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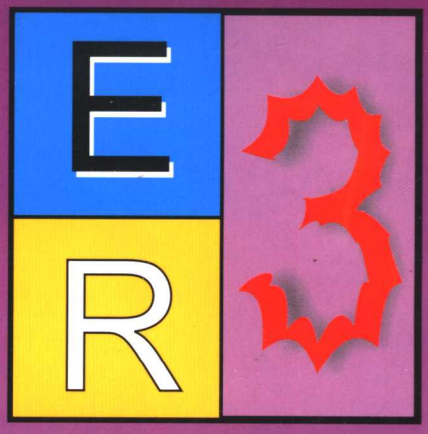

大学英语阶梯阅读训练

College English Reading Comprehension

主编　侯宝琴

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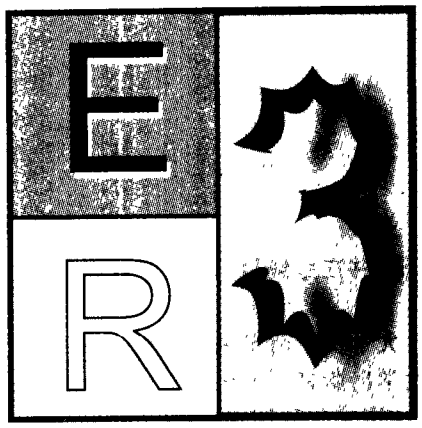

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前　言

为了帮助学生更多地掌握一些英语阅读的素材，我们根据教育部最新修订的《大学英语教学大纲》，编写了这套英语泛读教材。

本套书共分4册，每册收录35～45篇文章。全套书配合英语分级考试以及大学英语四、六级的新题型，每课包括课文、生词和短语、课文注释及阅读理解、难句翻译、简短回答问题等内容。每册书为一级，共四级，适用于具有5000单词量以上的学生使用。

该书的特点是：

1. 内容新颖，题材多样。富有现代生活气息，介绍英美国家的风景名胜、社会现状、传奇故事、寓言故事、体育赛事、科技知识、名人轶事、文化教育、时事报道等内容。希望学生在学习语言的同时获得新信息和西方文化背景知识。

2. 幽默趣味，可读性强。选材注重内容生动活泼，能提高阅读的轻松感，降低学习压力。

3. 语言地道，原汁原味。文章皆选自近几年来有较大影响的国外期刊、书报，语言的规范性强，又体现了现代英语的新发展。

4. 循序渐进，难度适宜。同级各课的难度大体相当，学生可以通读全书，亦可选读部分课文。每册书的难易程度与英语分级考试相关性强。练习答案附在课后，以便读者自测阅读效率。

目前，全国尚缺少能全面地配合分级考试的泛读教材。为落实教学大纲的新精神，对外经济贸易大学一线英语教师编写了这套教材，并充分考虑到对于自学者的适用性。

由于编者水平有限，至于书中存在的缺点和错误，还希望广大读者予以批评、指正。

编　者

2001年7月于北京

CONTENTS

Unit 1

Cosmic Radiation[1] and Van Allen Belts

Warm-up:

1. *Space travels are exciting. But do people think about the danger in space — cosmic radiation?*
2. *Have you ever heard any thing about Van Allan belts?*

What is cosmic radiation? This question has fascinated and puzzled scientists for more than half a century. In order to find out more about the strange rays, pioneer researchers sent up balloons equipped with instruments such as Geiger counters[2]. (1) They found that when the balloons ascended[3] to higher altitudes, the clicking rates of the Geiger counters increased. This indicated that there were more cosmic rays at higher altitudes.

Many scientists began to study cosmic radiation. One of them was James A. Van Allen of the University of Iowa, a top-level adviser to the National Aeronautics and Space Administration. During World War II, Van Allen had done a great deal of work with miniature[4] instruments. After the war he turned his attention to rockets and high-altitude research. He worked on tiny instruments that could be packed into a satellite, and waited impatiently for the first U. S. satellite to be launched.

When *Explorer* I was launched into orbit on January 31, 1958, a Van Allen instrument package was aboard. Inside the eighteen-pound payload[5], Van Allen had placed a Geiger counter tube about the size of a small cigar. Whenever a cosmic ray passed through the Geiger tube, it was recorded and translated into a radio signal. Below the orbiting satellite, a worldwide network of stations picked up the radio signals.

The first reports from the stations gave data that they had obtained when the satellite was at a low altitude. These reports were close to what

WORDS AND EXPRESSIONS

1. cosmic radiation 宇宙辐射
2. Geiger counter 盖革计数器
3. ascend *v.* 登高，上升
4. miniature *a.* 袖珍的，小型的
5. payload *n.* (火箭)有效载重

earlier rocket experiments had led the scientists to expect. A few weeks later, however, high-altitude data began to come in. When Van Allen and his co-workers had collected and analyzed it, they were deeply puzzled. At the very high altitudes reached by the satellite, the Geiger counter had recorded no cosmic rays.

It seemed unlikely that anything was wrong with the instruments, for they worked perfectly at lower altitudes. On the other hand, scientists could not believe that there were no cosmic rays at high altitudes. (2) Van Allen's explanation of the mystery was simple. At high altitudes, the counter ran into so many cosmic rays that it could not cope with the counting, and "blanked out[6]." Further experiments with other types of Geiger counters showed beyond a doubt that Van Allen had discovered a great zone or belt of radiation round the earth. And so the temporary death of a Geiger counter gave birth to the most brilliant discovery in space science to date.

The Van Allen belt, as it has been named, circles the earth like a slight flattened inner tube. It begins at an altitude of about 500 miles up and extends to an altitude of 2,500 miles above sea level.

Pioneer II, a U. S. space shot aimed at the moon, enabled Van Allen and his colleagues to make a second discovery. (3) Although the satellite fell short of its mark and crashed to earth, it went far enough into space to send back the exciting news that there was a second great Van Allen belt in space. This second belt begins about 12,000 miles out in space and extends more than 50,000 miles from earth.

These radiation belts round the earth are a dangerous barrier during the first part of a space flight. They are like invisible reefs[7]. On orbital flights close to the earth, astronauts must steer clear of them, for repeated exposure to such strong radiation would be fatal. On longer missions, men must either avoid radiation reefs or find a quick route through them.

Even after a spaceship has passed beyond the reefs and entered outer space, there is still potential danger from death rays. Just as sailors must prepare for storms at sea, space travelers have to be cautious of radiation storms that could surround them with a hail of[8] deadly rays.

(4) These radiation storms in the sea of space begin on the sun. For reasons still unknown, the sun sometimes shoots off great masses of fiery[9] gas into space. These "solar flares" do not happen often. There

WORDS AND EXPRESSIONS

6. blank out 使无效
7. reef *n.* 暗礁
8. a hail of 一阵
9. fiery *a.* 燃烧的，火的

are no advance warnings, however. At any time the sun can send a radiation storm sweeping into space. On short space flights one's chances of being caught in such a storm might not be very great. But when spacemen set out on lengthy missions such as a three-year trip to Mars and back, the danger of radiation storms will be much serious.

The radiation from solar flares attacks the earth as well as space, but we are protected by our blanket of atmosphere. People on the earth's surface are standing at the bottom of an air ocean, for out shield of atmosphere is equal to thirty feet of water. It absorbs the cosmic rays and allows only a very few of the most powerful ones to reach sea level.

The bold men who venture into space will not have this shield. Spaceships will have to be designed to protect space travelers from the deadly effects of solar flare radiation. This, however, presents a difficult problem, for every pound of shielding material adds one hundred or more pounds to the takeoff weight of the space rocket.

Exercise:

I. Check Your Comprehension.

1. To study cosmic rays, early researchers used_____.
   a. telescopes　　b. satellites
   c. Geiger counters　　d. bolloons
2. The air that protects earth from cosmic rays is compared to_____.
   a. an inner tube　　b. a balloon
   c. an ocean　　d. none of the above
3. The first reports from Explorer I were_____.
   a. puzzling　　b. as expected
   c. inaccurate　　d. surprising
4. Van Allan's explanation of the data obtained from Explorer I was that_____.
   a. the instrument had failed
   b. there was no radiation in outer space
   c. the instrument could not record excessive radiation
   d. the instrument was not advanced enough
5. Pioneer II enabled scientists to_____.
   a. study the moon's surface　　b. discover another Van Allen belt
   c. both a and b　　d. none of the above

Ⅱ. Translate the Underlined Sentences into Chinese.

Ⅲ. Short Answer Questions.

1. How were Van Allen belts discovered?
2. On whom is the danger from solar flares greatest?
3. How does the author make comparison between space and ocean?

英语锦言妙语

Fair and softly goes far.
谦和者致远.

Man proposes, God disposes.
谋事在人,成事在天

A word once spoken cannot be taken back even by a team of four horses.
一言既出,驷马难追

An honest man doesn't do anything underhand.
明人不做暗事

Spectators see clearly while the participants are often lost in the maze.
旁观者清,当局者迷

Leal heart lied never.
心诚无谎言.

"Never" is a long word.
不要轻易说"决不"

Unit 2

Hormones[1] and the Function

Warm-up:

1. *Do you have any knowledge about the substances in our body called hormones?*
2. *How much do you know about endocrine[2]?*

(1) Without regular supplies of some hormones our capacity to behave would be seriously impaired[3], without others we would soon die. (2) Tiny amounts of some hormones can modify our moods and our actions, our inclination to eat or drink, our aggressiveness or submissiveness, and our reproductive and parental[4] behavior. And hormones do more than influence adult behavior, early in life they help to determine the development of bodily form and may even determine an individual's behavioral capacities. Later in life the changing outputs of some endocrine glands[5] and the body's changing sensitivity to some hormones are essential aspects of the phenomena of aging.

(3) Communication within the body and the consequent integration of behavior were considered the exclusive province[6] of the nervous system up to the beginning of the present century. The emergence of endocrinology as a separate discipline can probably be traced to the experiments of Bayliss and Starling on the hormone secretin[7]. This substance is secreted from cells in the intestinal walls when food enters the stomach, it travels through the bloodstream and stimulates the pancreas[8] to literate pancreatic juice, which aids in digestion. By showing that special cells secrete chemical agents that are conveyed by the bloodstream and regulate distant target organs or tissues. (4) Bayliss and starling demonstrated that chemical integration can occur without participation of the nervous system.

The term "hormone" was first used with reference to secretin.

WORDS AND EXPRESSIONS

1. hormone *n.* 荷尔蒙，激素
2. endocrine *a. n.* 内分泌
3. impair *v.* 削弱，损害
4. parental *a.* 父母的
5. gland *n.* 腺
6. province *n.* 范围，领域
7. secretin *n.* 分泌素
8. pancrea *n.* 胰腺
9. duct *n.* 管腺，管子

Starling derived the term from the Greek hormon , meaning, "to excite or set in motion". The term "endocrine" was introduced shortly thereafter. "Endocrine" is used to refer to glands that secrete products into the bloodstream. The term "endocrine" contrasts with "exocrine", which is applied to glands that secrete their products through ducts to the site of action. Examples of exocrine glomds are the tear glands, the sweat glands, and the panereas, which secretes panereatie juice through a duct[9] into the intestine. Exocrine glands are also called duct glands, while endocrine glands are called ductless.

Exercise:

I. Check Your Comprehension.

1. What is the author's main purpose in the passage?
   a. To explain the specific functions of various hormones.
   b. To provide general information about hormones.
   c. To explain how the term "hormone" evolved.
   d. To report on experiments in endocrinology.
2. Which of the following is NOT mentioned as an effect of hormones?
   a. Modification of behavior.
   b. Sensitivity to hunger and thirst.
   c. Aggressive feelings .
   d. Maintenance of blood pressure.
3. The passage supports which of the following conclusions?
   a. The human body requires large amounts of most hormones.
   b. Synthetic hormones can replace a person's natural supply of hormones if necessary.
   c. The quantity of hormones produced and their effects on the body are related to a person's age.
   d. The short child of tall parents very likely had a hormone deficiency early in life.
4. It can be inferred from the passage that before the Bayliss and Starling experiments most people believed that chemical integration occurred only_____.
   a. during sleep
   b. in the endocrine glands
   c. under control of the nervous system
   d. during strenuous exercise
5. According to the passage, another term for exocrine glands is_____.
   a. duct glands
   b. endocrine glands
   c. ductless glands
   d. intestinal glands

II. Translate the Underlined Sentences into Chinese.

Unit 3

The Little People

Warm-up:

1. Why do the Pygmies[1] think that they are "little" people of Africa?

2. What do you think of the Pygmies?

WORDS AND EXPRESSIONS

1. Pygmy *n.* (分布在中非、东南亚、大洋洲一带的)身体矮小的人
2. encampment *n.* 营地；野营
3. fern *n.* 蕨类植物
4. crouch *v.* 蹲伏；蜷缩
5. leopard *n.* 豹

Many different tribes live in the Ituri rain forest of Africa, but the Pygmies are the most unusual. Bands of Pygmies, known as Tiki-Tikis, are scattered throughout the forest. Most of the men are not much more than four feet tall. They weigh only about eighty pounds. The women are even smaller and thinner. But in spite of the fact that they are small, these people are perfectly formed men and women.

It is an exciting experience to visit a Pygmy encampment[2] for the first time. Before you go, you must send word ahead that you are coming. Some friendly native or trader must take the message to the Tiki-Tikis. (1) Otherwise the whole tribe will vanish into the depths of the jungle long before you have come within hailing distance.

The great Ituri rain forest seems cut off from the rest of the earth. There are living, dead, and dying trees on every side. Except where a clearing has been burned and chopped out, a man may live his whole life in the Ituri and never see farther than twenty yards.

It takes sharp eyes to discover the almost hidden path to the Pygmy camp. The path is no wider than a small man's foot, and it twists and turns through a mass of ferns[3] and creepers. No sound breaks the silence in this part of the forest. There are no signs of people.

The stranger must walk carefully. What appears to be a twisted branch may prove to be a deadly snake. A spotted gold patch of sunlight may be a crouching[4] leopard[5].

Even the Pygmy camp comes as a surprise. The leafy shelters in which the little people live are scarcely three feet high. They look so

much like the surrounding undergrowth that they might easily be passed by. These houses contain no furniture of any sort. The beds are merely plantain[6] leaves spread out on the earth floor. There are no cooking pots, food is eaten raw or smoked over a fire. Spears, bows, and arrows are the only possessions of these people. When the tribe moves to a new camp there is nothing to carry except these weapons and babies too small to walk.

The tribes of Tiki-Tikis are constantly moving around. Since they do not plant or cultivate any food crops, their camps are temporary, and so are their dwellings. They seldom sleep in one camp for more than a few days. The men are hunters, and the tribes live on what they kill plus whatever other food they can find in the jungle.

Of all the jungle people, Pygmies are the best hunters and the finest animal trackers. They make their weapons by hand and use them both for catching meat and for defending themselves. Their marksmanship[7] is truly marvelous. (2) They can shoot three or four arrows so rapidly that often the last one leaves the bow before the first has reached its mark. If an arrow should miss its goal, the impatient little Pygmy may fly into a rage, breaking his arrows and stamping on them. The arrow the Pygmy uses is merely a hard, straight reed with poison on the tip and two leaves at the other end to steady the flight.

Even the mighty elephant can be caught by these tiny jungle people. Sometimes enormous traps are dug and cunningly[8] concealed with branches and leaves.

For small game, the Tiki-Tikis have an unusual way of hunting. They stretch nets of stout[9] fiber through the jungle. Then the women and children scatter in a wide semicircle and make a great deal of noise. The noise drives the frightened animals into the net, where they are quickly killed.

Pygmies can move in the treetops almost as expertly as monkeys. Often they travel great distances through the branches without touching the ground. Because of the danger from crocodiles, they stay out of water and seldom learn to swim. Because of this, they have become expert bridge builders, using vines instead of ropes or cables. (3) Building a bridge of vines is work that takes great skill.

One of the most surprising facts about these small men and women is their great appetite. (4) A Pygmy can consume a stalk of sixty bananas at a single meal, in addition to quantities of meat. After eating,

WORDS AND EXPRESSIONS

6. plantain *n.* 大蕉；车前草
7. marksmanship *n.* 射击术；枪法
8. cunning *a.* 精巧的；熟练的
9. stout *a.* 结实的，牢固的

he will lie on his hard earth bed and groan in pain all night. But in the morning, he is ready to eat the same amount of food all over again.

Pygmies like an unusually large amount of salt with their meals. Since there is almost no salt to be found in the jungle, traders use bars of salt instead of money when they deal with the Tiki-Tikis.

In spite of a life that would seem very hard to most of us, the Tiki-Tikis are almost always good-natured and helpful. Outsiders who have observed them say that they seldom lie, steal, or fight among themselves. In their own language—which few other people ever learn to speak—they call themselves the Little People. They speak of other Africans as the Real People.

The Tiki-Tikis interest scientists everywhere. Unlike their neighbors in the jungle, they have skin of a coppery color like that of the American Indians, and curly red-brown hair. Some scientists think that they may be descendants of the first men of Africa; in that case the Pygmies, not their neighbors, are "the real people."

Exercise:

I. Check Your Comprehension.

1. If a friendly visitor did not warn the tribe of his approach they would_____.
   a. attack him
   b. be surprised by his arrival
   c. not be there when he arrived
   d. kill him
2. The story says that the Pygmies_____.
   a. are better hunters than any other jungle peoples
   b. eat more than any other jungle peoples
   c. have better weapons than any other jungle peoples
   d. often lie, steal, or fight among themselves
3. Hunting is done by the_____.
   a. men of the tribe
   b. men and young boys
   c. men, women, and children
   d. both a and b
4. Traders who do business with the Pygmies pay them with_____.
   a. bars of salt

b. elephant tusks
c. coins and paper money
d. bows and arrows

5. The Pygmies probably live by_____.
a. always thinking of the future
b. an elaborate legal code
c. taking each day as it comes
d. hunting and growing crops

Ⅱ. Translate the Underlined Sentences into Chinese.

Ⅲ. Short Answer Questions.

1. What do the Pygmies live by?
2. When a Pygmy tribe moves, what does it carry along?
3. Why does the Pygmy whose arrows miss the mark become angry?

英语锦言妙语

Tell all that you know and tell it without reserve.
知无不言，言无不尽。

Running water does not get stale; a doorhinge is never worm-eaten.
流水不腐，户枢不蠹

A past mistake of one serves as a good lesson to all.
一人之失，百人之师

Repent what's past, avoid what is to come.
前事不忘，后事之师

Poverty of speech is the outward evidence of poverty of mind.
语言贫乏说明头脑空虚。