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英语四级 词汇与阅读 突破

主编 李玉麟



石油大学出版社

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编者 的话

随着我国改革开放的深入,以及对外文化和教育交流的扩大,我国大学英语的教学在不断地强化和完善。学生们在努力提高自己的英语语言运用能力的时候发现,阅读是学好英语的关键,而影响阅读理解和速度的根本因素是词汇量。我们在长期的教学中发现,学生在掌握英语单词方面还存在着一些问题。有的学生成天到晚趴在课桌上记写单词,有的专门背诵词汇表,有的专做大量的词汇练习,还有的想方设法寻找巧记词汇的灵丹妙药,但是,到头来,他们深切地感到在记单词方面他们的收获仍然不令人满意。为什么许多学生今天记了一些单词明天就会忘掉呢?为什么一个月前学的词汇一个月后就记不起来了呢?为什么学了许多词汇而又不会使用呢?其原因可能会是多样的,也是因人而异的,但是有一点可以肯定,那就是他们学过的词汇几乎没有重复的机会。我们知道,如果所学的词汇不在阅读中反复出现,很快就会被遗忘。就像记一个陌生人以及他的名字一样,你不经常地看他一两次,你就不会记住这位陌生人和他的名字。当然了,有记忆力超常的人,他们可以过目不忘,但那毕竟是少数人。在通常情况下,我们要求学生在课后进行大量的阅读,阅读那些能覆盖大学英语四、六级词汇的阅读材料,这样,长此以往,词汇记住了,阅读量大了,阅读速度也会提高了,运用语言的能力也随之提高了。大量事实证明,那些平时大量阅读英语文章以及英文报刊的学生,不仅词汇量大,阅读理解能力强,知识面广,而且具有较强的写作能力。可以看出,在英语学习中,抓好阅读是件事半功倍的事。

本书选材新颖、广泛,涉及到政治、经济、外交、法律、教育、科技、环保、卫生、趣闻轶事等。书中文章均选自近几年国外出版发行的书刊,有一定的难度,但文字略作删减,长度适中,均在

800 单词左右, 适合自学。读者可在较短的时间内利用所提供的生词表和注释看懂文章; 在读完文章后, 可通过词汇填空练习、汉语短语翻译、词汇配对、词汇多项选择、简短回答和英语句子翻译来提升自己运用语言的能力。每篇文章后附有补充词汇, 其中一部分是与主题有关的四级词汇, 可供读者不断地充实和扩大词汇量。每册书后附有总词汇表, 可供读者复习或查阅使用。为便于读者学习, 我们还编写了每课练习的答案, 供读者参考, 检查自己的阅读理解能力和掌握课文知识的程度。

我们希望读者能通过自学本书来提高各自的英语水平, 以便将来较好地适应对英语有较高要求的工作和高层次的学习和研究。

本书既适合大学本科生备考大学英语四、六级使用, 也适合报考硕士研究生的考生使用。具有中级英语水平的爱好英语的读者读完本套书后一定会受益匪浅。

参加本书编写的(按姓氏笔画顺序排列)有: 王璐、孙国谨、李
小飞、李玉麟、周洁和陈宏新等六位教师。

在编写本书中, 我们摘录了众多作者已发表的文章, 在此我们对有关作者表示衷心的感谢。

本书编写仓促, 疏漏谬误在所难免, 敬请广大读者和同行提出宝贵意见, 以便改正。

编 者

2001 年 10 月



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Unit 1 The Riddle of Time

Sometimes it flies, sometimes it crawls, but it always passes inexorably. We mark it, save it, waste it, bide it, race against it. We measure it incessantly, with a passion for precision. Time is so vitally enmeshed with the fabric of our existence, in fact, that it's hard even to conceive of¹ it as an independent entity —and when we try, the result is less than enlightening. Pondering the mystery of what time really is, St. Augustine wrote in his *Confessions*², “if no one asks me, I know; but if any person should require me to tell him, I cannot.”

Unit
1

Indeed, while scientists have harnessed the power of the atom, cracked the genetic code and probed the very edges of the universe, they still don't understand time much better than St. Augustine did. Yet now, as the last few days of the second millennium tick rapidly away (though diehard purists³ still insist it doesn't really end for another year), we seem more fascinated with the subject than ever. For instance, at the Royal Observatory at Greenwich⁴, England, crowds are flocking to a new exhibition, “The Story of Time,” which examines time from cultural, religious, artistic and scientific viewpoints.

Technology has led to our obsession with ultraprecise⁵ time-keeping and time management. Before the Industrial Revolution, the exact time of day or year mattered only to those in specialized jobs, such as astrologers and sailors. For the rest, the day began at dawn, noon was when the sun was highest in the sky, and sunset wrapped things up⁶. Says Carleen Stephens, in 1790 fewer than



10% of Americans had a clock of any kind in their homes, and most of those had no minute hand.

Then came trains and factories, and with them the need to coordinate the schedules of hundreds and even thousands of people. It was the railroad companies that invented time zones, in 1883. Because of the earth's rotation, the sun was highest at different times in New York City and, say, Washington, which lay a bit farther west. The 11-min. difference in local noon could lead to disaster at intersections.

Unit 1

Factories, meanwhile, required workers to begin their days together: It's no coincidence that inexpensive alarm clocks and wristwatches began appearing at the end of the 1800s. "In the 19th century," says historian Michael O'Malley, author of *Keeping Watch: A History of American Time*, "we were urged to merge our sense of time with mechanical devices. It allowed for new forms of social organization."

Technology continues to make things worse. Before digital clocks and watches became common, people rounded to the nearest five minutes when telling each other the time: now we give the exact minute. Before cell phones and faxes and answering machines, we accepted being out of touch. Before the Internet, we didn't feel entitled (much less obliged) to shop or do research or work around the clock.

Technology also demands that time be measured ever more precisely. An accurate mechanical clock proved to be so valuable to the British maritime industry in the eighteenth century that the government awarded a great prize to its inventor, Joseph Harrison (a story elegantly told in Dava Sobel's 1995 best seller *Longitude*).

But such a timepiece would be virtually useless today: computers, communications satellites, global-positioning receivers and telephone-switching systems need a precision beyond anything con-



ceivable even 50 years ago. Time technology long since abandoned mechanical devices and even the hum of quartz crystals. For true precision — accuracy to a billionth of a second — you need to travel, virtually at least, to a place like the perfectly circular, well-guarded park that sits in northwest Washington. There, on the grounds of the U. S. Naval Observatory⁷, a nondescript⁸ concrete building houses the nerve center of the U. S. Directorate of Time⁹.

Behind its barred windows sit 28 atomic clocks, four of them holding atoms of hydrogen and the rest cesium. When excited by lasers or irradiated with microwaves, the atoms begin to dance with an utterly regular vibration that's monitored by computer. Once each second, the results are fed into America's Master Clock; the measurements from this and similar clocks around the world are sent to the International Bureau of Weights and Measures¹⁰ outside Paris — the ultimate timekeeping authority. It is there, next Friday, that the pulsing of billions of atoms will officially signal that civilization's odometer has turned over from 1999 to 2000.

Yet even the most accurate clock in the world can't answer the question of what all these atoms are actually measuring. What is time anyway? "We're trying to understand it," says Harvard theorist Cumrun Vafa. "It's quite mysterious."

For physicists, then, time is an exceedingly complex and slippery concept. No wonder St. Augustine couldn't explain it. But when the month, the year, the century and the millennium end next week, it's a fair bet that theoretical physicists, like the rest of us, will be partying¹¹ to welcome in the year 2000 — whether it really exists or not.

From *Time*, Dec. 27, 1999 by Michael D. Lemonick
(828 words)

Unit
1



New Words

inexorably /in'eksərəbli/ *ad.* 冷酷无情地

bide /baɪd/ *vt.* 等待

incessantly /in'sesəntli/ *ad.* 不间断地

enmesh /in'meʃ/ *v.* 使陷入

entity /'entɪti/ *n.* 实体

ponder /'pɒndə/ *v.* 考虑

probe /prəʊb/ *v.* 探查

millennium /mi'leniəm/ *n.* 千年

obsession /əb'sesjən/ *n.* 困扰, 着迷

astrologer /əs'trɒlədʒə/ *n.* 占星家

intersection /,ɪntə(:)'sekʃən/ *n.* (道路等的)交叉

merge /mɜ:dʒ/ *v.* 合并

maritime /'mæritaim/ *a.* 海上的

timepiece /'taɪmpɪ:s/ *n.* 时钟

director /di'rektərət/ *n.* 董事会

quartz /kwɔ:ts/ *n.* 石英

cesium /'si:ziəm/ *n.* [化]铯

odometer /ɒ'dɒmɪtə/ *n.* 里程表

Notes

1. conceive of ... as ... 把...看作...
2. Confessions 《忏悔录》; 作者是古罗马基督教神父 St. Augustine (354~430)。
3. diehard purists 顽固不化的纯化论者。diehard 顽固分子, 死硬分子; purist 纯化论者。
4. the Royal Observatory at Greenwich 格林威治, 英格兰东南部的一个市镇, 位于大伦敦地区, 在泰晤士河上, 为原皇家观象台所在地。本初

子午线即 0° 经线穿过此地。

5. ultraprecise 超精密的。ultra-前缀, 意为“超的”。
6. wrap up sth. 结束。
7. U. S. Naval Observatory 美国海军天文台。
8. nondescript 无可名状的, 由 non + descript 构成。
9. U. S. Directorate of Time 美国时间董事会。
10. International Bureau of Weights and Measures 国际度量衡署。
11. party 名词作动词用, 意为举行社交聚会。

Exercises

Unit
1

I. Complete the following sentences with the proper forms of the words given below:

harness crack probe confession require tick
ponder flock bide enlightening coordinate viewpoint

1. At night, she likes sitting under the tree, pondering the mystery of the stars and the moon.
2. People have successfully harnessed the power of the wind and the sun.
3. Although cracking the code is a hard nut to crack, they tried their best to do it.
4. Two men were sent to probe the tunnels for possible survivors.
5. To coordinate the schedule of their employees, the international company tried various methods.
6. One can mark time, save time or waste time, but one can never lose time, no matter how hard he tries.
7. The lecture greatly interested him on the subject which he's most interested in.
8. The suspect refused to confess his guilt.



9. Crowds of people _____ into the stadium for the match.
10. On top of the hill, we can get a bird's eye _____ of the city.

II. Translate the following phrases into English:

- | | | |
|------------|-----------|--------------|
| 1. 科学的观点 | 2. 超精密的计时 | 3. 机械设备 |
| 4. 手机 | 5. 时区 | 6. 全球定位接受器 |
| 7. 有木栅栏的窗户 | 8. 有规律的震动 | 9. 复杂难以捉摸的概念 |
| 10. 理论物理学家 | | |

III. Multiple choice:

Unit
1

1. Because of financial difficulties, many companies _____ with each other to cut costs.
A. blended B. combined C. joined D. merged
2. If you fail for the third time, you'll not be _____ to try for the fourth time.
A. entitled B. obliged C. rounded D. urged
3. The suspect's comings and goings are _____ by the police with a camera planted in a building across the street from his home.
A. monitored B. overheard C. controlled D. supervised
4. The machine has been _____ idle all the year round.
A. laying B. lain C. lying D. laid
5. Furnished with a few pieces of modern furniture, the room looks _____ in its bareness.
A. elegant B. elaborate C. luxurious D. rich
6. The assembling of the parts of a watch must be _____.
A. accurate B. correct C. exact D. precise
7. He likes _____ on any race.
A. betting B. gambling C. risking D. venturing
8. Plastic is a kind of _____-like material.
A. iron B. mirror C. crystal D. liquid

IV. Short answer questions:

1. What do you think were clocks invented and improved for?





2. What does the passage mainly deal with?
3. What improved time measurement?
4. When was the article written?

V. Translate the following sentences into Chinese:

1. Time is so vitally enmeshed with the fabric of our existence, in fact, that it's hard even to conceive of it as an independent entity —and when we try, the result is less than enlightening.
2. Indeed, while scientists have harnessed the power of the atom, cracked the genetic code and probed the very edges of the universe, they still don't understand time much better than St. Augustine did.
3. But such a timepiece would be virtually useless today: computers, communications satellites, global-positioning receivers and telephone-switching systems need a precision beyond anything conceivable even 50 years ago.
4. For true precision —accuracy to a billionth of a second —you need to travel, virtually at least, to a place like the perfectly circular, well-guarded park that sits in northwest Washington.
5. Once each second, the results are fed into America's Master Clock; the measurements from this and similar clocks around the world are sent to the International Bureau of Weights and Measures outside Paris —the ultimate timekeeping authority.

Unit
1

Additional Words

accessory *n.* 零件

bolt *n.* 螺钉

cork *n.* 软木塞

foil *n.* 箔

hook *n.* 吊钩

apparatus *n.* 器械

clamp *n.* 夹子

elastic *a.* 弹性的

generator *n.* 发电机

install *v.* 安装

appliance *n.* 用具

clip *n.* 回形针

static *a.* 静态的

horsepower *n.* 马力

assemble *v.* 安装





magnet *n.* 磁铁

shaft *n.* 轴

solar time 太阳时

aluminum *n.* 铝

tin *n.* 锡

oxygen *n.* 氧

screw *n.* 螺丝

metallic *a.* 金属的

weld *v.* 焊接

light-year 光年

nickel *n.* 镍

carbon *n.* 碳

grinding *n.* 磨削

fittings *n.* 配件

saw *v. & n.* 锯

rust prevention 防锈

leap year 闰年

mercury *n.* 汞

lead *n.* 铅

spray painting 喷漆

spare parts 备件

Unit
1





Unit 2 The Power of Big Ideas

What changed the course of human events most profoundly? It wasn't a general or battle, emperor or president or assassin, as the "Great Man" school of history holds. It was more likely ... well, clocks or hay, the thermos bottle or writing. It was, in other words, a technological invention, according to 80-plus scholars gathered in the electronic salon called Edge (www.edge.org). In November, literary agent and author John Brockman, who presides over Edge, asked scientists and other thinkers to nominate the most important invention of the last 2,000 years. In the postings being released this week, one theme emerges: while the absence of any single political event would not have changed history much (if Gavrilo Princip hadn't shot Archduke Francis Ferdinand¹ to start World War I, something else would have), the absence of certain inventions would have produced a world far different from the one we inherited. Without the automobile, there would be no suburbia.

Unit
2

Some of the Edge offerings are predictable (the steam engine, the telescope, space travel); some suggest that their nominators should log off² occasionally (the Internet, public key encryption). Others are provocative: batteries, notes philosopher Daniel Dennett of Tufts University³, allowed the development of transistor radios and cell phones, which are "the most potent weapons against totalitarianism ever invented, since they destroy all hope of centralized control of information." Even an invention as simple as knitting, argues physicist Freeman Dyson of the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton, N. J., triggered changes. Before knitting,