

extensive
reading

英语阅读训练

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河南大学出版社

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前 言

阅读教学在整个英语教学中占有十分重要的地位,这主要是因为阅读对于写、说、译、听等技能有着极其重大的影响。首先,写作能力与阅读有着密切的关系,这是众所周知的。其次,读不懂的文章就谈不上对它的翻译和口头表达,也就听不懂。在听力测试中,试卷是以书面形式出现的,而且测试时间又有严格规定,所以不少阅读能力差的学生往往是顾上听,顾不上读,或是顾上读,顾不上听。由于上述理由《大学英语教学大纲》把大学英语的教学目的规定为“培养学生具有较强的阅读能力、一定的听的能力、初步的写和说的能力”是完全正确的。与教学大纲相对应,大学英语考试大纲也对阅读理解部分给予充分重视,其总分占40分,比听力、语法和词汇三个项目得分的总和还多五分。大学英语四级测试卷的结构及分数的分布不能不引起我们对于阅读教学的重视。

本书共汇集英语短文248篇,按照难易程度分为四个等级,每四篇作为一个试卷,每篇下面列有五个理解题。前三个等级各十个试卷,共120篇;第四个等级为32个试卷共128篇。本书取材广泛,包括人物传记、社会、文化、日常生活知识、科普常识等,所涉及背景知识一般能为学生所理解;体裁多样,包括叙述文、说明文和议论文等;难易适中,文中无法猜测而又影响作题的关键词语都用汉语注出了词义。短文后面的理解题有的是检测主旨、大意,有的检测与主旨有关的细节,有的检测对个别字句的理解,有的检测推论、判断和上下文的逻辑关系。为了便于教学安排,我们备有本书的参考答案需要时可与本书编者联系。

本书适用于大学生和研究生、出国留学学生以及其他英语学习者提高阅读能力和阅读应试能力。

由于我们的水平所限,书中不妥之处在所难免,诚请读者批评指正。

编 者

1991年1月

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BAND ONE

Test 1

Passage 1

There is an ancient Greek story about a monster. It asked people a question. If they could not answer correctly, it killed them. This is the question. It has four legs in the morning. It has two legs in the afternoon. It has three legs in the evening. What is it?

The monster killed many people. Then one man succeeded in guessing the correct answer.

Questions like this are called "riddles". You will find them in all languages. Some are hard and some are easy. Here is an easy one. It has legs but cannot walk. What is it? It is a chair. Can you think of other answers to that riddle?

Riddles often contain some kind of a trick to make you give the wrong answer. Here is an example. What is the longest word in the English language? Answer: "Smiles", because the first and last letters have a mile between them. Can you invent some riddles to ask your friends?

1. The correct answer is_____.

a. a chair b. a bed c. a horse d. a man

2. It has four legs in the morning. The morning means_____.

- a. ☒ the morning of his life, when a man is a baby
 b. the spring of a year
 c. the morning of a day
 d. when the sun rises
3. Three legs means ____.
- a. a man crawls on hands and feet b. ☒ an old man with a stick
 c. a man lost his leg d. a monster
4. It has two legs in the afternoon. It means ____.
- a. a baby b. an old man c. ☒ an adult d. a clock
5. Questions like this are called "riddles". Riddles mean ____.
- a. stories b. tales c. ☒ puzzling questions d. myths

Passage 2

A flag is more than a piece of cloth. It stands for a nation's people—their land, history, and ideals. Iceland's flag, for instance, stands for features of the land. Red is for the fire of Iceland's volcanoes. White is for ice. Blue is for the mountains. On India's flag, the blue wheel stands for peace and progress. The white stripe behind it is for truth. The black stripe on the flag of Malawi stands for the Negro people of that African land. The red stripe represents the blood they shed to free themselves from foreign rule.

When the people of any nation see their flag flying, they feel proud. They love and honor the flag as the symbol of their country.

1. The flag of Iceland is ____.
- a. red and white b. blue and green
 c. black, white, and red d. ☒ red, white, and blue
2. The white stripe on India's flag stands for ____.
- a. ice and mountains b. peace and progress
 c. waterfalls d. ☒ truth
3. The red on Malawi's flag reminds the people of ____.
- a. the many volcanoes in their land b. the beauty of their countryside
 c. ☒ their fight for freedom d. their need to make progress
4. The writer says that when people see their flag they feel ____.
- a. peace b. pride c. love d. ☒ both b and c
5. The most important thing about a flag is ____.
- a. ☒ what it stands for b. when it is used
 c. what it is made of d. how big it is

Passage 3

In 1889 all Paris admired the Eiffel Tower. It was the engineering wonder of the world. Alexandre. Gustave Eiffel had completed his

masterpiece in steel.

Steel as a building material was then still new. The 984-foot tower was a lacy (带有花边的) network of girders (梁). There were thousands of steel pieces. Two and a half million on rivets joined them.

From four corners, the legs of the tower slope inward. They rise to form the spire. Lifts carry visitors to three platforms at different height. On a clear day, countryside sixty miles off is viewed from the top platform.

As Eiffel planned, his structure is a landmark of Paris. It is even higher today. A relay station for radio and television has added almost fifty feet to the tower.

1. The tower bears the name of ____.
a. the main river of Paris b. a president of France ✓
c. ☒ its builder d. none of the above
2. The tower was an engineering wonder because of ____.
X a. ☒ its sideways slant ☒ b. the use of steel
c. the use of glass d. its location
3. At the bottom, the tower has ____.
a. two main sections b. three legs X
c. ☒ four legs d. six legs ✓
4. To reach the top platform, sightseers use ____.
a. ☒ lifts b. escalators
c. steel ladders d. spiral stairways
5. The article does not say that ____.
X a. ☒ many people at first thought the tower was ugly
b. steel arches link the legs of the tower
c. the total height is now given as 1,033 feet. .
☒ d. any of the above

Passage 4

Once upon a time there lived a poor peasant, who was too old to work. One day he was standing on the road, cold and hungry. Suddenly a stranger appeared before him, carrying a beautiful white goose. "Take care of my goose, and my goose will take care of you. "

The peasant took the goose home, and gave her water to drink, and his last grain of rice to eat. When the goose had finished her supper, the peasant made her a nest of warm sweet hay to sleep in. The next morning when the peasant woke up, his first thought was the goose. To his surprise, he found in his nest a beautiful golden egg newly

laid. He picked it up and hurried off to the nearest market and sold it for much money. The next morning the same thing happened and the next and the next. With the eggs he was able to buy clothes and food, and build a new house.

1. Which one is not true according to the passage?
 - a. The stranger came to help the peasant.
 - ☒ b. The stranger didn't know his goose would lay golden eggs.
 - c. After the peasant fed the goose that night, he got no grain left.
 - d. The goose helped him out of poverty.
2. The peasant was very poor, because _____.
 - a. he worked too hard,
 - b. he was old enough to work
 - ☒ c. he couldn't work
 - d. he was always standing on the road
3. The stranger appeared before him, because _____.
 - ☒ a. the stranger wanted to help him
 - b. the stranger would take care of him
 - c. the stranger wanted to work for him
 - d. the stranger wanted to sell his goose
4. The peasant got _____ eggs in a week.
 - a. one
 - b. three
 - c. five
 - ☒ d. seven
5. With the eggs he was able to _____.
 - a. buy clothes
 - b. buy food
 - c. build a house
 - ☒ d. all of the above

Test 2

Passage 1

The first English window was just a slit in the wall. It was cut long, so that it would let in as much light as possible, and narrow, to keep out the bad weather. However the slit let in more wind than light. This is why it was called "the wind's eye". The word window itself comes from two Old Norse words for wind and eye.

Before windows were used, the ancient halls and castles of northern Europe and Britain were dark and smoky. Their great rooms were high, with only a hole in the roof to let out the smoke from torches and cooking fires.

As time went on, people wanted more light and air in their homes. They made the wind's eye wider so as to admit more air and light. They stretched canvas or tapestry across them to keep out the weather.

1. The first window was a _____.
 - a. large hole in the wall

- b. hole covered with canvas
 - ☒ c. a narrow opening in the wall
 - d. a long cut with a piece of paper over it
2. The word window meant ____.
- a. an opening to look through
 - b. a light given
 - ☒ c. a slit
 - ☒ d. wind's eye
3. The window got its name because it ____.
- a. kept out the bad weather
 - b. blew out the smoke
 - ☒ c. let in more wind than light
 - d. let in fresh air
4. In the ancient castles, smoke went out through ____.
- a. the windows
 - b. the doors
 - c. the chimney
 - ☒ d. a hole in the roof
5. It seems true that the larger windows with canvas or tapestry ____.
- a. were not any better than the first ones
 - b. were worse than the first ones
 - ☒ c. did not let any air in
 - ☒ d. were as good as today's windows

Passage 2 *atom.*

Atoms are all around us. They are the bricks of which everything is made. Many millions of atoms are contained in just one grain of salt, but despite their small size they are very important. The way an everyday object behaves depends on what kinds of atoms are in it and how they act.

For instance, you know most solid objects melt if they get hot enough. Why is this? It is the effect of the heat on the object's atoms. All atoms move constantly. When they are hot, they move faster.

Usually the atoms in an object hold together and give the object its shape. But if the object grows hot, its atoms move so fast that they break the force that usually holds them together. They move out of their usual places so that the object loses its shape. Then we say that the object is melting.

1. One grain of salt contains ____.
- a. a few thousand atoms
 - ☒ b. many millions of atoms
 - c. several heated atoms
 - d. one million atoms
2. The way an object behaves depends on the ____.
- ☒ a. kinds of atoms in it
 - b. number of atoms
 - ☒ c. way its atoms behave
 - ☒ d. both a and c
3. Atoms in an object move ____.
- ☒ a. at all times
 - b. only when the object is heated

- c. whenever they grow hot d. unless the object has melted
4. Heating an object will affect ____.
- a. the movement of its atoms b. the speed of its atoms
- ☒ c. both a and b d. the shape of its atoms
5. An object holds its shape because its atoms ____.
- ☒ a. usually hold together b. move very fast
- c. are very hot d. are not moving

Passage 3

Few animals other than monkeys have handlike paws. The monkey, like man, has an opposable thumb—that is, it can place its thumb opposite its other fingers. By pressing its first finger against its thumb a monkey can pick up things as tiny as a flea. Because other animals lack this thumb, it is difficult for them to pick up small things and carry them.

The monkey's ability to grasp rice with its paw often leads to its capture. Hunters bait a coconut (椰子果) with a handful of rice, leaving a hole in the shell of the nut. The monkey has no trouble sliding its paw through the hole. But it can't draw the paw out while it is holding a fistful of rice.

Since it is often too stupid or greedy to open its hand, the monkey is unable to free itself from this simple trap.

1. Not many animal have ____.
- a. fingers b. hands c. paws ☒ d. handlike paws
2. An opposable thumb is a thumb that can ____.
- a. pick up things ☒ b. be placed against the other fingers
- c. press against the other thumbs d. press against anything
3. A monkey can pick up small objects by pushing its thumb against ____.
- a. its paws b. its fingers ☒ c. its forefinger d. the objects
4. Hunters put rice in the coconut trap because monkeys ____.
- a. can get the rice easily b. have trouble picking up rice
- ☒ c. must close their fists to hold rice ☒ d. both b and c
5. The success or failure of a coconut trap depends on ____.
- ☒ a. what kind of rice is put in the trap
- b. how large the coconut is
- c. how many holes are in the coconut
- ☒ d. whether the monkey will give up the rice

Passage 4

Between A.D. 700 and 1100, northern rovers called Vikings explored most of the known world. They even crossed the Atlantic and

reached the shores of North America. Yet they had no compasses or other modern instruments. How did they find their way?

The Vikings stayed near coasts whenever they could. In open seas they navigated by the sun. On cloudy days they used sun stones. Sun stones were probably pieces of a crystal now called cordierite. This substance has the power to filter sunlight. Peering through a sun stone, a sailor could find out where the sun was and thus plot his ship's latitude.

Today sky compasses are used to guide some Scandinavian jets across polar regions, where a magnetic compass would be of no use. Though more complex, the sky compass works in the same way as the sun stones used by the Vikings more than a thousand years ago.

1. The Vikings traveled mostly _____.
a. by aircraft b. in ships c. on foot d. on horseback
2. Coastlines often helped the Vikings _____.
a. discover good hunting areas b. hide from their enemies
c. keep away from rocks d. find their way
3. The Vikings used sun stones to _____.
a. determine their latitude b. measure the temperature
c. predict the coming of storms d. both a and b
4. Sun stones were used when _____.
a. the night was dark b. the day was clear
c. clouds hid the sun d. no winds blew
5. Sky compasses are used in polar regions because _____.
a. radar is useless at the poles b. the days are so short
c. magnetic compasses won't work there.
d. sun stones are no longer available.

Test 3

Passage 1

Bamboo is a giant grass that grows in warm climates. It has many uses. Everything from chairs and fishing rods to rope and paper can be made from it. And that's not all. It can be eaten too.

In many parts of Asia, bamboo shoots (笋) are a favorite food. The winter shoots taste the best. They are soft, with a creamy color. Usually they are boiled in salted water. Spring shoots are darker and harder. They take longer to cook and cost less than winter shoots.

Fresh bamboo shoots are seldom found outside their native soil.

But preserved shoots may be used in their places. They need no cooking and taste almost as good.

1. This story is mostly about bamboo as a ____.
a. decoration b. building material c. tool ☒ d. food
2. The story calls bamboo a ____.
a. bush b. tree ☒ c. grass d. weed
3. Compared with spring shoots, winter shoots ____.
☒ a. taste better ☒ b. have a lighter color
c. take less time to cook ☒ d. all of the above
4. Spring shoots cost less probably because ____.
☒ a. they need no cooking b. they are softer ✓
c. people don't like them as well d. salt must be added to them
5. Preserved bamboo shoots are probably ____.
☒ a. cooked before being preserved b. sweetened with sugar or honey
c. made into chairs and tables d. used to make rope

Passage 2

Mr. Thompson did not learn to drive a car until he was almost thirty, because he was a very nervous person who always had the convenience of someone else to drive him, first his mother and then his wife. But at last he decided to take lessons, and managed to pass his driving test on the second attempt, although he still wasn't good at parking.

A week later he drove into town by himself and was trying to park between two other cars when he damaged one of them slightly.

When he wrote to the insurance company about the accident, they sent him a form to fill in describing it, and one of the questions on the form was: "How could the driver of other car have prevented the accident from happening?"

Mr. Thompson thought for a minute and then wrote, "He could have parked his car on another street."

1. Mr. Thompson didn't learn to drive a car, because ____.
a. he had no car b. he was thirty
☒ c. he was an anxious and a worried person d. he was a mad person
2. He decided to pass his driving test when he was ____.
a. thirty b. over thirty
☒ c. nearly thirty d. in his thirties
3. He always had the convenience of someone else to drive him.
It means ____.
☒ a. he always drove someone else b. he drove instead of someone else

- ☒ c. someone else often drove him
 d. someone else always had the convenience of him to drive home.
4. His accident was that ____.
- ☒ a. he damaged a car badly ☒ b. he damaged a car slightly
 c. his car was damaged badly d. his car was damaged slightly
5. His answer was ____.
- ☒ a. wrong b. right c. reasonable d. possible

Passage 3

All the useful energy at the surface of the earth comes from the activity of the sun. The sun heats and feeds mankind. Each year it provides man with two hundred million tons of grain and wood.

Coal, oil, natural gas, and all other fuels are stored-up energy from the sun. Some was collected by season's plants as compounds. Some was stored by plants and trees ages ago. *Seu*

Even water-power derives from the sun. Water turned into vapor by the sun falls as rain. It courses down the mountains and is converted to electric power.

Light transmits only the energy that comes from the sun's outer layers, and much of this energy that is directed toward the earth never arrives. About nine-tenths of it is absorbed by the atmosphere of the earth. In fact, the earth itself gets only one half-billionth of the sun's entire output of radiant energy (辐射能).

- All the useful energy at the surface of the earth comes ____.
 - For the mankind, the sun is the source of ____.
 - Radiant energy is stored as carbon compounds by ____.
 - The largest part of the radiant energy directed toward the earth is ____.
 - Of the sun's entire output of the radiant energy, the earth receives ____.
- a. directly from the sun ☒ b. from the sun's activity
 c. from energy stored by the sun
 d. from radiation of the sun
- a. solar activity ☒ b. all heat
 c. all food ☒ d. both band c
- a. plants ☒ b. rain *both a & b*
☒ c. coal, oil, and natural gas ☒ d. inflammable substances
- a. stored by the current season's plants b. turned into fuel
☒ c. absorbed by the earth's atmosphere d. used for electric power
- a. nearly all b. about half
☒ c. a very small portion d. all that comes from the sun's outer layers

Passage 4

The horse has been man's friend since the earliest times, as painting on the walls of old caves and tombs show. A man on his steed became a symbol of power, striking fear into those he had conquered. A knight of medieval times would own several horses—one for war, some for racing and hunting, and others for jousting—while his lady had a palfrey (供妇女骑的马) of her own.

Later the horse played an important role in the field of medicine. Horsehair was used as thread to sew up wounds. The blood of horses was useful in the development of serums. In 1895 Emil von Behring developed a diphtheria serum. He injected into horses increasing doses of toxins until their blood built up a resistance. The serum he obtained from the horses' blood helped cure diphtheria in human beings. The same method was used to develop a serum for tetanus, commonly known as lockjaw.

Today horseflesh is eaten by people in some parts of Europe and Asia. In many other countries horseflesh serves mainly as cat and dog food.

1. Cave and tomb paintings prove that the horse ____.
☒ a. has always been liked by artists
☐ b. was known to early man
☒ c. influenced the course of history
☐ d. participated in hunting expeditions
2. A man mounted on a horse represented ____.
a. friendship ☒ b. power c. courtesy d. wealth
3. Knights used horses for ____.
a. fighting b. sport
c. hunting ☒ d. all of the above
4. The part of the horse used to develop serums is its ____.
a. bones b. hide ☒ c. blood d. hair
5. The two human diseases the horse has helped cure are ____.
a. tetanus and lockjaw ☒ b. lockjaw and diphtheria
c. diphtheria and heart disease d. diphtheria and wounds

Test 4

Passage 1

It is morning on a coral reef (珊瑚礁). The sun warms the water and lights up the reef below. The color of the reef is mostly a soft

blue-green. But there are flashes of bright colors everywhere—colors of fish and of many other creatures that live here.

A purple fish with blue dots swims out of a hole in the coral wall. A big red crab hides beneath a ledge. A green eel stretches its head out of a cave. Dozens of blue fish with yellow stripes dart this way and that.

The fish swim over purple sponges and over coral rocks splashed with color. The corals look like dozens of tiny rock flowers and rock stars.

The fish, the crab, the eels are all animals you can see. But there are billions more you don't see.

1. There are flashes of bright colors everywhere.
 - a. They are colors of fish.
 - b. They are colors of the many other creatures in the sea.
 - c. They are colors of flashes of lightning.
 - ☒ d. Both a and b.
2. Which of the following is not true?
 - ☒ a. We can see all animals in the morning.
 - b. We can see the fish swimming.
 - c. We can see a green eel stretching its head.
 - d. We can see many blue fishes.
3. According to this passage, we know _____.
 - a. the corals are tiny rock flowers
 - b. the corals are tiny rock stars
 - ☒ c. the corals are creatures
 - ☒ d. both a and b
4. What are polyps (水母)?
 - a. It is a fish ☒
 - ☒ b. It is a little animal we can't see.
 - c. It is a coral reef ☒
 - d. It is something dirty in the sea.
5. From this passage we can conclude that the author _____.
 - a. hates the sea
 - ☒ b. likes the sea
 - c. is annoyed for the sea
 - d. has a cold feeling to the sea

Passage 2

Strange things happen to time when you travel, because the earth is divided into twenty-four time zones, one hour apart. You can have days with more or fewer than twenty-four hours, and weeks with more or fewer than seven days.

If you make a five-day trip across the Atlantic Ocean, your ship enters a different time zone every day. As you enter each zone, the time changes one hour. Traveling west, you set your clock back; traveling east, you set it ahead. Each day of your trip has either twenty-five or twenty-three hours.