

大学英语精典题解



College English Test

六级阅读

500 题

详解



主编 郑天义 彭秋兰
审订 黄又林



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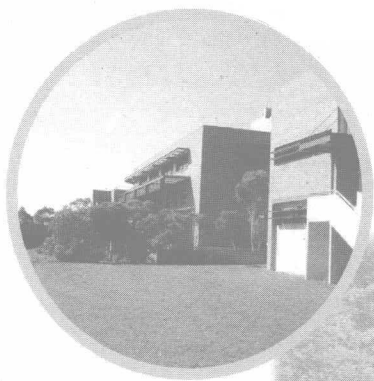
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大学英语六级考试中,阅读理解占 40% 的比重,是测试的重点。最新修订的《大学英语教学大纲》也指出“大学英语教学的目的是:培养学生具有较强的阅读能力和一定的听、说、写、译能力,使他们能用英语交流信息”。大纲中将阅读列为第一层次的要求,这是因为,目前尽管对听、说的要求相当强烈,但阅读能力仍是大部分大学生今后工作所需的主要技能,而且阅读也是提高听、说、写、译能力的基础。因此,阅读能力的考查一直是六级考试的重点。

本书根据最新《大学英语教学大纲》及《大学英语六级考试大纲》编写,目的在于帮助广大考生通过阅读强化训练达到百练一胜——迅速提高阅读能力,在六级统考中获得优良的成绩。

全书共计 25 个单元,每单元 4 篇短文,每篇配有 5 道阅读理解题,篇幅及难度按递增顺序排列,在选材难度及结构形式上力求与六级考试保持一致,以便于考生检测自己的阅读水平。

本书在选材上涵盖了六级考试中阅读理解的常考题材,即日常生活知识、科普常识、风

土人情、人物传记、社会文化教育,具体又可分为自然地理、妇女、能源与环保、教育、经济、文体、医学、人文、交通建筑、其他等十大类别,体裁涉及叙述文、说明文、议论文、应用文。本书内容新颖,注重选取最新的报章资料,比如“因特网上的隐私问题”,“英国高校里的种族矛盾”,“美国校园枪击”;并兼具一定的知识性及实用性,比如,“如何成为一名成功的 CEO”,“你为什么付小费”等等,可读性强。

在题型设计上,按六级考试题型进行设置,包括信息细节题、中心主旨题、词义辨析题、推断结论题,使考生通过练习达到《大纲》要求的阅读能力,即:能顺利阅读语言难度较高的一般性题材的文章,掌握中心大意以及说明中心大意的事实和细节,并能就文章的内容进行分析、推理、判断和综合概括,领会作者的观点和态度,阅读速度达到每分钟 70 词。在阅读篇幅较长、难度略低、生词不超过总词数 3% 的材料时,能正确理解中心大意,抓住主要事实和有关细节,阅读速度达到每分钟 120 词。考生可以把这些规定作为对自己能力检测的一个参考,进一步明确自己在阅读理解能力训练中存在的问题和努力的方向,完成必要的阅读量。只要在平时的练习中,能时时加以比较和调整,并自觉加强训练,那么在 35 分钟的规定时间内完成四篇短文 1600~2000 词的阅读量和 20 道题,应能从容不迫。

本丛书由郑天义教授主编,北京大学苏颖、张凤琴、陈菁,北京外国语大学张洪亮,清华大学彭秋兰,北京理工大学李冬梅、王淑美,中国人民大学周新生等编著。全书英文部分由美籍专家 Duncan Rayner 审读,在此表示感谢。

由于编者水平有限,书中的疏误在所难免,敬请读者不吝批评、指正。

编者

2003 年 8 月于清华园

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READING

UNIT 1

Passage 1

9:46 千鈞一髮
 Choosing a travel companion is at least as uncertain as choosing marriage partner. The chances of success are perhaps even less. The initial stages of both journeys are filled with enthusiasms, indulgences, and a fairly consistent closing of the eyes to that which may later become, if not unacceptable, at the very least unpalatable.

No law of casualty exists to insist that in choosing a travel companion you will lose a friend. But it's not unlikely. The odds depend on the length and the rigorousness of the trip. Some friendships have strength that will withstand even travel; others, based on happenstance, are by nature short-lived and travel merely hastens their dissolution.

Perhaps I should make it clear that in discussing this matter of travel companions I am confining myself to Platonic friendships. Intimate friends may well be the best companions of all, but entirely different rules of travel prevail. Compromises and concessions, demands and entreaties to and from such companions clearly stem from a recognized emotional base that colors every issue. I'll confine myself, then, to companions, male and female, who are sharing a trip solely for company.

Why bother at all with a travel companion? Why not travel alone, in single blessedness, unencumbered and swiftly pursuing

one's goal? Some of the answers are obvious: a congenial fellow traveler eases the stress and tensions, adds to the delights and rewards and pays half the bills. If the threat of loneliness is frightening, even a grumpy companion will foretell that, and quite often bring you to the point where you devoutly wish you were alone.

Finding that suitable companion is something of an art and something of a gamble. But the choice should be determined by one cardinal rule: both travelers should be going on the trip with the same idea in mind. They should hold in common a theory of travel.

1. According to the author, compared with choosing a marriage partner, choosing a travel companion is _____.

- A) just as difficult as it
- B) is possibly easier than it
- C) is perhaps less certain than it
- D) is perhaps less uncertain than it

2. Travel will give us a chance to _____.

- A) become strong and vigorous
- B) testify our friendship
- C) see who is our enemy
- D) lose a friend

3. The travel companion the author refers to is _____.

- A) anybody you meet
- B) a spiritual friend
- C) an intimate friend
- D) anybody who shares a trip simply for partnership

4. The author thinks that _____.

- A) unlike intimate friends, travel companion needn't make many compromises and concessions
- B) travel companions will add to the delights and pays half the



bills

- C) it is possible to foretell whether two people will get along on the trip
- D) the advantages of choosing a travel companion are at least as great as those of traveling alone

5. We can infer from the passage that _____.

- A) a friend in need is a friend indeed
- B) opposite types of people attract each other
- C) like-minded people should make good travel companions
- D) even intimate friends have arguments

Passage 2

Spelunking has been called “mountain climbing upside down in the dark.” However, this description is not entirely accurate. The mountain climber knows where he is going. He climbs a mountain because it is there. A spelunker, on the other hand, doesn't know what is there. All he sees when he enters a wild cave is a hole in the surface of the earth — a very dark hole. Once he gets inside he may find it runs only a few hundred feet or, like one cave in Switzerland, more than 35 miles. He may find big hall, subway like tunnels, rivers or strange and beautiful limestone formations.

Some spelunkers have become famous, or their discoveries. Several years ago Norbert Castreet, a Frenchman, was exploring a cave that had a rapidly flowing underground river. He followed the river until it went under a cave wall and disappeared. Wearing a bathing suit and a rubber cap, he dived into the river. He surfaced on the other side of the cave wall and found in a huge hall untouched and undisturbed for tens of thousands of years.

My wife and I became spelunkers almost by accident. We were



driving down the Pan-American Highway to Mexico City when I noticed several black openings up in the mountains near the road. I stopped and asked what they were, and learned that they were a network of large caves. Following a guide, we were climbing slowly up the mountain. When we reached the top, a large opening appeared under an overhanging cliff. Inside was a smaller hole covered by a wooden door. Taking a gasoline lamp in one hand, the guide opened the door. We followed him down the smooth cement steps. Strange shapes moved on the walls as his lamp swung back and forth at each step.

This was a limestone cave, formed hundreds of thousands of years ago by the slow dripping of water through the cracks of the rock. The guide pointed out formations that looked like horses, tigers, hands and plants.

When we left the cave about an hour later, we saw a sign mentioning the National Speleological Society. Our interest awakened, we noted the address and wrote for further information, the reply informed that there were "Grottoes" local chapters of the society, all over the United States. We joined one that was near our home. Soon we were making out first trip through a wild, unmapped cave. That was 12 years ago. Since then I have explored caves in Europe, Central and South America, and all over the United States.

1. According to the passage, the difference between spelunking and mountain climbing lies in the fact that _____.

- ☒ A) people do not know where to go in the former case and where to go in the latter case
- B) people go downward in the former case and go upward in the latter case
- C) it is more dangerous to do spelunking than mountain climbing

D) spelunking is more exciting than mountain climbing

2. Which of the following statements is true?

A) Norbert Castreet was famous for its discoveries of new caves.

B) The cave Norbert Castreet explored is famous for its underwater river.

✓ C) Norbert Castreet discovered a very old huge hall that was situated on the other side of the wall of the cave.

D) The old hall Norbert Castreet discovered has been used as a hidden place of some pirates.

3. The author and his wife _____.

A) had planned carefully before they started their first spelunking

B) were convinced by their friends that spelunking was a good sport

C) spent more time looking for a suitable cave to start their first exploration

D) explored their first cave rather unexpectedly

C 4. The author and his wife explored their first cave _____.

A) for several hours

B) independently

C) just for a short time

D) with a guide and a guard

B 5. How did the author and his wife join the society of spelunking?

A) Recommended by their friends.

B) Intrigued by an advertisement.

C) Encouraged by an article in the newspaper.

✓ D) Attracted by a local chapter of the society.

Passage 3

Extraordinary creative activity has been characterized as revolutionary, flying in the face of what is established and producing not what is acceptable but what will become accepted. According to this formulation, highly creative activity transcends the limits of an



existing form and establishes a new principle of organization. However, the idea that extraordinary creativity transcends established limits is misleading when it is applied to the arts, even though it may be valid for the sciences. Differences between highly creative art and highly creative science arise in part from a difference in their goals. For the sciences, a new theory is the goal and end result of the creative act. Innovative science produces new propositions in terms of which diverse phenomena can be related to one another in more coherent ways. Such phenomena as a brilliant diamond or a nesting bird are relegated to the role of data, serving as the means for formulating or testing a new theory. The goal of highly creative art is very different: the phenomenon itself becomes the direct product of the creative act. Shakespeare's *Hamlet* is not a tract about the behavior of indecisive princes or the uses of political power; nor is Picasso's painting *Guernica* primarily a propositional statement about the Spanish Civil War or the evils of fascism. What highly creative artistic activity produces is not a new generalization that transcends established limits, but rather an aesthetic particular. Aesthetic particulars produced by the highly creative artist extend or exploit, in an innovative way, the limits of an existing form, rather than transcend that form.

This is not to deny that a highly creative artist sometimes establishes a new principle of organization in the history of an artistic field; the composer Monteverdi, who created music of the highest aesthetic value, comes to mind. More generally, however, whether or not a composition establishes a new principle in the history of music has little bearing on its aesthetic worth. Because they embody a new principle of organization, some musical works, such as the operas of the *Florentine Camerata*, are of signal historical importance, but few listeners or musicologists would include these



among the great works of music. On the other hand, Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro* is surly among the masterpieces of music even though its modest innovations are confined to extending existing means. It has been said of Beethoven that he toppled the rules and freed music from the stifling confines of convention. But a close study of his compositions reveals that Beethoven overturned no fundamental rules. Rather, he was an incomparable strategist who exploited limits — the rules, forms, and conventions that he inherited from predecessors such as Haydon and Mozart, Handel and Bach — in strikingly original ways.

1. The author considers a new theory that coherently relates diverse phenomena to one another to be the _____.

- A) basis for reaffirming a well-established scientific formulation
- B) byproduct of an aesthetic experience
- C) tool used by a scientist to discover a new particular
- D) result of highly creative scientific activity

2. The author implies that Beethoven's music was strikingly original because Beethoven _____.

- A) strove to outdo his predecessors by becoming the first composer to exploit limits
- B) fundamentally changed the musical forms of his predecessors by adopting a richly inventive strategy
- C) embellished and interwove the melodies of several of the great composers who preceded him
- D) manipulated the established conventions of musical composition in a highly innovative fashion

3. The passage states that the operas of the Florentine Camerata are _____.

- A) unjustifiably ignored by musicologists



- B) not generally considered to be of high aesthetic value even though they are important in the history of music
- C) among those works in which popular historical themes were portrayed in a musical production
- D) often inappropriately cited as examples of musical works in which a new principle of organization was introduced
4. The author implies that an innovative scientific contribution is one that _____.
- A) is cited with high frequency in the publications of other scientists
- B) is accepted immediately by the scientific community
- C) does not relegate particulars to the role of data
- ☒ D) introduces a new valid generalization
5. Which of the following statements would most logically conclude the last paragraph of the passage?
- A) Unlike Beethoven, however, even the greatest of modern composers, such as Stravinsky, did not transcend existing musical forms.
- ☒ B) In similar fashion, existing musical forms were even further exploited by the next generation of great European composers.
- C) Thus, many of the great composers displayed the same combination of talents exhibited by Monteverdi.
- D) By contrast, the view that creativity in the arts exploits but does not transcend limits is supported in the field of literature.

Passage 4

You stare at waterfall for a minute or two, then shift your gaze to its surroundings. What you now see appears to drift upward. You are aboard a train in a busy station when suddenly another train next to



your starts moving forward. For a fraction of a second you feel that your train has lurched backward.

These optical illusions occur because the brain is constantly matching its model of reality to signals from the body's sensors and interpreting what must be happening — that your train must have moved, not the other; that downward motions is now normal, so a change from it must now be perceived as upward motion.

The sensors that make this magic are of two kinds. Each eye contains about 120 million rods which provide somewhat blurry black and white vision. These are the windows of night vision; once adapted to the dark, they can detect a candle burning ten miles away.

Color vision in each eye comes from six to seven million structures called cones. Under ideal conditions, every cone can "see" the entire rainbow spectrum of visible colors, but one type of cone is most sensitive to red, another to green, a third to blue. By monitoring how any wavelength of light affects the different cones, a connected ganglion cell can determine its "color" and relay those data brainward.

✓ Rods and cones send their messages pulsing an average 20 to 25 times per second along the optic nerve. We see an image for a fraction of a second longer than it actually appears. In movies, reels of still photographs are projected onto screens at 24 frames per second, tricking our eyes into seeing a continuous moving picture.

Like apparent motion, color vision is also subject to unusual effects. When day gives way to night, twilight brings what the poet T. S. Eliot called "the violet hour." As light levels fall, the rods become active, and the cones become progressively less responsive. Rods are most sensitive to the shorter wave-lengths of blue and green,

and they impart a strange vividness to the garden's blue flowers.

However, look at a white shirt during the reddish light of sunset, and you'll still see it in its "true" color — white, not red. Our eyes are constantly comparing an object against its surroundings. They therefore observe the effect of a shift in the color of illumination on both, and adjust accordingly.

The eyes can distinguish several million graduations of light and shades of color. Each waking second they flash tens of millions of pieces of information to the brain, which weaves them incessantly into a picture of the world around us.

Yet all this is done at the back of each eye by a fabric of sensors, called the retina, about as wide and as thick as a postage stamp. As the Renaissance inventor and artist Leonardo da Vinci wrote in wonder, "Who would believe that so small a space could contain the images of all the universe?" And only now, 500 years later, are we beginning to learn how the eyes do it.

1. Visual illusions often happen when the image of reality is

- A) matched to six to seven million structures called cones
- B) ~~confused~~ in the body's sensors of both rods and cones
- C) ☒ interpreted in the brain as what must be the case
- D) signaled by about 120 million rods in the eye

2. At night rods can be so active as to be able to see clearly

- A) red
- B) white
- C) violet
- D) ☒ blue

3. The retina sends pulses to the brain

- A) is short wavelengths
- B) ☒ as color pictures
- C) by a ganglion cell
- D) along the optic nerve

4. Twenty-four still photographs are made into a continuous moving