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十天突破

新托福ESSAYS

慎小嶷 / 编著

iBT

The Ten-Day Step-by-Step Guide to
the TOEFL iBT Writing Module

每一篇新托福高分作文都是一次对美式英语与美国核心价值观的精准把握

机械工业出版社
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TOEFL iBT

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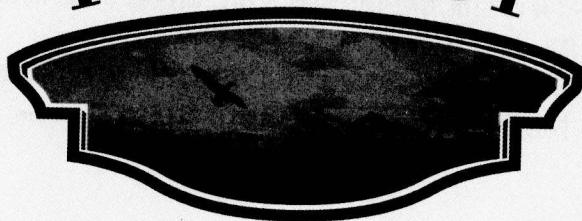
新托福ESSAYS

慎小嶷 / 编著

The Ten-Day Step-by-Step Guide to
the TOEFL iBT Writing Module

本书是出国考试类畅销书作者慎小嶷老师的又一力作。

本书紧扣官方资料要求而编写，所涉及资料均选自美国本土出版的最新资料。

本书将探讨中国留美考生在准备新托福作文过程中急需解决的大量实战问题：如何选择写作中真正需要的美语词汇；怎样才能写出灵活多样的地道英文句子；哪种段落结构才符合美国人的审美观；为什么必须果断放弃已经被用烂了的经典人物，而改举 Made in the U. S. 的新例子；偏题、难题的高分素材和段落；北美作文同义词替换合集等。

书中加分词汇和例句都为大家录制了光盘，可以边听边记。因此在准确把握北美议论文写作风格的同时，您将发现本书也是您正式开始积累地道美式英语的 milestone。

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If winning isn't everything, why do they keep score?

— *Vince Lombardi*
American Football Coach

推 荐 序

在 2010 年京城滴水成冰的严寒中，《十天突破新托福 Essays》终于将要付梓了。

这是 Pat 老师在国内出版的第三本书。本以为在《十天突破雅思写作》与《十天突破雅思口语》两本书仅在中国大陆的销量就已经突破 17 万册的情况下，对作者来说本书将是信手拈来。但让我始料未及的是：《十天突破新托福 Essays》的创作过程竟比"十天"系列的前两本耗时更久而且着力更多。从 2008 年慎老师完成本书提要，直到今年 1 月他从美国把全书最后的 Bibliography 传送给我，历时长达 1 年零三个月，并且作者为了搜集第一手资料还多次往返于中美之间。我有幸见证了本书中每段文字的破茧而出，方知"慎式写作法"的良苦用心。

尽管同为留学语言类考试，新托福作文和雅思作文却有着深刻的不同。除了英美议论文在语言风格上存在明显差异（在本书中大家将看到这些差异体现在题目表述、文体、句法、谋篇布局直至具体单词拼写等诸多方面）之外，新托福作文比雅思写作还更多地涉及到了文化的层面，即学生对于美式价值观的理解和认同。因此，如何在传授地道美式写作实用技法的同时，传达北美社会与文化的要素，对本书作者在各方面的掌控能力均提出了极高的要求。Pat 本人拥有十多年北美生活的经历，并且在北京从事英语教学期间批改过数万名中国学生的作文，这些为他完成这本精彩纷呈的新托福写作书打下了坚实的基础。逐页研读本书的正文，大家就会清晰地体会到：大到章节段落，小到单词释义，甚至每天中的短小精悍的引子，无不在精准地传达着美式写作与北美文化的特质。

对这样一本致力结合中美文化的双语作品，每个读者都会获得属于自己的领悟。我本人特别推崇的是第 8 天中对美式议论文段落布局异常深入地剖析，涉及的领域十分庞杂却又每每能够和那些原汁原味的实例结合得天衣无缝，其中展现出的功力令我折服。而附录中所收入的 66 道难题原创高分段落，在 Pat 与他的朋友们一起进棚录音时几个"老美"朗读后都对文风给出了 two thumbs up，让我们再次庆幸自己找到了一位真正值得信赖的合作伙伴。更为难得的是：本书中的全部例句都是作者结合书中语言点遴选

自美国2008～2009年的最新出版物，其使用价值已经超出了单纯的语言学习，而渗透到美国生活的方方面面。

本书在实用性及行文风格上也另辟蹊径。坊间出现了这样中英双语均能挥洒自如的年轻人，并在近两年内其作品始终稳居国内新华书店英语应试类图书总排行单科书籍的第一名，与一些经典词汇用书并驾齐驱，不啻是海外军团对 two-fisted writer 一词的最新诠释。

李超群

作 者 自 序

For all of you out there who have your hearts set on studying in North American institutions, one of the blessings of having to take the TOEFL iBT Writing Test is you feel compelled to become intimately aware of the failings in your past essays. So you are thrown right back on a quest for diagnostic assistance and yet find yourself adrift without a map or compass. Then the lingering insecurity on all sides gives you fresh incentives to re-orient yourself, through which you actually acquire new knowledge about essay writing in English. ☺

For TOEFL instructors, the exploration into the multiple layers of techniques for the TOEFL iBT essay test is a "sleeper" that possesses much more than merely meets the eye. In all honesty, even prep instructors oftentimes underestimate the scope of such a commitment: It not only permits probes into hidden aspects of the general problem of English writing competency, it also caters to the entire spectrum of candidates' personalized needs for highly well-defined situational contexts. That was exactly why in attempts to boost readers' writing proficiency, I have been constantly mindful of the actual test settings and constraints of TOEFL iBT as well.

Even so, nowhere in this tome will you find one single argument that dictates you must adopt the approach I favor simply because there can be no alternative. Instead, throughout the book, you will sense the entrenched disbelief that instructors who offer "infallible panaceas" can ever be true sages. Frankly, a moderate dose of skepticism toward any test-prep technique taught in any book would not only be tolerable, it will be constructive indeed. Likewise, even though every section in this publication represents a substantial component in building your arsenal for tackling the TOEFL iBT Essay Test, you are not given a fixed itinerary. Readers are encouraged to consider these components in whatever order they deem appropriate. Read with intention towards your goal — or just let a random chapter take you by surprise. A tool can only be as powerful as its users, after all.

Since this book is meant for a unique audience — readers with a notably shaky grasp of the English vocabulary and rhetoric but nonetheless pressed for study time, it foregoes, of necessity, the conventional means of teaching essay writing — i. e., with colossal word lists, myriad grammatical points and convoluted sentence patterns filled with embellishments, which I believe obscure as much as they clarify; rather, this jargon-free book endeavors to illuminate straightforwardly, and often light-heartedly, the most intricate issues such as the complexities
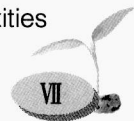
of test questions, the generation of refreshing ideas, the proper diction, the correct mechanics and the construction of tight-knit paragraphs, while still doing justice to their respective roles in unravelling the TOEFL iBT mystery. You will even find sections solely dedicated to collections of earthy buzzwords and catchphrases in American English, a robust language, whose literal meanings are ten thousand miles away from their true significations. Feel free to think of this book as being nothing more than a tool to clarify and demystify the baffling things about TOEFL essays for you.

As Alfred Adler aptly observed, referring to the school he had found in Vienna, "The students teach the teachers." In the same vein, I do not see how a test prep instructor can be anything but deeply grateful for what he is daily taught about the issues on the test by those who are called his students.

Xiaoyi
(*a. k. a. Pat*)

Into Uncharted Territory:
The Relativity of the TOEFL iBT Writing Module

Despite its phenomenal candidate boom and exuberant recognition by learning institutions across the world, the TOEFL iBT Writing Test is not without its own share of trials and tribulations, a major portion of which has been, amidst its swiftly-gained popularity, the lingering skepticism about its fairness in judging functional writing competence.

The reliability of the test falls beyond the scope of this publication. Still, I would venture to point out that such doubt has been cast over almost all subjective tests administered so far in the civilized world, just that its six-digit number of test-takers has rendered the TOEFL iBT Writing Section far more vulnerable to finger-pointing.

A substantial source of the growing pains could be, as a matter of fact, that the very purpose of the test has been seriously diluted, if not defeated, when in reality, many prep teachers gear their curricula exclusively toward the type of question that is most likely to come up in the next test and the students' answers have consequently been reduced to mere regurgitations of their lecture notes.

There can still be some turning back, though.

The TOEFL iBT essay marking process has been largely shrouded in mystery. Even so, one thing is for sure, it is by no means as straightforward as the examiners' interpolating candidates' arguments into predefined scoring parameters, assigning a mark to each category accordingly and then averaging the results out.

Although it is safe to say that all the raters, as highly intelligent and well-educated humans, unanimously appreciate original ideas, compelling points, detailed exemplifications, accurate diction, precise sentences, coherent internal linking and logical paragraphing, the officially-specified areas of gauging test-takers' performance are NOT hard and fast rules. It is equally safe to say that in practice, there have to be holistic adjustments to particularistic applications. More importantly, even though the test *per se* is by definition Internet-based, the raters who do

the subsequent grading work are just human. Each and every score assigned inevitably, invariably and inescapably reflects the rater's own interests, experiences and blind spots, for that matter.

This publication attempts to, through ample dissection of high-achieving essays, fill a void for those who wish to know more about what raters realistically expect from test essays and the corresponding tactics. It is therefore unsurprising that this book tends to bypass the rigid rating criteria. Instead, it comes to grips with the more human dimensions of the essay-marking process. While some of the text, through copious comparison and contrasting, tries to nail down what the majority of TOEFL iBT essay examiners desire in their assessment of test essays, the other sections are dedicated to exploration into the virtually limitless possibilities of TOEFL essay writing, which may be identified or verified through juxtapositions of markedly contrasting essays that have achieved precisely the same impressive score.

Incidentally, you do not have to consume this book in one big gulp, or even from the start to finish lines; rather, you can just read the components in any order you choose or simply ramble around it. It will not bite or induce deep comas, just something that gives you the itch to keep turning pages. ☺

A word of warning: This tome is not a scholarly monograph; rather, it is meant to be a broadly-accessible, terminology-free book that meets the needs of general readers. Chances are that it may not lend itself readily to efforts to integrate it into the curriculum of existing prep courses. Nevertheless, prep instructors will definitely find it most informative as well as entertaining.

Pat@
NYC

From the Author to the Reader
致 读 者

新托福写作考什么？

ETS 在 O. G.（第三版）中所给的数据明确显示：以中文为母语的 TOEFL iBT 考生写作平均成绩*仅为 20 分，而申请美国牛校理想的成绩是每项均达到 25 分或以上。因此，新托福写作教师的任务就转化成了如何能有效地消除或者缩短这 5 分的差距。

（一）本书的实质是一本 test-prep book，95％以上的内容都是讲解如何在短期内提高英语写作技能，特别是如何提高美式英语写作技能的。具体来说，我们将对以下领域进行深入探讨：

（a）摆脱缺乏写作素材的困扰。见到简单的题目还好，但很多同学一旦遇到作文难题或者"怪题"就不知如何入手，甚至在考试时因为想不出素材而让宝贵的时间白白流走。本书 Day 2 与附录 E 专门为大家提供常规题目与难题、怪题的实用解法和素材，帮你迅速突破 idea conception。

（b）提高语法知识的灵活度和准确度。很多中国考生的语法"内功深厚"，而且对语法现象的专业术语耳熟能详，但是实用性却偏低，从而导致写出句子来很"干"，甚至语法错误"此起彼伏"。Day 3 和 Day 6 将为大家集中展示真正适应实战要求的写作语法，并总结出必须避免的常见语法错误。对考试来说，我们完全可以把 Benjamin Franklin 的那句"A penny saved is a penny earned."改为"An error avoided is a point earned."。

（c）总结出真正的核心词汇。考前准备写作单词理论上来说是"没有最多，只有更多"的。但适合短期突破的核心词汇却一定是有限的。Day 4 为大家展示新托福写作的真正必备分类单词，而且还系统归纳了北美考试作文中常用的强势动词、抽象名词与抽象形容词。而附录 F 则为大家提供了新托福作文同义词全面替换表。

（d）提高句式变换的能力。不知大家有没有过这种经历：高分作文看着很好，想要模仿却很难。其中的原因除了国内的英语水平考试普遍重视阅读、听力这样的输入型测

试却比较忽视写作和口语这类输出型考查外，另一个重要原因就是地道英文中的句式变化对多数考生来说缺乏可把握的规律性，甚至让一些孩子产生了严重的挫败感。我们在 Day 5，Day 6 和 Day 7 三天里将彻底掌握英语句式变换的各种手法，而且关键是做到七个字：考场能用得出来，否则理论再好听也只是忽悠人的空话。

（e）例证频繁是美式作文与"欧版"作文的一个重要差异。我在北京的 5 年半时间里，经常发现国内同学们往往沉迷于哥白尼、曼德拉、水门事件、Mother Teresa 或者波士顿倾茶事件这些"陈年老例"，却完全无视连印加传说中的"2012"都已经 just around the corner 的事实。本书附录 D 就专门为大家介绍 21 世纪的"美人"怎么举例。

（f）对于很多考生来说，独立作文的逻辑往往是套模板的"副产品"。这实在是一种本末倒置（put the cart before the horse）的学习方法。Day 8 和 Day 9 会以前所未有的深度帮助大家彻底读懂英语议论文的逻辑结构。而对于基础过于薄弱、"胸无大志"、只打算套模板的那部分苦孩子，也必须好好研究一下这两天的内容，彻底理解新托福作文的逻辑到底应该怎样去展开，才能实现"源于模板而高于模板"。

（g）与比较生活化的独立写作部分不同，新托福的综合写作部分则是严格的 academic writing，"套路无罪，模板有理"。但问题是怎样才能拥有真正高质量的综合写作模板呢？Day 10 给大家深入揭示了综合写作考试的本质。

此外，本书中还将为大家提供开头、主体、结尾的大量高分实例，172 部经典"美句"、名人们如何看待新托福作文话题……备考时间特别紧张的同学还可以先重点研读书中页边侧有 V 字标记的重点章节。

（二）在踏踏实实地提高写作基本功的同时，想写好新托福作文很难完全躲开美国的社会背景，这也是新托福写作教师必须帮助学生突破的瓶颈。

托福老师讲作文的时候，多半会提到"美国人喜欢怎样的写法"。其实这种说法本身就非常值得推敲：

（a）在美国 K-12/K-14 和大学低年级阶段通常都会提供一门课叫 creative writing，专门教学生怎么写出有个性、真正能表达自己想法的作文。其实只有这样才符合常理：萝卜白菜，各有所爱（Different strokes for different folks.）。怎么可能大家都喜欢一样的写法呢？

在北京，很多人喜欢唱许巍的《蓝莲花》，可我偏喜欢并不算太火的《那一年》。快女选秀有人支持曾轶可，就一定有人支持包小柏。有人爱去三里屯儿，就一定有人坚定地去后海或者南锣鼓巷。这就是 sociologists 所说的"个人偏好多样性"（the diversity of individual preferences）。

美国也是这样，或者说美国更是这样，因为它是彻底的 capitalism in action（也是所有工业化国家中唯一没有全民医保的国家，奥巴马在 2009 年圣诞节前提出的 Health Care Bill，其象征意义超过它的现实意义。不说别的，如果实行全民医保，美国的 family physicians 在今后多年内都将处于短缺状态）。Milton Friedman 对当代美国社会的影响超出大家的想象：有 demand，就一定会有 supply；有 the need for expression，就一定会有 the means of representation。

比如很多同学都知道，新托福考试中有大量关于 Success 的考题（最近四年完整机考题库请大家参考附录 A 和附录 C）。但美国社会对于成功的定义比中国社会更加多元化，像 William Hung 和 Sanjaya Malakar 这样在 Elvis 时代连话筒都无法靠近的人，在当代美国却都曾让 American Idol 的评委意见和 public votes 彻底决裂。如果完全不了解这种背景，就容易在讨论 success 话题时把范围限制得过窄。

再比如，新托福作文中有大量关于 Education 的题目。像小学生就近入学这样在北京根本不会是问题的问题，美国家长们则至少有 public school /private school/charter school/Catholic school 甚至 homeschooling 可以选择。如果能适当了解一点美国人对教育问题的看法，无疑可以让自己的 essay 更加贴近考官的审美观。

本书中的大量"美句"和"美文"，就是大家了解与新托福作文考题密切相关的美式思维的"快捷键"。

11 年前，精力过剩的我曾从美国东海岸一直开车到西海岸，又沿着不同的路线返回。可以毫不夸张地说：对于某一个美国人的某一种偏好，一定就有和它完全对立的其他偏好合法地存在着。所以真的不能说，"美国人都喜欢什么样的写法"。

（b）更重要的是：到底什么是美国人？美国有 3.05 亿人，是中国的 1/4 不到，但构成却异常复杂，很多人你根本说不清是从哪儿来的。比如 Tiger Woods（这位 2009 年中刚被公众评选为 the Athlete of the Decade 的"优质偶像"，到了 2009 年底因为 mistress "小蜜"被曝光而突然变成了美国公众谴责的对象，再一次让人感慨美式人生的戏剧性。这个新例子用来写 Honesty & Lies 的作文话题或者 Media / Privacy 的作文

话题都相当棒）：这哥们是 1/4 非裔，1/4 华裔，1/4 泰裔，1/8 荷兰裔和 1/8 的 Native American，你说他到底是哪儿来的人？又比如 2008 年总统竞选期间，楞是有小报记者提出大量证据说明 Barack Obama 和 Brad Pitt 是近亲，而 Hillary Clinton 则是 Angelina Jolie 的 cousin。这个例子除了可以用来作"是否应该相信新闻来源的真实性"这道新托福作文题的论据之外，不可否认小报记者们敢去这样编故事也确实体现了这个社会惊人的民族多元化（racial and ethnic diversity）和文化多元化（cultural pluralism）。所以就更不该说"美国人都喜欢什么样的写法"。

（c）但是另一方面，200 多年来，美国人从来都是追求 the will of the majority 的民族。大家如果有时间研究一下美国史和 the separation of powers（这里的 power 要加 s，指三权分立制度），就会看出美国版的 checks and balances 核心理念就是不管多聪明的人也一定会犯错，所以多数人的意见必须得到尊重，即使它看起来可能是幼稚的（naïve）甚至可笑的（ludicrous）。

不管是老托儿还是新托儿，TOEFL 从来都是对可能进入美国境内的外国学生进行文化同化的重要环节。也正是由于新托福对美国核心价值观的这种集中体现，才让貌似完全无法把握的 TOEFL iBT essay raters 的偏好具有了相对的确定性。

扎实的美语写作功底，以及对美国社会的适当了解，就是新托福写作考查的核心，也是新托福写作教师必须帮助学生有效突破的瓶颈。

special note of appreciation to Whitney Liu, for the touching up of the Chinese text I wrote in the first and the second drafts and for giving me hints on how to make this book more meaningful in the Chinese context.

I am thankful for, as always, the loving support from my parents, my sister, Meg, and friends of mine, without whom I would not have embarked upon this "cottage industry".

<div align="right">

小嶷

2009 年圣诞节于 N. Y. C.

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* 请注意 mean 是美国生活中谈到统计数字时的常用概念，它与 average（平均值）是一样的意思，但与 median（中位值）不同。median 是指各有 50% 的调查对象在这个数值之上和之下，相对来说更加客观；而 mean 是总数除以总人数，就比较容易由于"顶级大牛"或者"小白级菜鸟"的存在导致数据不客观。比如美国的 median household net worth 在 2007 年只有 120,300USD，而同一年的 mean household income 却达到了 556,300USD. So you see, multibillionaires like Bill Gates, Warren Buffett and Michael Bloomberg really messed up the data. ☺

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