Uh, Dean Lewis, why don't you tell them a little bit about the 4 here at South Harmon?

Dean Lewis: Look, we throw a lot of fancy words in front of these kids, in order to 5 them to going to school, in the 6 that they're gonna have a better life. And we all know that all we're doing is breeding a whole new generation of buyers and sellers. Buyers and sellers! And indoctrinating (教) them into a 7 hell of debt and indecision (优柔寡断).

Father: I ...

Mother: Um ...

Father: I ... I just don't understand.

Dean Lewis: Do I have to spoon-feed it to you? Look, there's only one 8 that kids wanna go to school.

Bartleby: Holy shit.


Father: Which is?

Dean Lewis: To get a good job. To get a good job with a



Part A

Warm-up

- I.  Watch the video clip and fill in the blanks with the words or expressions you've heard.

设计思路

- 该部分的视频截选自美国电影《录取通知》，视频中 Dean Lewis 直言不讳地谈论大学教育的目的，值得大一新生思考。其目的是一方面通过视频引起学生的兴趣，锻炼听力；另一方面为下一项任务做铺垫。

参考教法

- 可先让学生读题，鼓励其根据上下文猜测本视频所涉及的内容；
- 播放完一遍视频后，核对答案；
- 根据学生理解情况，可再次播放视频，并讲解视频中的个别短语或单词。

Script & Keys:

Dean Lewis: You know that a lot of people say that college is the time when young men and women expand the way that they look at their world, when they 1. open their minds to new ideas and experiences, and when they begin that long journey from the 2. innocence of youth to the responsibilities of 3. adulthood. Now isn't that a load of horseshit? Ha ha ...

Bartleby: W ... What?

Father: Could you explain that to us a little more?

Bartleby: Uh, Dean Lewis, why don't you tell them a little bit about the 4. philosophy here at South Harmon?

Dean Lewis: Look, we throw a lot of fancy words in front of these kids, in order to 5. attract them to going to school, in the 6. belief that they're gonna have a better life. And we all know that all we're doing is breeding a whole new generation of buyers and sellers. Buyers and sellers! And indoctrinating (教) them into a 7. lifelong hell of debt and indecision (优柔寡断).

Father: I ...

Mother: Um ...

Father: I ... I just don't understand.

Dean Lewis: Do I have to spoon-feed it to you? Look, there's only one 8. reason that kids wanna go to school.

Bartleby: Holy shit.

Father: Which is?

Dean Lewis: To get a good job. To get a good job with a great starting 9. salary.

Father: I couldn't agree more.

Mother: It is so 10. refreshing to have somebody approach education so rationally.

great starting 9 .

Father: I couldn't agree more.

Mother: It is so 10 to have somebody approach education so rationally.

II. Work in pairs and discuss the following questions.

1. What does Dean Lewis tell the parents what people believe college is for?
(Cues: new ideas and experiences, responsibilities, adulthood)
2. How do the parents react to Dean Lewis's openness (坦率)?
(Cues: shocked, bluntness, agree with, impressed)
3. What is so shocking about what Dean Lewis has to say?
(Cues: direct, truth, true purpose of school)

Text A

Words and Expressions

(四级词汇标记为■; 四级积极词汇标记为▲; 六级词汇标记为★; 超纲词汇不标记)

- **desperately** [ˈdespəətli] *ad.* in a way that shows despair 拼命地; 不顾一切地
 - ▲ **require** [rɪˈkwaɪə(r)] *v.* to have need of; to depend upon; to want 需要; 有赖于
 - **extraordinary** [ɪkˈstrɔːdnəri] *a.* very unusual, remarkable or surprising 非凡的; 令人惊奇的
 - ▲ **remarkable** [rɪˈmɑːkəbl] *a.* worthy of note or attention 引人注目的; 卓越的
 - ★ **humanitarian** [hjuː.mənɪˈteəriən] *a.* concerned with reducing suffering and improving the conditions that people live in 人道主义的
- thanks to** on account of; because of 幸亏; 由于
- merge** [mɜːdʒ] *v.* to blend or cause to blend; to fuse (使) 融合; 融入
- ▲ **prestige** [preˈstiːʒ] *n.* great respect or importance 威望; 显赫

You'll Never Be Famous — And That's OK

By Emily Esfahani Smith¹

1 Today's college students desperately want to change the world, but too many think that living a meaningful life requires doing something extraordinary and remarkable like becoming an Instagram star, starting a wildly successful company or ending a humanitarian crisis.

2 Having hopes and dreams for the future is, of course, part of being young. But thanks to social media, purpose and meaning have become merged with prestige: Extraordinary lives look like the norm on the Internet. Yet the idea that a meaningful life must be or appear remarkable is not only limited but also misguided. Over the past five years, I've interviewed dozens of people across the country about what gives their lives meaning, and I've read through

II. Work in pairs and discuss the following questions.

Suggested Answers:

1. Dean Lewis tells the parents that people believe college is a place where children are transformed through new ideas and experiences. There they learn to take on new responsibilities and begin their journey to adulthood.
2. The parents' initial reaction is shocked mainly because of the intensity of both the language used and his bluntness. However, by the end of the conversation the parents firmly agree with what he has to say. They are actually thankful and impressed by Dean Lewis.
3. What Dean Lewis does is so shocking, because as the head of the college it is surprising for him to be so direct as to the truth of what college is actually for. Aside from the language, Dean Lewis is quite open about the true purpose of school by not sugarcoating (美化; 粉饰) it for the parents of a student.

设计思路

- 该部分延伸了视频中的话题讨论, 以进一步导入本单元的主题, 切入 Text A。

参考教法

- 可采用分组讨论或个别提问的方式。根据学生情况, 可适当提示有用的词汇或句型。

Text A

You'll Never Be Famous — And That's OK

By Emily Esfahani Smith

Language and Cultural Points in the Text

Paragraph 1

- ◆ **desperately**: *ad.* in a way that shows despair 拼命地; 不顾一切地
e.g. She searched desperately for her husband during the Las Vegas shooting.
在拉斯维加斯的枪击事件中, 她拼命寻找自己的丈夫。
I was desperately nervous about speaking before a crowd.
在人群前讲话, 我非常紧张。
- ◆ **require**: *v.* to have need of; to depend upon; to want 需要; 有赖于
e.g. A successful marriage requires falling in love many times, always with the same person.
成功的婚姻需要多次坠入爱河, 且每次爱上的都是同一个人。
Starting your own business overseas will definitely require diligence and careful consideration.
在海外开创生意肯定需要勤勉和慎重的考虑。
- ◆ **extraordinary**: *a.* very unusual, remarkable or surprising 非凡的; 令人惊奇的
e.g. Smith has a plain name but is an extraordinary talent.
史密斯虽名字普通, 但却是一位非凡的天才。
- ◆ **remarkable**: *a.* worthy of note or attention 引人注目的; 卓越的
e.g. Only remarkable stuff can be remembered forever.
只有卓越的事物才会被永久记住。
- ◆ **humanitarian**: *a.* concerned with reducing suffering and

improving the conditions that people live in 人道主义的
e.g. The Beijing Paralympic Games are an opportunity for China to further promote a humanitarian spirit.
北京残奥会是中国进一步弘扬人道主义精神的良机。
Reducing the price of cancer drugs is a humanitarian move.
降低抗癌药物的价格是一项人道主义举措。

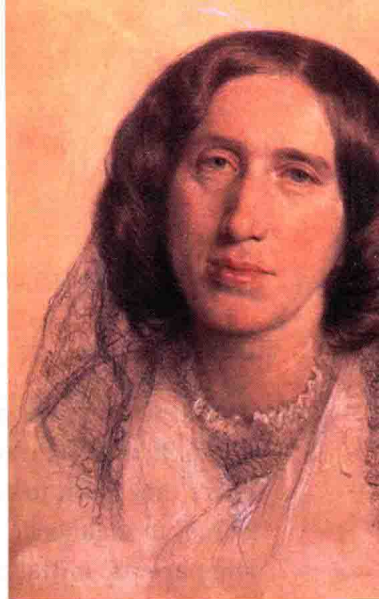
Paragraph 2

- ◆ **thanks to**: on account of; because of 幸亏; 由于
e.g. Thanks to the Internet, the world is becoming smaller.
由于有了互联网, 世界变得更小了。
A disabled young man wins Harvard place, thanks to his mother's devotion.
多亏了他妈妈的奉献, 残疾的年轻人进入哈佛。
- ◆ **merge**: *v.* to blend or cause to blend; to fuse (使) 融合; 融入
e.g. In this great melting pot cultures are merged and traditions lost.
在这个种族大熔炉中, 各种文化融为一体, 原来的传统则失落了。
Elon Musk says human brains need to merge with AI to stay competitive with machines.
埃隆·马斯克称人脑需要融入人工智能以保持对机器的竞争力。
- ◆ **prestige**: *n.* great respect or importance 威望; 显赫
e.g. Such a scandal will surely damage the mayor's prestige.
这样一个丑闻肯定会毁掉市长的威望。
The event will surely boost the university's global prestige.
这个活动必将提升该大学的全球声望。



MIDDLEMARCH

GEORGE ELIOT



- * **dignity** [ˈdɪɡnəti] *n.* the quality of being worthy of honor or respect 尊严
- * **devotion** [dɪˈvəʊʃən] *n.* the action of spending a lot of time or energy on sth. 奉献; 专心; 热爱
- **discipline** [ˈdɪsɪplɪn] *n.* the ability to control one's behavior or the way one lives, works, etc. 自制力; 遵守纪律
- kind of** somewhat; rather; almost 有点; 相当
- hard-won** [hɑːdˈwɒn] *a.* acquired through effort or in spite of problems 来之不易的
- **heroine** [ˈhɪərəʊɪn] *n.* the main female character in a novel, play, film, etc. (小说、戏剧、诗歌等中的)女主角,女主人公
- provincial** [prəˈvɪnʃəl] *a.* of or like that of rural provinces; countrified 地方的; 乡下的
- passionate** [ˈpæʃənət] *a.* having or showing strong feelings; full of passion 热情的; 热诚的
- * **yearn** [jɜːn] *v.* to be filled with longing or desire 渴望; 向往
- philanthropist** [fɪˈlæntərəpɪst] *n.* 慈善家
- ▲ **ambitious** [æmˈbɪʃəs] *a.* having a strong desire for success or achievement 雄心勃勃的
- epic** [ˈepɪk] *a.* very great and impressive 英雄的; 壮丽的
- end up** to become eventually 最终变成, 结果
- * **wither** [ˈwɪðə(r)] *v.* to lose vigor or freshness; to become wasted or decayed 枯萎; 萎缩; 消失
- turn out** to prove to be 结果是; 原来是
- ▲ **vain** [veɪn] *a.* too proud of one's own appearance, abilities or achievements 自负的; 自视过高的
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thousands of pages of psychology, philosophy and neuroscience research to understand what truly brings people satisfaction.

3 The most meaningful lives, I've learned, are often not the extraordinary ones. They're the ordinary ones lived with dignity.

4 There's perhaps no better expression of that wisdom than George Eliot's *Middlemarch*³, a book I think every college student should read. At 700-some pages, it requires devotion and discipline, which is kind of the point. Much like a meaningful life, the completion of this book is hard-won and requires effort. The heroine of the novel is Dorothea Brooke, a wealthy young gentlewoman in a provincial English town. Dorothea has a passionate nature and yearns to accomplish some good in the world as a philanthropist. The novel's hero, Tertius Lydgate, is an ambitious young doctor who hopes to make important scientific discoveries. Both hope to lead epic lives.

5 Both Dorothea and Tertius end up in disastrous marriages — she to the preacher Mr. Casaubon, he to the town beauty Rosamond. Slowly, their dreams wither away. Rosamond, who turns out to be vain and superficial, wants Tertius to pursue a career paying enough to support her

◆ **But thanks to social media, purpose and meaning have become merged with prestige: Extraordinary lives look like the norm on the Internet.**

Since social media is filled with extraordinary people and events, people tend to take them as normal lives, believing that a purposeful and meaningful life should be as glamorous as those on the Internet.

◆ **Yet the idea that a meaningful life must be or appear remarkable is not only limited but also misguided.**

Note: 此处 idea 之后 that 引导的是同位语从句。同位语从句属于名词性从句的范畴, 应和定语从句作区分, 主要体现在以下两点:

1. 同位语从句的先行词一般为抽象性名词, 如: idea, fact, news, belief, suggestion, reason 等。
2. 同位语从句是对先行词具体内容的进一步解释和说明。先行词和引导同位语从句的关联词不存在指代关系, 它们也不在从句中充当成分; 而引导定语从句的关系代词和关系副词在从句中充当句子成分, 而且与先行词存在指代关系。

e.g. I've heard the news that he will come back soon. (同位语从句)
He can't believe the news that he heard a moment ago. (定语从句)

He finally accepted the doctor's advice that he quit smoking immediately. (同位语从句)

He finally accepted the advice that the doctor gave him. (定语从句)

Paragraph 3

◆ **dignity: n.** the quality of being worthy of honor or respect 尊严

e.g. We cannot afford to lose dignity.

我们丢不起尊严。

Gender violence occurring within families is a matter of human dignity.

发生在家庭中的性别暴力事关人类尊严。

Paragraph 4

◆ **There's perhaps no better expression of that wisdom than George Eliot's *Middlemarch* ...**

Note: 在比较句型中使用否定词 no, nobody, nothing 表示最高级的意思。

e.g. I like nothing better than reading.

我最喜欢读书了。

Nobody knows you better than yourself.

你自己最了解自己。

◆ **devotion: n.** the action of spending a lot of time or energy on sth. 奉献; 专心; 热爱

e.g. My father tried to teach me the importance of hard work and devotion to a career.

我的父亲试图教给我努力工作和投身事业的重要性。

Sun Yat-sen's dedication and devotion to his country and people deserves being remembered.

孙中山先生对祖国和人民的奉献与热爱值得被铭记。

◆ **discipline: n.** the ability to control one's behavior or the way one lives, works, etc. 自制力; 遵守纪律

e.g. Discipline brings success.

自制力带来成功。

The military taught him self-discipline.

军队教会他自律。

◆ **kind of: somewhat; rather; almost** 有点; 相当

e.g. I feel kind of offended by his words.

他的话让我觉得有点反感。

◆ **hard-won: a.** acquired through effort or in spite of problems 来之不易的

e.g. I can lead a comfortable life with this hard-won money.

我可以这笔来之不易的钱过上舒适的生活。

She was not going to give up her hard-won freedom so easily.

她不会这么轻易地放弃得来不易的自由。

◆ **provincial: a.** of or like that of rural provinces; countrified 地方的; 乡下的

e.g. I have a set of French provincial style furniture from the 1970's that my grandmother handed down to me.

我有一套20世纪70年代的法国乡村风格家具, 是我祖母留给我的。

◆ **passionate: a.** having or showing strong feelings; full of passion 热情的; 热诚的

e.g. If you want to move up the company ladder you need to be passionate about your work.

你若想在公司升职就要对工作抱有热情。

The best ideas arise from passionate interest in commonplace things.

最好的想法来自对平凡事物的浓厚兴趣。

◆ **yearn: v.** to be filled with longing or desire 渴望; 向往

e.g. I believe all artists yearn for recognition.

我相信所有的艺术家都渴望被认可。

I yearn to become a scientist.

我渴望成为一名科学家。

◆ **philanthropist: n.** a person who seeks to promote the welfare of others esp. by the generous donation of money to good causes 慈善家

e.g. Why do entrepreneurs like Bill Gates become philanthropists?

为什么像比尔·盖茨这样的企业家们会成为慈善家?

◆ **ambitious: a.** having a strong desire for success or achievement 雄心勃勃的

e.g. She is politically ambitious.

她有政治野心。

Starbucks has an ambitious expansion plan in China.

星巴克在中国有一个雄心勃勃的扩张计划。

◆ **epic: a.** very great and impressive 英雄的; 壮丽的

e.g. epic deeds 英雄事迹

his successful return after his epic voyage

他在史诗般壮丽的航行后的胜利归来

Paragraph 5

◆ **end up: to** become eventually 最终变成, 结果

e.g. He ended up working at Walmart.

他最终在沃尔玛工作。

The murderer will end up with a bullet in his head.

这个谋杀犯最终会被枪毙。

◆ **wither: v.** to lose vigor or freshness; to become wasted or decayed 枯萎; 萎缩; 消失

e.g. The flowers withered due to heat.

花儿因受热而枯萎。

With new technologies, whole new categories of jobs are being created, while others wither away.

随着新技术的出现, 全新的工作岗位正在形成, 而另一些则在逐渐消失。

◆ **turn out: to** prove to be 结果是; 原来是

e.g. It may turn out that the overseas market is the company's very best sales opportunity.

可能会证明, 海外市场是该公司最好的销售机会。

This doesn't mean that none of these claims will turn out to be true.

这并不意味着这些说法都不会成真。

◆ **vain: a.** too proud of one's own appearance, abilities or achievements 自负的; 自视过高的

e.g. She is vain of her accomplishments, and wishes to show them off in public.

她对自己的成就颇为自负, 希望在公共场合炫耀。

Men are more vain than women.

男人比女人更自负。

◆ **superficial: a.** concerned with and understanding only the easily apparent and obvious; not profound; shallow 表面的; 肤浅的

▲ **yield** [ji:ld] *v.* to give up under pressure; to surrender 屈服; 放弃

■ **conventionally** [kən'venfənəli] *ad.* conforming to established practice or accepted standard; traditionally 符合习俗地; 传统地

follow through to continue and complete an action 坚持到底

■ **original** [ə'ri:dʒənəl] *a.* having to do with an origin; first; earliest 最初的

■ **tragedy** ['trædʒɪdi] *n.* a shocking or sad event; disaster 悲剧; 惨剧

▲ **reconcile** ['rekənsaɪl] *v.* to make sb. or oneself accept an unpleasant situation 将就; 妥协

▲ **dull** [dʌl] *a.* causing boredom; not interesting or exciting 枯燥无味的; 无聊的

■ **triumph** ['traɪəmf] *n.* the act or fact of being victorious; success 胜利

foundress ['faʊndrɪs] *n.* a female founder 女创始人

letdown ['letdaʊn] *n.* a disappointment or disillusionment 失望

beneficent [br'nefɪsənt] *a.* giving help or showing kindness 行善的; 仁慈的

■ **literature** ['lɪtərətʃə(r)] *n.* written material such as poetry, novels, essays, etc. 文学作品

▲ **humble** ['hʌmbəl] *a.* having a low rank or social position (级别或地位) 低下的, 卑微的

idealistic [aɪ.dɪə'lɪstɪk] *a.* 理想主义(者)的

▲ **significance** [sɪg'nɪfɪkəns] *n.* importance 重要性; 意义

extraordinary tastes, and by the end of the novel, he yields, abandoning his scientific quest to become a doctor to the rich. Though conventionally “successful”, he dies at 50 believing himself a failure for not following through on his original life plan.

6 As for Dorothea, after the Reverend Casaubon dies, she marries her true love, Will Ladislaw. But her larger ambitions go unrealized. At first it seems that she, too, has wasted her potential.

7 Tertius's tragedy is that he never reconciles himself to his dull reality. Dorothea's triumph is that she does.

8 By novel's end, she settles into life as a wife and a mother, and becomes, Eliot writes, the “foundress of nothing”. It may be a letdown for the reader, but not for Dorothea. She pours herself into her roles as mother and wife with “beneficent activity which she had not the doubtful pains of discovering and marking out for herself”.

9 Looking out of her window one day, she sees a family making its way down the road and comes to the realization that she needs to begin to live in the moment. Rather than give in to the despair of disappointed dreams, she embraces her life as it is and contributes to those around her as she can. Eliot's final words on Dorothea,⁴ which is one of the most beautiful passages in literature, capture what a meaningful life is about: connecting and contributing to something beyond the self, in whatever humble form that may take.

10 Most young adults won't achieve the idealistic goals they've set for themselves. They won't become the next Mark Zuckerberg. They won't have death notices that run in newspapers like this one. But that doesn't mean their lives will lack significance and worth. We all have a circle of people whose lives we can touch and improve, and we can find our meaning in that.