

新东方学校·大学英语丛书

当代

优秀英语时文快速阅读

■ 胡敏 Paul White 左岩 编著

第一册

世界知识出版社



必修一数学必修一

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前 言

阅读是语言学习十分重要的一环。只要看一看大学英语四六级、研究生入学考试英语考试、托福、GRE、GMAT等国内外英语考试中阅读所占的比例,其重要性就不言而喻。如何提高阅读能力、突破阅读难关是许多英语学习者努力攻克的难题,本书正是针对这一难题而编写的。

本书所选的最新英语时文,内容涵盖国际时事、经济文化、社会生活、科学技术、文学艺术、风云人物等各个方面。

本书有如下几个特点:

1. 选材针对性强、信息量大,所选文章不但题材广泛、体裁多样,而且内容新颖、语言优美,有利于读者扩大词汇量,适合不同层次的读者使用。
2. 文章长度适中,适合于定时操作和制定阅读计划,也适合于精读与背诵。
3. 词汇注释准确、详细,为读者阅读时扫清语言障碍提供了最直接、最有效的帮助。
4. 所配练习难度适中、科学性强,对提高阅读理解能力和写作水平有很大的帮助作用。为帮助读者全面检查自己的学习水平和训练效果,书后还提供了参考答案。

参加本书编写的有:著名英语教学专家、新东方资深教师胡敏先生,资深英国专家 Paul White 和北京大学英语系左岩博士。

在本书编写中,得到北京新东方学校校长俞敏洪老师的关心和指导,在此谨表感谢。

编 者

1999 年 7 月于北京

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Unit One

The Age of "Globality"

It was a stunning deal. Even more stunning, says Pulitzer Prize-winning author, is what DaimlerChrysler tells us about the world.

By *Daniel Yergin*

Starting Time: Minutes _____ Seconds _____

Big is in, and "very big" is very in. Barely a week goes by without another large and often astonishing merger. There is hardly time to recover from Citibank and Travelers, with its frontal challenge to New Deal banking rules, before Daimler-Benz and Chrysler take to the road, shaking the automotive and financial world. In between, a couple of huge banks get together, and Germany's dominant publisher sweeps in to acquire perhaps the most famous name in American books. What seemed to be the megamergers of yesteryear begin to look more like minis.

The scale and audacity of these combinations are impressive, of course. But they also make people vaguely uneasy. Are these combinations becoming too powerful, too dominant—simply too big? The cross-border mergers provoke a deeper anxiety: will the tidal wave of transactions wash away national character? The question is particularly pointed for "Daimler Chrysler." After all, Chrysler was enough of a national champion to be bailed out by the federal government in 1978; and somehow it seemed altogether fitting that rescuer-in-chief Lee Iacocca would also take on the project of refurbishing another national icon, the Statue of Liberty. For its part, Daimler-Benz is the very epitome of German engineering prowess and its Mercedes cars the embodiment of prestige on wheels.

The \$38 billion proposed combination underlines a momentous fact: the world is entering a new type of capitalism. Karl Otto-Pohl, the former head of the German Bundesbank, calls it "the era of very big companies." And those very big companies, in turn, reflect the fact that the world economy is undergoing fundamental change.

For several years now, "globalization" has been the mantra for the expansion of international trade and foreign investment and the integration of markets. But we are now beginning to see a reality beyond globalization—the world of "globality." This is not so much a process as a condition, a world economy in which traditional and familiar boundaries are being surmounted or made irrelevant. Companies and investors operate in a 24-hour world. Currency traders see the same information at the same time, and can act on it simultaneous-

ly, whether they are in Singapore, London or New York (assuming only that they are all awake at the same time). Billions of dollars move at the push of a button. Global branding is the great game. Work is networked among North America, Europe and Asia via computer. And even the very idea of a corporate headquarters is beginning to become a metaphysical concept; increasingly, the corridors in which managers run into each other are not physical but electronic.

The forces creating this new globality are the very imperatives that are driving the mergers. One is the demand by money managers—themselves competing to retain and attract assets—for quarterly performance and earnings growth that will propel stock prices upward. It is they, ultimately, who are calling the tune these days. Outside the United States and Britain, this has become known as the “Anglo-Saxon model of shareholder value.”

Daimler’s path to the altar began five years ago, when it made the crucial decision to put itself under the sway of the “Anglo-Saxons” by listing itself on the New York Stock Exchange. To do so, it began to use U. S. accounting standards that revealed that, contrary to its German accountants, it wasn’t doing very well at the time. Since then, Daimler has remade itself from a clumsy conglomerate into a firm focused solely on the automotive industry. Its further quest for shareholder value has now led it to Chrysler. And the much higher stock price with which it has been rewarded for its conversion to the Anglo-Saxon faith provides the currency it is using to pay for the deal.

The second driver is in the marketplace itself. The borders that constrained commerce—but also protected companies from the full brunt of competition—are eroding. Governments are retreating from control of the commanding heights of their economies: they are privatizing and deregulating. Barriers to trade and investment are coming down rapidly. Ever-cheaper communications and ever-faster computers, along with the Internet, are facilitating the flow of goods and services, as well as knowledge and information. Increasingly, companies are integrating their global strategies with global capital markets.

All this greatly widens opportunities. It also greatly intensifies competition. This—along with the demands of investors—means that pressures for performance will become ever more relentless. The result is the propensity to merge—in order to improve corporate performance, protect and enhance the company’s competitive position, build and protect broadly based brands and gain all the advantages of scale in wider markets.

For Daimler-Benz and Chrysler, the merger is about assembling the right parts to win in the global automotive market. This is a merger driven by industrial logic and growth strategy, rather than by the cost-cutting that often underpins mergers. Chrysler is basically a North American company, strong in lower-priced cars, very strong in sport utility vehicles, but weak internationally. Daimler’s Mercedes makes it pre-eminent in the upper part of the automotive market—but not in the United States. On its own, Chrysler has little hope of building its non-U. S. franchise, while Daimler suffers from being a minor player in the innovative—and huge—U. S. market. Neither is strong in Asia. Together, they become a

full-range auto company, capable of competing in almost every arena, equipped to deploy huge cash flow and technology around the world.

The way the deal is being done is also noteworthy, underlining how the world's capital markets are being integrated. Chrysler shareholders are not going to receive cash; they are going to end up with shares in the German company. Five years ago, such a financial structure would have been, at best, most improbable and almost certainly unacceptable to investors.

Putting a deal like this together is nevertheless an immense undertaking. Getting it closed is more than challenging. But the hardest part will be making it work. At the outset of mergers, the tendency is to downplay the differences in style, corporate values and national character. But history indicates that those differences often turn out to be more problematic than initially anticipated. Even with the best of intentions—and the most attractive incentives—friction, at the very least, is inevitable, and managing such friction is a major task.

One of the problems of the new globality is that it encourages scale and yet at the same time requires greater emphasis on managerial creativity, entrepreneurial values and initiatives and responsiveness to the market. Surely one of the most important challenges for the new company will be to avoid squelching those characteristics in the course of integrating the two operations. The point is to become more flexible, fast-moving and adaptive, not less.

A huge risk in this new era of megamergers is to be blindsided in the quest for global scale. Yes, the competitive playing field is much wider than ever before. But that does not mean that national values, tastes and character have disappeared—whether within companies themselves or among their customers. A company, big or small, that misses that reality is quite likely to produce less value.

Yergin is coauthor with Joseph Stanislaw of "The Commanding Heights: The Battle Between Government and Marketplace That Is Remaking the Modern World" (Simon & Schuster, 1998). He is president of Cambridge Energy Research Associates.

Finishing Time: Minutes _____ Seconds _____

Words & Expressions

globality [gləʊ'bæli] *n.* 全球性

stunning ['stʌniŋ] *a.* 令人震惊的, 令人目瞪口呆的

deal [di:l] *n.* 交易

in [in] *a.* 时髦的, 流行的

go by (时间)过去, 逝去

merger ['mɜ:dʒə] *n.* (公司、企业等的)合并

Citibank 花旗银行

Travelers 旅行家银行

frontal ['frʌntl] *a.* 正面的, 迎面而上的

take to the road 上路, 出发, 启动

in between 在...之间, 介于两者之间

sweep in 横扫而入

megamerger ['megə'mæ:dʒə] *n.* 巨合并, 特大合并

yesteryear ['jestə'jə:] *n.* 去年

mini ['mini] *n.* 迷你物, 小型物

audacity [ɔ'dæsiti] *n.* 胆量, 胆识

vaguely ['veigli] *ad.* 模糊地, 含糊其词地

uneasy [ʌ'nizi] *a.* 不安的, 忧虑的; 不舒服的

transaction [træn'zækʃən] *n.* 交易

cross-border [krɒs'bo:də] *a.* 跨越边界的

pointed ['pointid] *a.* 有针对性的, 有的放矢的

provoke [prə'vəuk] *v.* 激起, 引起

tidal wave 浪潮(指势不可当之物或趋势)

wash away 冲走, 冲掉

enough of... 足以(作为)

bail out 使摆脱困境, 保释, 救助

altogether [ɔ:ltə'geðə] *ad.* 完全, 全然

fitting ['fitɪŋ] *a.* 合适的, 恰当的

rescuer-in-chief ['reskjue-in-tʃif] 主要拯救者

take on 开始做, 开始处理, 承担

refurbish [ˌrɪ:fə:bɪʃ] *v.* 刷新, 重新磨光

icon ['aɪkɒn] *n.* 偶像; 圣像

the Statue of Liberty (美国)自由女神像

for one's part 在...一方面; 对...而言

epitome [i'pitəmi] *n.* 缩影, 象征

prowess ['prəʊɪs] *n.* 杰出的才能, 突出的成就

Mercedes [mə'seɪdɪz] *n.* 梅塞德斯牌汽车(一种德国产汽车)

embodiment [ɪm'bɒdɪmənt] *n.* 具体化, 化身

prestige [presti:ʒ] *n.* 名望, 声望, 威望

underline [ˌʌndə'leɪn] *v.* 强调, 表明...的重要性; 在...的下面划线

momentous [məʊ'məntəs] *a.* 重大的, 重要的

Bundesbank 德国中央银行

in turn 反过来; 轮流, 依次

undergo [ˌʌndə'geʊ] *v.* 经历, 遭受, 忍受

globalization [ˌgləʊbəlaɪ'zeɪʃən] *n.* 全球化

mantra ['mæntərə] *n.* 祷文, 符咒, (印度教和大乘佛教中的)曼陀罗

integration [ˌɪntɪˈɡreɪʃən] *n.* 整合,融为一体
 irrelevant [ɪˈrelɪvənt] *a.* 不相关的,离题的
 currency [ˈkʌrənsɪ] *n.* 货币,流行,流传
 act on 采取行动
 simultaneously [ˌsɪməltəɪnjəsli] *ad.* 同时地
 not so much...as... 与其说是...倒不如说是...
 surmount [səˈmaʊnt] *v.* 战胜,超越,克服
 at the push of a button 只需按一下按钮
 brand [brænd] *v.* 加商标于
 game [geɪm] *n.* 策略,计谋
 network [ˈnetwɜ:k] *v.* 以网络连接,网络化
 via [ˈvaɪə] 经由,经过,借助
 corporate [ˈkɔ:pəɪt] *a.* 团体的,公司的
 metaphysical [ˌmetəˈfɪzɪkəl] *a.* 形而上学的,抽象的
 run into 撞见,碰见
 imperative [ɪmˈperətɪv] *n.* 需要,必要性
 drive [draɪv] *v.* 驱动,促使
 asset [æset] *n.* 资产
 quarterly [ˈkwɔ:təli] *a.* 每季度的
 propel [prəˈpel] *v.* 推动,驱使
 stock price 股值,股票价格
 ultimately [ˈʌltɪmɪtli] *ad.* 最终地
 call the tune 定调子,发号施令,决定一切
 Anglo-Saxon [ˈæŋɡləʊˈsæksən] *a./n.* 以英语为母语的(人,国家),盎格鲁—萨克逊人(的)
 shareholder [ˈʃeəˌhəʊldə] *n.* 股东,股票持有人
 altar [ˈɔ:ltə] *n.* 祭坛,圣坛
 crucial [ˈkru:ʃəl] *a.* 决定性的,重要的
 put...under the sway of... 将...置于...控制之下
 accounting [əˈkaʊntɪŋ] *n.* 会计制度,结账,结算
 reveal [rɪˈvi:l] *v.* 显示,揭示
 contrary to 与...相反
 clumsy [ˈklʌmzi] *a.* 笨拙的,行动不便的
 conglomerate [kənˈɡlɒməɪt] *n.* 联合大企业,聚集物,混合体
 quest [kwest] *n.* 追求,寻求
 lead to 导致,引向
 stock [stɒk] *n.* 资本,股本,股份,股票
 conversion [kənˈvɜ:ʃən] *n.* 转变,转换;(宗教信仰的)皈依
 driver [ˈdraɪvə] *n.* 动力,【电子】激励器
 constrain [kənˈstreɪn] *v.* 限制,约束

brunt [brʌnt] *n.* 主要冲力(或压力等), 冲击, 撞击
erode [ɪˈrəʊd] *v.* 腐蚀, 侵蚀, 削弱
retreat from... 由...撤退
commanding height 制高点
privatize [ˈpraɪvətaɪz] *v.* 私有化
deregulate [dɪˈregjuleɪt] *v.* 撤销对...的管制规定, 解除对...的控制
barrier [ˈbæriə] *n.* 阻碍, 障碍
come down 失势, 崩溃
ever-cheaper [ˈevətʃi:pə] *a.* 日趋廉价的
facilitate [fəˈsɪlɪteɪt] *v.* 使促进, 使顺利, 使容易
strategy [ˈstrætɪdʒi] *n.* 战略, 策略, 计谋
intensify [ɪntensɪfaɪ] *v.* 强化, 增强, 加强
relentless [rɪˈlentlɪs] *a.* 残酷的, 无情的
propensity [prəˈpensɪti] *n.* 倾向, 趋势
enhance [ɪnˈhɑːns] *v.* 提高, 增加
assemble [əˈsemble] *v.* 组装, 集合, 装配
cost-cutting [ˈkɒstˈkʌtɪŋ] *n.* 降低费用
underpin [ˌʌndəˈpɪn] *v.* 支持, 支撑, 加固基础
utility vehicle 多用途车辆, 轻型箱式越野车辆, 轻型高通过性车辆
pre-eminent [priːˈemɪnənt] *a.* 显赫的, 杰出的, 有名的
on one's own 独自地, 独立地, 靠自己的力量
franchise [ˈfræntʃaɪz] *n.* (公司或制造商给予的在某一地区经营业务的) 特许经销权, 特许经销区
innovative [ɪˈnəʊvətɪv] *a.* 富有革新精神的, 革新的, 创新的
full-range [fʊlˈreɪndʒ] *a.* 范围宽广的, 全面的
arena [əˈriːnə] *n.* 竞争场所, 活动场所
deploy [dɪˈplɔɪ] *v.* 调动, 利用, 部署
noteworthy [ˈnəʊtɪwəði] *a.* 值得注意的, 显著的
end up with... 以...结束, 以...告终
at best 最好情形下
put together 组合, 汇总, 装配, 拼合
undertaking [ˌʌndəˈteɪkɪŋ] *n.* 任务, 事业, 企业
more than 非常, 极其
at the outset of... 在...起初
downplay [ˈdaʊnpleɪ] *v.* 对...轻描淡写, 贬低, 轻估
turn out 结果是, 最后成为
initially [ɪˈnɪʃəli] *ad.* 起初地, 最初地
incentive [ɪnˈsentɪv] *n.* 动力, 激励
friction [ˈfrɪkʃən] *n.* 摩擦, 不和

at the very least 最起码

managerial [ˌmænədʒiəriəl] *a.* 管理方面的, 经营上的

entrepreneurial [ˌɒntreɪprənəriəl] *a.* 企业的, 事业的

initiative [ɪˈnɪʃiətiɪv] *n.* 主动的行动, 倡议, 首创精神, 主动权

responsiveness [rɪˈspɒnsɪvnis] *n.* 反应能力

squelch [ˈskweltʃ] *v.* 消除, 压碎, 镇压; 使不再作声

flexible [ˈfleksəbl] *a.* 有弹性的, 灵活的, 易变的

in the course of 在...过程中

blindside [ˈblaɪndsaɪd] *v.* 出其不意地打击; 盲视, (对问题或潜在的危險等) 视而不见

in the quest of 在追求...的过程中, 为追求...

playing field 赛场, 竞技场

Comprehension

1. The main theme of this passage is:
 - A. International business mergers have entered a new era.
 - B. The Daimler-Chrysler merger is the biggest in history.
 - C. Transnational companies are more efficient than domestic companies.
 - D. The amalgamation of motor car companies is an inevitable trend.
2. What does the author mean by "Big is in"?
 - A. Large things are more important than small ones.
 - B. Motor cars are getting bigger and bigger.
 - C. It is fashionable to form large business companies.
 - D. Small things are always on the outside.
3. International business mergers "make people vaguely uneasy" because:
 - A. they will lead to price increases.
 - B. the world is entering a new type of capitalism.
 - C. the world economy is undergoing fundamental change.
 - D. they may do away with national characteristics.
4. What metaphor does the author use to describe the merger trend?
 - A. The Statue of Liberty.
 - B. A tidal wave.
 - C. Prestige on wheels.
 - D. The great game.
5. Which of the following best describes why the word "globalization" is called a "mantra"?
 - A. It is vague but it sounds impressive.
 - B. It was coined by Lee Iacocca.

- C. It is a Buddhist term.
D. Mantra is easier to pronounce than globalization.
6. "Calling the tune" means:
A. Going into the music business. B. Putting cassette players in motor cars.
C. Exercising control. D. Boosting stock prices.
7. "Daimler's path to the altar" compares the company's merger process to:
A. A religious conversion. B. Wedding preparations.
C. Visiting a church. D. Anglo-Saxon architecture.
8. Why is "assembling the right parts" an apt description of the Daimler-Chrysler merger?
A. Because the merger was driven by industrial logic and growth strategy.
B. Because they have achieved advantages of scale.
C. Because the move was the correct corporate strategy.
D. Because it reminds us that they are automobile companies.
9. What is noteworthy about the way the deal is being done?
A. Government officials are handling the negotiations.
B. The merger is no longer unacceptable to investors.
C. Chrysler shareholders will receive shares, not cash.
D. The world's capital markets are being integrated.
10. What does "blindsided" mean?
A. Taken by surprise by a competitor's winning move.
B. Blindly pursuing business goals.
C. Narrowing the competitive playing field.
D. Ignoring national values, tastes and character.

Writing

Summarize the passage in about 100 words.