



普通高等教育“十一五”国家级规划教材
普通高等教育“十二五”规划教材



大学英语 快速阅读

2

(第三版)

College English
Fast Reading

总主编 李正栓



北京大学出版社
PEKING UNIVERSITY PRESS

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总主编 李正栓

College English Fast Reading

大学英语快速阅读 2

(第三版)

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前言

《大学英语快速阅读》(2)为北京大学出版社出版的“大学英语立体化网络化系列教材”之一。共精选短文24篇,内容涉及中西文化、语言、教育、生活、媒介、科技、人性、哲学等,按主题分为8个单元。本教材突出选文的科学性、可读性和趣味性,阅读内容丰富、有趣、时尚;所有选材均为原汁原味的佳作,语言地道,表达准确。

本教材旨在帮助读者扩大英语词汇量,提高阅读速度和阅读理解能力,广泛深入地了解有关历史、文化、风俗、人情以及自然科学和人文科学方面的知识。本教材着重培养学生英语快速阅读策略和技巧的运用,通过本教材系统、科学的强化训练,学员的英语快速阅读水平可在较短时间内得到大幅度提高。

本教材根据国家颁布的《大学英语教学大纲》关于大学英语四六级学生的快速阅读速度要求和《关于试点阶段的大学英语四级考试说明》设计单元练习,每个单元配有与学习内容相关的练习题。

本教程适合我国高校非英语专业大学一年级开设快速英语阅读课使用,也可作为四六级英语阅读强化班的培训教材,同时也适合参加托福、GRE、雅思、考研等各种英语考试的广大考生学习使用。

由于编者水平和时间所限,难免还有不足之处,敬请广大读者批评指正。

编者



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Unit 1

Passage 1 (Time Required: 6' 33")

The Importance of Being Bilingual

Vocabulary Tips

immigrant *n.* 移民

curriculum *n.* 课程

metropolitan *adj.* 大都会的

diversity *n.* 多样性

restrictionism *n.* 限制主义

census *n.* 人口普查

ethnic enclaves 少数民族聚居地

preserve *vt.* 保持; 保存

legislation *n.* 立法; 法律

divergent *adj.* 有分歧的

Starting Time

Finishing Time

Actually, though, America, the “land of immigrants”, has always had people of many different nationalities and languages. The 1990 census indicates that almost 14% of Americans speak a non-English language at home. Yet only 3% reported that they spoke English “not well” or “not at all”. That means that slightly more than one out of 10 Americans could be considered bilingual. Besides that, many high school and college students and even some elementary school students are required to take a foreign language as a part of their curriculum. In addition to old standbys like Spanish, German and French, more and more students are opting Eastern European and Asian languages. Of course, not all students keep up their foreign language abilities. As the old saying goes, “If you don’t use it, you’ll lose it.” But a growing number of Americans are coming to appreciate the benefits of being multilingual.

Ethnic enclaves, found particularly in major metropolitan centers, have preserved the language and culture of American immigrants. Some local residents can function quite well in their native language, without having to bother learning English. Regions such as southern Florida and the Southwest have numerous Spanish-speaking neighborhoods. In fact, Spanish speakers numbering over 17 million compose the largest non-English linguistic group in America. But Chinese, Vietnamese, Italian and many other ethnic groups add to the linguistic flavor of America. Foreign languages are so commonly used in some ethnic neighborhoods that visitors might think they are in another country!

Although some Americans welcome this linguistic and cultural diversity, others have

begun to fear that the English language is being threatened. Since the 1980s, the “English Only” movement has sought to promote legislation which would establish English as the “official language” and restrict the use of non-English language. However, some groups, including TESOL, the organization for Teachers of English to Speakers of Other language, object to such “language restrictionism”. Their view, known as “English Plus,” suggests that Americans should have respect for people’s native help them fit into the mainstream of society. But so far, 19 states have passed English Only legislation, and the topic is the focus of an ongoing debate.

Whether or not English is the official language of the United States, it remains the “language of wider communication”. Nearly everyone recognizes the need to develop proficiency in English in order to do well in America. To help those who want to brush up on their English skills, English as a Second Language (ESL) classes come around. Cities with large numbers of recent immigrants often set up bilingual education programs to teach students content subjects in their native language while they improve their English. Language educators often have strong and divergent views as to which approach helps learners achieve better results: a bilingual approach, an ESL approach or even a pure immersion approach. However, all these teachers share a common commitment: to help students function well in English.

Americans recognize that English is the international language, and people with good English skills can get by in many international settings. On the other hand, in a world growing increasingly smaller, second language skills can be a great favor. They can build cross-cultural bridges and give people an edge in a variety of career field. Indeed, lack of foreign language proficiency can limit one’s chances for advancement. As many people in America are discovering, being monolingual is no laughing matter.

(570 words)

Comprehension Exercises

For the first seven questions, choose the best answer from the four choices. For the last three questions, complete the sentences with the information given in the passage.

1. The word “bilingual” means _____.
 - A. being able to speak two languages
 - B. being able to speak three languages
 - C. being able to speak four languages
 - D. being able to speak five languages
2. The percentage of the Americans who can speak at least two languages is _____.
 - A. almost 14%
 - B. only 3 %
 - C. about 17%
 - D. more than 10%
3. Except for Spanish, German and French, more high school and college students and even some elementary school students are taking _____ as curriculum.
 - A. Eastern European and Asian languages
 - B. English as a second language
 - C. culture and history
 - D. literature and art
4. Foreign languages are commonly used in some ethnic neighborhoods because _____.
 - A. ethnic groups have preserved their native languages
 - B. ethnic groups are not allowed to speak English
 - C. ethnic groups encourage their natives to learn foreign languages
 - D. ethnic groups allow their natives to go to another country
5. The largest ethnic group that doesn't speak English in the USA is _____.
 - A. French
 - B. Spanish
 - C. German
 - D. Chinese

6. "English Only" movement was launched because _____.
A. English was being threatened.
B. some Americans worried about the confusion caused by diverse languages
C. English proficiency needed to be strengthened
D. English speakers cannot speak English well
7. TESOL is an organization with the objective of _____.
A. training more teachers to teach foreign language
B. making Americans aware that they should respect people's native
C. making ethnic groups follow the mainstream of the society
D. opposing English as the official language of the American society
8. All the language educators have a common goal of _____.
9. In this increasingly smaller world, second language skills can build _____.
10. Many people in America are discovering that _____ can limit one's chances for advancement.

Passage 2 (Time Required: 5' 54")**When in Rome Do as the Romans Do****Vocabulary Tips**hospitality *n.* 好客nicety *n.* 繁文缛节involve *vt.* 涉及

chitchat 闲谈, 聊天

in particular 尤其, 特别

housewarming *n.* 乔迁庆宴embarrass *vt.* 使尴尬obligate *vt.* 使负责任customary *adj.* 习惯上的snoop *vt.* 窥探legendary *adj.* 传奇的; 著名的

rule of thumb 经验; 法则

Starting Time _____ Finishing Time _____

An American friend has invited you to visit his family. You've never been to an American's home before, and you're not sure what to do. Should you take a gift? How should you dress? What time should you arrive? What should you do when you get there? Glad you asked. When you're the guest, you should just make yourself at home. That's what hospitality is all about: making people feel at home when they're not.

The question of whether or not to bring a gift often makes guests embarrass. Giving your host a gift is not just a social nicety in some cultures—it's expected. But in American culture, a guest is not obligated to bring a present. Of course, some people do bring a small token of appreciation to their host. Appropriate gifts for general occasions might be flowers, candy or—if the family has small children—toys. If you choose not to bring a gift, don't worry. No one will even notice.

American hospitality begins at home—especially when it involves food. Most Americans agree that good home cooking beats restaurant food any day. When invited for a meal, you might ask, "Can I bring anything?" The host will probably respond, "No, just yourself." For most informal dinners, you should wear comfortable, casual clothes. Plan to arrive on time, or else call to inform your hosts of the delay. During the dinner conversation, it's customary to compliment the hostess on the wonderful meal. Of course, the biggest compliment is to eat lots of food!

When you've had plenty, you might offer to clear the table or wash the dishes. But since you're the guest, your hosts may not let you. Instead, they may invite everyone to the living room for dessert with tea or coffee. After an hour or so of general chitchat, it's probably time to head for the door. You don't want to wear out your welcome. And above

all, don't go snooping around the house. It's more polite to wait for the host to offer you a guided tour. But except for housewarmings, guests often don't get past the living room.

Americans usually like to have advance notice when people come to see them. Only very close friends drop by unannounced. This is especially true if the guests want to stay for a few days. Here's a good rule of thumb for house guests: Short stays are best. As one 19th century French writer put it. "The first day a man is a guest, the second a burden, the third a pest." Even relatives don't usually stay for several weeks at a time. While you're staying with an American family, try to keep your living area neat and tidy. Your host family will appreciate your consideration. And they may even invite you back!

Most Americans consider themselves hospitable people. Folks in the southern United States, in particular, take pride in entertaining guests. In fact, "southern hospitality" has become legendary. But in all parts of America, people welcome their guests with open arms. So don't be surprised to find the welcome mat out for you. Just don't forget to wipe your feet.

(527 words)

Comprehension Exercises

For the first seven questions, choose the best answer from the four choices. For the last three questions, complete the sentences with the information given in the passage.

1. According to the first paragraph, the main point of hospitality is _____.
 - A. taking a gift
 - B. dressing well
 - C. being exactly on time
 - D. making people feeling at home
2. Bringing a gift when invited to an American home is _____.
 - A. a must
 - B. a choice
 - C. a custom
 - D. a ritual
3. Most Americans think _____.
 - A. it is better to invite a guest to a dinner in a restaurant than at home
 - B. good home cooking is better than eating outside
 - C. home cooking can not reflect the respect for the guests
 - D. restaurant food is delicious than food at home
4. The best way to show one's appreciation of a dinner is _____.
 - A. behaving properly
 - B. complimenting the food
 - C. eating a lot
 - D. asking for the recipe
5. It is customary for a guest to leave _____.
 - A. right after finishing the dinner
 - B. right after the dessert
 - C. after chitchatting for an hour or so
 - D. after helping the cleansing of the table and the washing of the dishes
6. According to American culture, a guest can get past the living room only _____.
 - A. after cleaning the table or washing the dish
 - B. after having dessert with tea or coffee

C. at a party to celebrate the moving-in to a new home

D. after an hour of general chitchat

7. It is recommended that when you want to go to an American home, you'd better _____.

A. give them a surprise by showing up suddenly

B. notify them in advance

C. bring a small gift

D. bring each of the family members gifts

8. When a guest wants to stay in an American family for several days, he or she had better _____.

9. When staying in an American home, one should keep the living area _____.

10. People _____ are proud of their hospitality in entertaining guests.

Passage 3 (Time Required: 15' 00")**Listen with Ears****Vocabulary Tips**morale *n.* 士气, 斗志caliber *n.* 口径poised *adj.* 泰然自若的, 镇定的scenario *n.* 情节; 局面eclectic *adj.* 折衷的; 选择的paradigm *n.* 范例mooring *n.* 下锚, 停泊处monologue *n.* 独白armament *n.* 武器; 军备grenade *n.* 手榴弹; 灭火弹winsome *adj.* 迷人的, 引人注目的facsimile *n.* 传真; 复写syncretistic *adj.* 混合论的, 调和论的monistic *adj.* 一元论的patronizing *adj.* 要人领情的thuggery *n.* 谋财害命, 暗杀

Starting Time _____ Finishing Time _____

"I challenge you to a debate!"

Sounds like someone has just pulled their verbal gun out, their finger is on the trigger, and they are ready to blow you away. Interested? This usually results in an armament check. We go and analyze our word inventory, our stockpile of arguments, and we analyze our morale and courage.

To ourselves we say, "Looks like he's got a 22 caliber single shot tongue, and several containers of verbal grenades. I've got a flame-throwing personality and a semi-automatic mouth."

"Yeah, come on let's fight...I mean debate."

In the English language we even use the metaphor of "putting holes" in another person's viewpoint. Truth is not served when the focus is how clever with words we can be, how self confident and poised we can be, how winsome we can be, or how intimidating we can be.

Do you know how much learning happens when debates are turned into verbal assaults? None. In fact, this kind of interchange hardens the heart and immobilizes the mind. Not all debates need to be like this.

The key difference? The ear.

Imagine having a debate with a person who is wearing large sound-proof covers over his ears. Perhaps you've seen the kind worn at firing ranges or in industry where there is a lot of noise. What if at a debate, someone showed up wearing those? This is the setting for

verbal warfare. This is often exactly what happens.

What's missing? The ear. Listening.

Have you ever had the experience of trying to get two people to listen to one another? I mean really listen to one another? Perhaps there is a husband and wife who are deep into an argument. They have been unable to resolve their conflict and they are beginning to show the signs of strain in their relationship. Perhaps you are a friend or a family member or a counselor who is trying to help them resolve their conflict. You will never get anywhere in resolving their conflict until you get them to listen. I mean really listen.

I will sometimes ask people in this scenario to repeat what the other person's viewpoint is. It can be fascinating to see how hard this is. Let's say the husband is asked to repeat the wife's viewpoint. He may say something like, "She is so stupid, and she thinks moving to Delhi will solve all our problems. They will only increase our problems, especially if we live near to her mother!"

I might respond, "Now I'm sure that is not your wife's viewpoint. I think you just stated your viewpoint. I am asking for you simply to repeat your wife's viewpoint. Can you do that?"

There will probably be a little grumbling at this point. He will usually try again.

"Well, she thinks moving to Delhi will solve all our problems!"

Now I know two things wrong with this statement. First of all, I know that she doesn't think moving to Delhi will solve all their problems. As well, the tone of his voice needs to be addressed, because he probably said it with a mocking or sneering tone of voice. And this certainly does not represent her point of view.

So I will ask him, "Let me see if you can simply state her point of view in such a way that she can agree that you have accurately said it."

He may try several more times, and I will ask her, "Is this your view?"

She will usually say, "Not quite," and explain.

Now be ready for a long session as you work on this. But if he is willing and somewhat sincere, eventually after some time he will be able to say a reasonable facsimile of what her viewpoint is with a warm tone of voice in such a way that she believes he has stated her true viewpoint.

A very interesting thing will start to happen at this point. Your work as a friend or a counselor will often be over. You may simply find yourself watching. This is because you have done the most important work of all for these circumstances—you have gotten them to listen to one another. The ear... Until this point they were simply mouths. Now they are much more human and have both a mouth and an ear.