

# A New Course of 新编大学英语阅读教程 二级 English Reading for College Learners

主编 欧阳俊林

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*A New Course of English Reading for*  
*College Learners 2*

**新编大学英语阅读教程 二级**

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**新编大学英语阅读教程 二级**

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## 编写说明

随着大学英语教学和考试系统的改革,大学英语的教与学对目的语的输入提出了更高的要求,体现了素质教育的基本导向。作为一门以扩大知识面和增强语言应用能力为目的的大学英语阅读课,迫切需要一套与之相适应的教材。《新编大学英语阅读教程》就是要体现这样的导向,满足这样的需求。

《新编大学英语阅读教程》广泛收集了现代英语,特别是近十年来英美社会的多式样语言文本。话题覆盖了当今政治、经济、文化、科技、教育、心理、人文、社会等诸多方面,帮助读者了解当今国际各领域的发展动态和问题,并从接触真实语料入手,学习和掌握语言形式、功能和用法,加深语言理解,从而全面提高学生英语语言的阅读水平,增强学生参加新体制下的大学英语四、六级考试的应试能力。

《新编大学英语阅读教程》一共四册,与目前大学英语教学的课程设置平行,每学期一册,循序渐进,由浅入深。通过课堂教学和学生课外阅读,逐步培养学生良好的语言思维和语言学习习惯,以达到最佳的教与学效果。

本书也可以作为英语专业泛读课程的选用教材。

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限于水平和时间,疏漏难免,恭请广大读者和学界同仁批评指正。

编者于

2005年8月

# *Contents*

## **Unit 1    Legendary Stories**

<b>Passage 1</b>	King Arthur and His Round Table	1
<b>Passage 2</b>	King Arthur and His Knights	3
<b>Passage 3</b>	The Phoenix in Mythology	7

## **Unit 2    Education**

<b>Passage 1</b>	The Kindness of Strangers	11
<b>Passage 2</b>	Challenge in Children's Literature	14
<b>Passage 3</b>	Advice That Can Help You Succeed on Campus	17

## **Unit 3    Women's Problems**

<b>Passage 1</b>	Beauty Contestant Fights for Right of Self-Improvement	22
<b>Passage 2</b>	Do Women Lack Ambition?	25
<b>Passage 3</b>	Study: Asian Suicide Rate Higher in Women	29

## **Unit 4    Biography**

<b>Passage 1</b>	Henry Ford, Inventor and Manufacturer	32
<b>Passage 2</b>	Steven Spielberg, the Moviemaker	35
<b>Passage 3</b>	The Death of Socrates	39

**Unit 5    Personal Experiences**

<b>Passage 1</b>	Changing the Way You Look at Yourself	43
<b>Passage 2</b>	Unforgettable Rocky	45
<b>Passage 3</b>	A Double-Dyed Deceiver	49

**Unit 6    Human History and Culture**

<b>Passage 1</b>	Some Theories of History	54
<b>Passage 2</b>	The Origins of Language and Song	57
<b>Passage 3</b>	Change: Some Firsts in Human History	60

**Unit 7    Mental Health**

<b>Passage 1</b>	Depression: Material and Psychological	64
<b>Passage 2</b>	Don't Let Anger Get the Best of You	68
<b>Passage 3</b>	New Ways to Protect Yourself From Crime	72

**Unit 8    Human Relations**

<b>Passage 1</b>	Table Manners	77
<b>Passage 2</b>	Harry Potter and the Sad Grown-ups	80
<b>Passage 3</b>	Friendship	84

**Unit 9    Life and Work**

<b>Passage 1</b>	Pink or Blue? — Knowing Your Business Style	88
<b>Passage 2</b>	Putting Your Job Interview into Rehearsal	91
<b>Passage 3</b>	Your Dream Job: A Click Away	95

**Unit 10 Entertainment**

<b>Passage 1</b>	Cartoon Stars: Who Create Them	99
<b>Passage 2</b>	Casino Chow	102
<b>Passage 3</b>	Enjoying Hamburger and Digging up Its History	104

**Unit 11 Information Technology**

<b>Passage 1</b>	Schools Face Staff Cuts	108
<b>Passage 2</b>	Information Age	111
<b>Passage 3</b>	For Some, the Blogging Never Stops	114

**Unit 12 Economy and Society**

<b>Passage 1</b>	Can Anybody Here Play This Game?	119
<b>Passage 2</b>	China Pays a Price for Cheaper Oil	121
<b>Passage 3</b>	Price Hike Signals More	126

**Unit 13 Public Health and Social Welfare**

<b>Passage 1</b>	Three Objections to the Moral Permissibility of Voluntary Euthanasia	130
<b>Passage 2</b>	A Ticking Time Bomb	133
<b>Passage 3</b>	Summertime, When People and Parasites Head for the Water	138

**Unit 14 Technology**

<b>Passage 1</b>	Learning How to Make Rain	142
<b>Passage 2</b>	Caught in the Web of the Internet	145
<b>Passage 3</b>	The Two Paths of Virtual Reality	148

**Unit 15    Personal Development**

<b>Passage 1</b>	How to Find Time to Read	156
<b>Passage 2</b>	To Learn to Think in College, Write a lot	159
<b>Passage 3</b>	Shattering the Glass Ceiling	163

**Unit 16    Urban Reflections**

<b>Passage 1</b>	Paris — The City of Light	169
<b>Passage 2</b>	Music School Offers Free Lessons	172
<b>Passage 3</b>	On the Meaning of Life	176

**Unit 17    Understanding of Man and World**

<b>Passage 1</b>	What's So Good About Failure?	180
<b>Passage 2</b>	Mistakes Winners Don't Make	184
<b>Passage 3</b>	On Time	188

**Unit 18    Glimpse of China**

<b>Passage 1</b>	Seeking to Revive China' TV King	192
<b>Passage 2</b>	The Three Gorges Project	196
<b>Passage 3</b>	South-to-North Water Diversion Project	200

<b>Key to Exercises</b>	206
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## Unit 1 Legendary Stories

### Passage 1 King Arthur and his Round Table

#### The Origin of the Story

1 There was a real Arthur, an Arthur who fought the Saxon invader and won a great battle at Mount Badon in A. D. 500. But around this shadowy human figure, fighting among the mountains of Wales or on the wild cliffs of Cornwall (where you can still see, at Tintagel, the ruins of Arthur's castle), has grown up a great collection of romantic stories that run like a brilliant thread through the pattern of English literature from the early Anglo-Saxon and Norman writers, through Chaucer and Malory to Tennyson. These old stories tell us of Arthur's miraculous coming, of how he became King and gathered together a brave company of Knights — the knights of the Round Table.

2 The Round Table was to show that no knight, not even the King himself, was "head of the table"; all were equal and the King was just "first among equals". You can still see the table — a great round piece of wood hanging on one of the inner walls of Winchester Castle. But though 600 places in the British Isles claim some memory of him, he is forever essentially the hero of Wales, and it's rather significant that the Welshman who became King of England, Henry VII, called his eldest son Arthur. Arthur's name is so widespread throughout England, and the Continent, too, because Welsh bards in Norman times and before that, traveled about singing the songs of and telling the stories about him. Those stories were gathered together by Sir Thomas Malory and it is from his *Morte d'Arthur* that all the later writers and poets have drawn the materials for their stories and poems.

#### It is Very Likely that King Arthur's Story is Simply a Legend

3 Many places in England, particularly in the south and west, claim connections with King Arthur and his Knights of the Round Table. Yet even today, with all the tools of modern archaeology, it's still impossible to know whether such a king existed, or whether his story is simply a legend.

4 Certainly there are historical references to a leader called Arthur, who lived around the end of the fifth century. He had already become something of a folk hero by the ninth century as a warrior king. But none of the information that has come down

to us is very reliable. What is certain is that the ideas of honour and chivalry that we associate with King Arthur were not much in evidence in that period of British history, rightly known as the Dark Ages.

5 And yet Arthur's Round Table exists — in Winchester. It is inside the magnificent Great Hall, the only part of the former Winchester Castle that remains intact. Although the table once had twelve legs, has a diameter of 18 feet (5.4 metres) and weighs nearly one and a half tons, it has hung on the wall for centuries. It has this inscription:

6 “This is the round table of Arthur with 24 of his named knights.”

7 Unfortunately scientific tests have shown that is unlikely. The table was made at some time between 1250 and 1280 — about thirty years after the Hall itself was built. The table was painted (or, just possibly, re-painted) in 1520, on the instructions of King Henry VIII. Indeed, there are those who say that the face of the king painted on the table could easily be a likeness of the young Henry — a piece of flattery by a court painter, rather than a portrait of an Arthur who may, after all, never have existed.

### ◇ Notes

archaeology <i>n.</i>	考古学
warrior <i>n.</i>	(尤指旧时的)武士,战士,勇士
reliable <i>a.</i>	可信赖的,可靠的
chivalry <i>n.</i>	骑士品质(高尚,仁慈,慷慨,勇猛,对女士彬彬有礼)
magnificent <i>a.</i>	宏伟的,壮丽的,华丽的,富丽堂皇
intact <i>a.</i>	完好无损的
diameter <i>n.</i>	直径
inscription <i>n.</i>	碑文,题词
flattery <i>n.</i>	奉承,恭维
be in evidence	[正式]显眼,引人注目

### ◇ Exercises

- *Decide whether each of the following statements is True (T) or False (F) according to the passage.*

- ( ) 1. Stories of King Arthur and his knights are very popular in England.
- ( ) 2. There used to be a leader called Arthur, who lived around the end of the fifth century.
- ( ) 3. The ideas of honour and chivalry that we associate with King Arthur were very much appreciated in the Dark Ages.

- ( ) 4. Scientific tests have shown Arthur's Round Table in Winchester is a true relic.
- ( ) 5. It is very likely that Arthur's story is simply a legend.

## Passage 2 King Arthur and His Knights

1 One day as King Arthur sat in his Court surrounded by the Knights of the Round Table a servant entered and said, "Sir King I have seen a strange sight. As I walked along the bank of the river I saw a great stone, and it floated on the water. There was a sword through the stone and the handle of the sword was thick with precious stones." When they heard this, the King and all the Knights went to see this strange thing. It was just as the servant has said; moreover, when they looked more closely they read the words on the sword: "No one shall draw me out of this stone except the Knight at whose side I am to hang. And he must be the best Knight in the world." Many of the Knights tried, but none could draw out the sword. So they returned and took their places again at the Round Table.

2 No sooner were they seated than the door opened and an old man, dressed in white, entered the hall, followed by a young knight in red armour, by whose side hung an empty sword-sheath. The old man bowed low to the King and said, "Sir, I bring you a young Knight, Sir Galahad; through him Britain shall win great glory; and he shall see the Holy Grail." "The Holy Grail!" said the Knights, their faces full of awe, for the Holy Grail was the cup from which Christ had drunk at the Last Supper. It had been brought to Wales by Joseph of Arimathea, but because of man's sinfulness it had been taken from human sight. None of the Knights had seen it, for it could be seen only by the pure in heart, and all of them had sinned.

3 When the feast was over, the King took Sir Galahad to see the sword in the stone. "I will try to take the sword," said Sir Galahad, "for, as you see, my sword-sheath is empty." He seized the handle of the sword and drew it easily from the stone and placed it in his sheath. While they were all filled with surprise, a lady came to them, riding on a white horse, and said, "I am sent to bring you word, O King that great honor will be done to you and all your knights. Today the Holy Grail will appear in your hall." Then she rode away and no one could ask her any further questions.

4 That evening as each Knight sat in his seat round the table there was a noise of thunder, so great that the whole palace seemed to shake, and there came into the hall

a great beam of light, brighter than any of them had seen before. The light touched them all, and a sweet scent was in the air. And in the beam was the Holy Grail. But no one could see it except the pure-hearted Sir Galahad. They all sat silent with amazement and awe until Arthur rose and gave thanks to God for the vision that had come to them.

5 Then Arthur's nephew, Sir Gawain, stood up and said that he would make a vow to go for a year and a day in search of the Holy Grail. Immediately other knights, a hundred and fifty in all, rose up and swore to do the same; and among them was Sir Galahad.

6 King Arthur was full of sorrow at this. His knights would wander into far-off countries; many of them, he knew, would forget they were in search of the Holy Grail, and would go on other adventures and never return. Meanwhile, the heathen enemies from whom he had protected his land would come again to conquer him. Turning to Sir Gawain he said, "Nephew, you have done wrong, for by your act I have lost the noblest company of knights that ever brought honour to any country in Christendom; for I know that you knights, whom I have loved as my life, will never again all gather together in this hall." The knights, too, were filled with sorrow, but they could not break their vows.

7 So the next day, after they had worshipped in the church at Camelot, the knights who had made the vow rode together out of Camelot, and the people wept as they rode away for they felt they would never return.

8 After that, Sir Galahad wandered for years searching for the Holy Grail. He had many adventures (every one of which would be a separate story). He rescued maidens who had been imprisoned, he was himself imprisoned for a year by an evil king in Sarras in Babylon where Joseph of Arimathea had lived 300 years before teaching the people the true faith. Finally he was freed and he forgave the king who had imprisoned him, and when that king died, Galahad was made king. But though at times he had seen again the light of the Holy Grail, he never saw it in reality. Every morning, early, he used to go into the little church to pray. Then one morning, very early, as he knelt, he saw a man in the dress of a bishop; and the bishop was surrounded by a great band of angels. The bishop said, "Come here, servant of the lord, and see what you have so long wished to see." And Galahad took the Grail in his trembling hands. "Do you know who I am?" said the bishop, "No," said the knight. "I am Joseph of Arimathea whom God has sent to show you the perfect vision of the Holy Grail." Then Galahad knelt and

prayed. As he prayed a hand came from Heaven and took away the cup. And when, a little later, the people came to the church, they found Sir Galahad dead.

9 What happened to King Arthur?

10 Well, though some of the knights returned, the great days of the Round Table were over. While Arthur was fighting his enemies in France, the wicked knight Sir Modred, whom Arthur had left to rule the land while he was away, plotted against the king and gathered together an army to fight against him. Arthur returned and a great battle was fought in the far west of Britain by the sea shore. The traitors were defeated and Modred was killed by Arthur, but only one of Arthur's knights Sir Bedivere, was left, and Arthur himself was very badly wounded. Then Arthur said to Sir Bedivere, "The end has come. Take my sword Excalibur and throw it into the deep water. Watch what happens and come back and tell me." So Sir Bedivere took the sword and went to the water's edge. But the handle of the sword was thick with precious stones and he couldn't bear to throw it away. So he hid the sword under a tree and came back to the king. "What did you see?" said the king, "and what did you hear?" And Sir Bedivere said, "I saw nothing but the waves and heard nothing but the wind." "That is untrue," said Arthur. "I order you, as a faithful knight, to go again and throw the sword into the sea." Again Sir Bedivere went, and again he was tempted. It is a sin and a shameful thing, "to throw away so noble a sword. It should be kept so that people in all future times can see it and be reminded of this great king." So he left the sword under the tree and returned again to the dying Arthur. "What did you hear; what did you see?" said Arthur slowly. And Bedivere said, "Sir, I saw the water washing on the rocks and heard the wind blowing in the trees." "Traitor," said Arthur, "you have betrayed your knighthood and your name. Go again and do as I command. If you fail this time I will rise and kill you with my hands." Then Sir Bedivere went quickly back to the water's edge and took the sword from where he had hidden it and closed his eyes for a moment so that he should not see the handle and the precious stones, and then he threw it with all his might out to sea. But before the sword touched the water, an arm rose out of the sea and caught the sword, raised it three times and then drew it under the water. Bedivere hurried back to the king and told him what he had seen. "Help me down to the water's edge," said Arthur, "but hurry. I have waited too long, my wound has taken cold and I may die." So Bedivere raised the king and took him on his shoulders and brought him gently down the rocks to the water's edge. And as they reached the shore they saw a small ship there, and in

it were many noble figures and among them three queens dressed in black with crowns of gold on their heads. "Put me in the ship," said Arthur. So Bedivere gently lifted the king into it and laid him down. Then the most beautiful of the queens knelt beside him, took off his helmet, which was cut through with a sword, and looking at his pale face, wept and said, "Dear brother, why have you waited so long?" Bedivere cried out, "Oh my lord Arthur, what shall I do now you are taken from me, and all my friends of the Round Table are dead? Where shall I go, alone, among new men, strange faces, other minds?"

11 And Arthur said, "Find comfort in yourself, for I can give you no comfort. My life is ended. The work of the Round Table is done. The old order has changed, giving place to new; but God's will is done in many ways. Pray for my soul; more things are done by prayer than this world dreams of. I am going now to the Valley of Avilion where my wound may be healed." As he spoke, the ship slowly moved away, and Bedivere watched it until it could be seen no more.

12 So, Arthur went away, and, though you can see his grave at Glastonbury, where it says:

13 "Here lies Arthur, once king, and king to be. Many people believed that he was not dead but was still living in the happy valley of Avilion until his country needed him, when he would come again to free it from its enemies."

### ◇ Notes

armour <i>n.</i>	盔甲
Holy Grail <i>n.</i>	(传说中耶稣在最后的晚餐中用过的)圣杯,圣盘
sinfulness <i>n.</i>	罪孽深重
sheath <i>n.</i>	鞘,护套,外壳
amazement <i>n.</i>	惊愕,惊异
heathen <i>n.</i>	不信上帝者,异教徒,野蛮人,粗野的人;
<i>a.</i>	异教的,野蛮的
Christendom <i>n.</i>	基督教徒(集合称)基督教界
imprison <i>vt.</i>	监禁,关押
<i>v.</i>	监禁
Galahad <i>n.</i>	亚瑟王的圆桌武士之一人,高洁之士
Camelot <i>n.</i>	英国传说中亚瑟王的宫殿所在地
Modred <i>n.</i>	(亚瑟王传奇中的)莫德雷德(亚瑟王的侄子和骑士)
Bedivere <i>n.</i>	贝德维尔(英国亚瑟王传奇中圆桌骑士之一,忠贞不

貳，負垂死亞瑟王登舟去 Avalon 島)

Excalibur *n.*

(传说中) 亞瑟王的神劍

### ◇ Exercises

• *Answer the following questions briefly.*

1. What is the story mainly about?
2. What is the Holy Grail?
3. What is so unusual about the sword?
4. Did Sir Galahad successfully find the Holy Grail in the end?
5. Where is Arthur now?

## Passage 3 The Phoenix in Mythology

1 The Phoenix is mentioned or represented in many cultures. It was thought to have originated in Assyria, but there are the Chinese, Japanese, Russian, Egyptian, Greek and Native American counterparts (Fêng-Huang, Ho-oo, Firebird, Benu, Phoenix and Yel respectively). All of these birds are identified with the sun.

### Assyrian

2 In Assyria, the Phoenix is represented as the following: The Phoenix does not live on fruit or flowers, like most birds but on frankincense and odoriferous gums. Its life-span is five hundred years, when these 500 years are at an end, it will build itself a nest in the branches of an oak, on the top of a palm tree. It will then collect cinnamon, spikenard, and myrrh and use these materials to build a pile, on which it deposits itself. Thus when it dies it can breathe its last breadth amidst the odors these materials release. Then from the body of the parent bird, a young phoenix is born, destined to live as long a life as its predecessor. When this phoenix has grown and gained sufficient strength, it lifts the nest from the tree (its own cradle and its parent's sepulcher), and carries it to the city of Heliopolis in Egypt, and deposits it in the temple of the sun.

### Egyptian

3 The Egyptian name for the Phoenix was the *Bennu* and was often depicted as a heron, but also as a peacock or an eagle. Its plumes were a brilliant red and golden colour. *Bennu* was the sacred bird of Heliopolis. Identified as a heron with its long straight back and head adorned at the back with two erect feathers, the *Bennu* was later named Phoenix by the Assyrians/Greeks. The story of the Phoenix is as follows:

The *Bennu* lived on the ben-ben stone or obelisk within the sanctuary of Heliopolis and was worshipped alongside Osiris. Similar to what is said in Assyria it created itself from fire, in this case the fire that burned on the top of the sacred Persea tree in Heliopolis. It was said that the sun rose in the form of the *Bennu* each morning and that the *Bennu* was also considered a manifestation of Osiris, said to spring from his heart as a living symbol of the god. It also symbolises rebirth as it rises from the ashes, just as the new sun rises from the old.

### **Chinese**

4 The Chinese called the Phoenix the *Feng-Huang* and was envisaged as a symbol of high virtue and grace, representing power and prosperity and reflected the empress, because of this the empress was the only one allowed to wear its symbol. In China there is the male Phoenix, the "*phuong*", and the female, the "*hoang*". It is said that the Phoenix only appears in peaceful and prosperous times, and hides when there is trouble. This makes the PHOENIX a sign of peace and a symbol of disharmony. The Phoenix is a bird symbolizing the union of *yin* and *yang*. The Chinese imagination conceived the Phoenix in the following form: The Phoenix has a large bill, the neck of a snake, the back of a tortoise, and tail of a fish. It carries in its bill either two scrolls or a square box that contains sacred books. According to tradition, the Phoenix's song includes all the five notes of the traditional musical scale; its feathers include the five fundamental colors and its body is a composite of the six celestial bodies: the head symbolises the sky; the eyes, the sun; back, the moon; the wings, the wind; feet, the earth; and the tail, the planets.

### **Greek**

5 The Greeks along with the Assyrians named this bird the Phoenix and their text was placed in Arabia. The story of the Phoenix goes as follows: "The Phoenix lives close to a cool well. Then every morning at dawn the Phoenix will go and bath in the well and sing a beautiful song. This song, being so beautiful, causes the sun god to stop his chariot and listen."

6 In Greek Myth there only exists one Phoenix at a time. When the Phoenix is about to die (every 500 or 1461 years) it will build a nest. The nest is then set on fire, and the Phoenix is consumed by the flames. From the pyre springs forth a new Phoenix which then embalms the ashes of its predecessor in an egg of myrrh and flies with it to the City of the Sun. There the egg is deposited on the altar of the sun god.

### **The Phoenix Constellation**



7 The Phoenix is a constellation in the Southern Hemisphere near Tucana and Sculptor. Phoenix was named by Johann Bayer in 1603 in his catalog, *Uranometria*. It lies between Grus and Eridanus. The constellation, universally recognized as a bird, has also been called The Griffin, The Eagle, The Young Ostriches (Arabic), and The Fire Bird (Chinese).

### Misc

8 The Phoenix was first mentioned by Hesiod in the eighth century B. C., and the most detailed early account is by the Greek historian Herodotus. He says, "I have not seen it myself, except in a picture. Part of his plumage is gold-colored, and part crimson; and he is for the most part very much like an eagle in outline and bulk."

9 In the fourth century A. D. the myth of the Phoenix had changed so that the mature bird self-immolated after turning its nest into a funeral pyre. Then after three days, it rose to live again. This then led onto the Phoenix becoming identified with the resurrection of Christ and became a symbol of both immortality and life after death.

### ◇ Notes

Assyria <i>n.</i>	亚述(西南亚洲底格里斯河流域的古国)
frankincense <i>n.</i>	乳香
odoriferous <i>a.</i>	散发气味的, 臭的
cinnamon <i>n.</i>	[植物]肉桂, 桂皮, 肉桂色
spikenard <i>n.</i>	[植]甘松, 甘松香
myrrh <i>n.</i>	[植]没药树, 没药(没药树的树胶脂)
sepulcher <i>n.</i>	坟墓, 埋葬所, 宗教圣物储藏所
<i>vt.</i>	埋, 葬
heron <i>n.</i>	苍鹭
benben <i>n.</i>	本本石
obelisk <i>n.</i>	[建]方尖石塔, 短剑号
sanctuary <i>n.</i>	避难所
Osiris <i>n.</i>	司阴府之神, 地狱判官(古埃及的主神之一)
composite <i>a.</i>	合成的, 复合的
<i>n.</i>	合成物
pyre <i>n.</i>	火葬用的柴堆
embalm <i>vt.</i>	涂香油于(尸体), 施以防腐剂, 铭记于心, 使不朽
constellation <i>n.</i>	[天]星群, 星座, 灿烂的一群