

大学英语四级考试**无笔训练**丛书

新大纲 新思路 新编排

阅 读 理 解

English

主 编：尹 群 李晓翠



天津大学出版社
TIANJIN UNIVERSITY PRESS



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新大纲

新思路

新编录

阅读理解

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考生在准备四级考试中,往往有两大困惑:一是感到自己整体水平尚可,但总在某一两个方面相对薄弱,难觅攻克良方;二是由于学习和工作时间紧张,常常没有充裕的时间去认真准备,想把自己的时间积零为整,又难寻对路的备考资料。为了满足广大考生的迫切需要,针对这两个难题,我们精心策划和编写了这套“大学英语四级考试无笔训练丛书”,以期使您的困惑迎刃而解。

本丛书包括《词汇与语法结构》、《阅读理解》、《简答题》、《写作》、《完型填空》、《翻译》及《全真模拟题》共七册,每册22元。

本丛书作者均是多年来一直从事大学英语教研工作,积累了丰富的教学和四级考试辅导经验的教师。他们想考生之所想,急考生之所急,潜心钻研,精心打造,使得本丛书与其他大学英语四级方面的书籍相比,有以下突出的特点。

1.独特的版式设计,使问题、难点及解决方法均在一页中得到全面解决。“只需你看,无须动笔”,哪怕是仅仅利用工作、学习之余的时间,坚持浏览与细细品味,也可快速获得学习效益。

2.精当的选材,是作者多年来对四级考试真题的潜心研究和辅导实践的结晶。其内容重点突出,命题的思路、难度、题量、题型也与真题保持高度一致。这样就能使考生在使用本丛书后对自己的水平有一个正确的评估。

3.释疑针对性强,难点讲解透彻,且覆盖面广。本书便于考生举一反三,在四级考试中真正做到以不变应万变。

在编写本丛书的过程中,作者所在高等院校的领导给予了特别鼓励和关心。天津易文图文设计有限公司的独特版式设计,使得本丛书表现形式更加完美。天津大学出版社在成书全过程中给予我们大力支持。在丛书付梓之际,特向他们表示衷心感谢。

由于编写水平和时间有限,书中错误在所难免,敬请同行专家及广大读者提出批评意见。

编者

2003年4月

国家教育部审定的新的《大学英语教学大纲》规定：“大学英语教学的目的是，培养学生具有较强的阅读能力，一定的听力能力，以及初步的写和说的能力，使学生能以英语为工具，获取专业所需的信息，并为进一步提高英语水平打下较好的基础”。可见，阅读是我国大学英语课程的主要培养目标。在各种语言技能中，《大学英语教学大纲》对阅读能力的要求最高，因而在大学英语四级考试中，阅读理解试题在整个考试中占了很大的比重。阅读理解部分的成功与否对学生英语考试总成绩的提高至关重要。

本书是根据教学与考试大纲对阅读的要求而编写的，目的在于通过典型试题的强化训练和讲解，进一步巩固学生的语言知识和技能，提高学生的应试能力，以帮助学生科学、省时、高效地跨越四级阅读这一关口。本书作者通过对近年来四级英语阅读测试所面临的具体情况，对《大纲》所规定的要求进行了全面的分析，精心编写，使本书在内容上具有以下特点。

内容广泛。书中的词汇题涉及了学校教育、自然科学、环境保护、社会文化、体育运动、历史地理、健康保健、人物传记、科普知识等，可谓面面俱到。

选材规范。书中题型完全符合实际考试，语言地道、文体规范、难度恰当，完全符合大纲要求。

指导性强。本书在给出答案的同时，还通过分析考生的解题的心理和特点，结合学生可能做出的选择和容易出现错误，进行画龙点睛般的解释，既突出了重点和难点，又具有较强的针对性和指导性。

由于水平和时间有限，书中错误在所难免，敬请同行专家及广大读者提出批评意见。

编者

2003年4月

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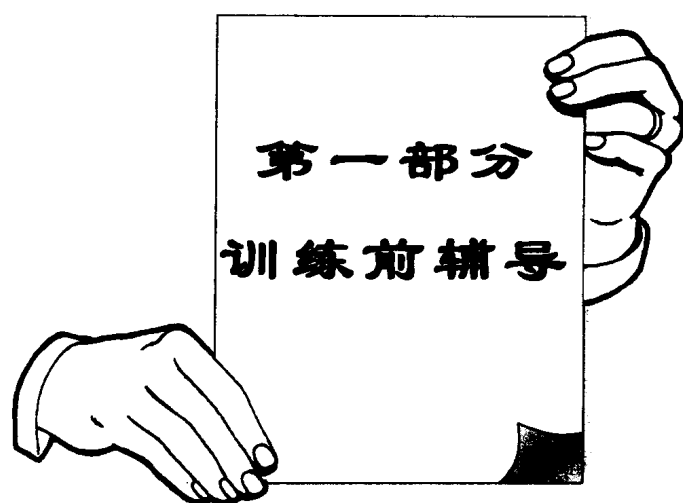
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怎样提高英语阅读理解能力

《大纲》明确指出,“培养学生具有较强的阅读能力是大学英语教学的主要目的”。这一教学目标是使我们的大学生在未来的工作或学习中能以英语为工具,涉猎于西方文化科技等领域,拓宽知识视野并在专业上有所发展。阅读英语资料是我们获得信息、摄取知识的主要途径,掌握了英语阅读技能就好比得到了一把打开西方科技文化宝库的钥匙。阅读理解能力包括两个方面的内容,即对材料内容的充分理解和一定的阅读速度。阅读速度与内容理解二者之间重点是理解,而不是脱离理解的速度,这是由阅读的目的所决定的。必须在正确理解的基础上提高速度,才能真正提高阅读理解能力,才能答好阅读理解试题。如果只图速度快而理解效果却很差,就达不到阅读的目的;反之,如果只求理解正确而速度却很慢,就不能在规定的时间内完成阅读任务。

一、影响正确理解的几个因素

英语阅读时理解效果差可能是由于下列因素的影响:

1. 词汇知识贫乏。单词记忆不牢,缺乏必要的词汇知识,是造成理解错误的一个重要原因。有些人不会根据上下文来理解和确定词义,甚至查完词典后仍不知该选择哪条释义,更何况阅读理解考试中根本不允许查词典呢?有些人则习惯于用自己最熟悉的词义去理解,岂不知大多数英语单词都是一词多义。这样往往会造成对句子的理解似是而非,甚至会导致对整个段落的曲解。

2. 语法基础不扎实。语法知识掌握得不好,对英语习惯表达法了解甚少,也是造成理解失误的一个重要原因。有些人不会分析和理解英语复合句,对主句和从句之间、从句和从句之间的复杂关系理不出头绪,遇到习惯用法更是摸不着头脑,因此他们领会不出句子结构所传递的语法信息,更理解不了句子的确切意义。

3. 理解停留在单句水平上。不少人习惯于逐词逐句地阅读,不会根据上下文线索来分析和判断词义句义,更不会把获得的信息前后联系起来,读了下句忘了上句,所以总是停留在单句水平上的理解,不能达到语篇水平上的理解。本来储存到大脑中的信息量就不多,又不能有效地加工处理以使信息得到扩展,当然就影响了对材料的整体理解效果。

4. 对阅读理解试题的材料不适应。阅读理解考试的材料与课文之间有一定的差距。课文结构大都比较松散,篇幅长而信息量相对来说却较少。考试的阅读材料就不同了。它们篇幅短小、



结构严谨、信息量大，是一些浓缩了的段落。我们平时读课文时速度可以慢一些，可以重复多次阅读，还可以查词典。考试时就不成了，我们要在规定的时间内完成阅读任务，要力求一遍读懂，把浓缩在材料中的大量信息尽可能多地找出来，没有平时的基本功当然是不行的。

二、怎样提高理解的准确率

要提高理解的准确率，应做好以下几点。

1. 努力扩大词汇量。词汇量是理解的基础，也是阅读的必备条件。一个人词汇量越大，阅读时理解障碍就越少。应结合语言环境学习和掌握一些常用的词和短语，丰富大脑中的语言信息量，提高对书面语言的反应能力。扩大词汇量是无止境的，要不断学习和积累新词汇，也要复习和巩固原来已经掌握的词汇。

2. 牢固掌握语法知识。不仅要熟练掌握各种时态、语态和语气，也要熟悉英语的基本句子结构和各种从句的构成及用法，具备一定的句子分析能力，还要学会利用上下文判断词义和理解句子。

3. 重视语篇水平上阅读理解能力的训练。阅读理解时我们的着眼点应放在整体水平的理解上，也就是要把握住文章的中心思想。主题句是表达中心思想的句子，是文章思想内容的凝聚点，所以学会辨识主题句有助于把我们的理解思维纳入正确的轨道，并为我们选择答案提供依据。主题句的位置可能在文章开头，开门见山提出主题；也可能在文章的末尾，对前面的叙述或论证做出结论。有些文章没有主题句，此时就需要对文章中所有信息进行综合概括来确定中心思想。在阅读理解的过程中，要特别注意那些搭配能力强使用频率高的小词，留心词汇出现的上下文及其情境气氛，训练自己的语言观察能力，增强语感，力求读出字里行间内含的意义。还要学会根据词、句、段之间的逻辑结构及意义上的联系来把握文章的主题思想。阅读训练时使用的材料应篇幅短小、结构严谨、信息量大、难度与 CET-4 考试的材料相当，以适应 CET-4 考试的特点和要求。

4. 扩大阅读量。扩大阅读量是提高理解准确率的重要途径。不仅要加大阅读篇幅和文字总和的数量，也要扩大阅读材料的内容和题材范围。在阅读实践中不断扩大自己的知识面，增加对英美国家社会、文化、历史、地理、风土人情以及科技知识的了解，从而提高我们大脑加工处理文字信息的质量和速度，使理解的准确率逐步提高。阅读能力不是老师教会的，而是学生学会的。光听老师讲阅读技巧是不能解决根本问题的，要培养起自己的阅读兴趣，尤其是课外阅读的兴趣。每天都应拿出一定的时间（比如 20 分钟至半小时）来进行英语阅读练习。

三、影响阅读速度的几个因素

1. 小声朗读或默读。不少人阅读时习惯于读出声来或默读，有人甚至用手指或尺子指着一个个的单词朗读，似乎只有这样才能理解得深透。岂不知人的眼睛摄入信息和大脑加工处理信息的速度都远远高于人的朗读速度。



2. 回视或重复阅读。有些人在读完一句或一段话之后，习惯于再返回去重读一遍。这样，他们阅读一篇文章可能要花费两三倍于他人的时间。

3. 视幅太窄。有些人习惯于逐词逐句的阅读，而且视幅太窄，每次眼动只能摄入一个单词。他们不会利用眼睛的余光，不能一次摄入一个词组或一个句子，所以阅读速度缓慢。

4. 查词的次数太多。不少人阅读时只要遇到生词就一定要查词典，这当然也影响阅读速度。其实有些生词的词义是可以根据构词法知识或上下文线索推测出来的，有些不影响句义理解的生词则可以忽略不考虑，或者等读完整篇材料后再查。

四、怎样提高阅读的速度

要提高阅读，除克服上述不良阅读习惯并逐步培养正确的阅读习惯外，还需要进行一些方法和技巧的训练。

1. 计时阅读。阅读一篇材料时记下自己所用的时间，然后根据材料的词数计算出自己的阅读速度；或者选择一些长度和难度相当的文章，在规定的时间内读完并做阅读理解题。在取得一定进步后再选择篇幅更长些的材料，仍在相同的时间内读完。这样做就可以强迫自己克服不良阅读习惯，提高阅读速度。

2. 用内容熟悉的材料训练阅读速度。阅读内容熟悉、趣味性强而且难易适当的文章，速度一定会快一些。而要熟悉各种材料的内容，就要在平时广泛接触不同类型的文章，从散文、小说到自然科学和社会科学，都应读一些。

3. 学会猜测词义。在阅读中遇到生词时，只要不影响内容理解，尽量不要查词典。要学会根据构词法和上下文来判断词义，也要学会利用限定成分如定语从句、同位语从句等来确定词义。

4. 掌握几种阅读技巧。阅读技巧主要有预测、查读、略读和分析性阅读。这四种技巧中前三种属于阅读的初步技能。所谓预测是指在阅读开始前首先根据标题或练习题选择项所提示的线索来预测材料的内容。无论我们预测得正确与否，都有助于提高我们的阅读兴趣和主观能动性。查读的目的在于验证或查找某个事实或信息而不是理解全文，它要求我们用目光扫视材料，直至找到所需的信息为止。略读的目的在于了解文章的大意或主题思想。此时我们可以忽略与内容大意无关的细节，迅速通读全文，领会其中心内容。分析性阅读是阅读的高级技能。它要求我们准确并熟练掌握材料中的词汇、语法和修辞手段，深透地理解材料内容以及作者的思想感情和态度等。

善于阅读的人会根据需要随时改变阅读速度。不同的材料、不同的阅读目的，都要求我们采用不同的速度和技巧。比如我们为了写论文而查阅资料的速度与我们阅读消遣读物的速度，自然是不一样的。我们考试时阅读速度当然要比我们阅读课文的速度快些才行。



阅读理解题测试要点及样题分析

一、测试要点

阅读理解主要考核学生通过阅读获取书面信息的能力,属于语言技能考试的范畴。其测试要点主要有:

- (1)掌握材料内容大意或重要信息的能力(Understanding main ideas or important information);
- (2)了解具体事实和细节内容的能力(Drawing specific facts);
- (3)根据材料内容进行正确推论的能力(Making correct inference);
- (4)根据材料内容进行正确判断的能力(Making sound judgement);
- (5)辨别词或词组意义的能力(Identifying words or phrases)。

二、样题分析

下面我们依据阅读理解题的测试要点来对CET-4样题阅读理解部分进行分析。

Passage One

The advantages and disadvantages of a large population have long been a subject of discussion among economists. It has been argued that the supply of good land is limited. To feed a large population, inferior land must be cultivated and the good land worked intensively. Thus, each person produces less and this means a lower average income than could be obtained with a smaller population. Other economists have argued that a large population gives more scope for specialization and the development of facilities such as ports, roads and railways, which are not likely to be built unless there is a big demand to justify them.

One of the difficulties in carrying out a world-wide birth control program lies in the fact that official attitudes to population growth vary from country to country depending on the level of industrial development and the availability of food and raw materials. In a developing country where a vastly expanded population is pressing hard upon the limits of food, space and natural resources, it will be the first concern of government to place a limit on the birthrate, whatever the consequences may be. In a highly industrialized society the problem may be more complex. A decreasing birthrate may lead to unemployment because it results in a declining market for manufactured goods. When the pressure of population on housing declines, prices also decline and the building industry is weakened. Faced with



considerations such as these, the government of a developed country may well prefer to see a slowly increasing population, rather than one which is stable or in decline.

21. A small population may mean _____.
A. higher productivity, but a lower average income
B. lower productivity, but a higher average income
C. lower productivity and a lower average income
D. higher productivity and a higher average income
22. According to the passage, a large population will provide a chance for developing _____.
A. agriculture B. transport system C. industry D. national economy
23. In a developed country, people will perhaps go out of work if the birthrate _____.
A. goes up B. goes down C. remains stable D. is out of control
24. According to the passage, slowly rising birthrate perhaps is good for _____.
A. a developing nation B. a developed nation
C. every nation with a big population D. every nation with a small population
25. It is no easy job to carry out a general plan for birth control throughout the world because _____.
A. there are too many underdeveloped countries in the world
B. underdeveloped countries have low level of industrial development
C. different governments have different views of the question
D. even developed countries may have complex problems

这篇材料共两个自然段:1.人口众多的利弊问题是经济学家们长期以来争论不休的话题。有人认为人口多是造成生产率低和平均收入低的原因,有人则认为人口多有利于发展交通等事业。2.世界各国政府对控制人口问题态度不一。发展中国家因食品、住房及自然资源的限制而竭力赞成控制人口出生率,发达国家则担心人口下降会造成市场萧条从而导致失业。

第21题是语义题,我们可以根据第一段第三、四句提示的线索来解答此题。注意文中说的是“a large population, each person produces less and a lower average income”,而题中说的是“A small population may mean”,只要找出上述解题线索的反义结构,便找到了正确答案,即D。干扰项C的干扰性较强,如果忽视了题句中small一词,就很可能选错。第22题也是语义题,正确答案为B。我们可以比较容易地在第一段中为答案找到对应词组,即ports, roads and railways。同时,该词组所在的句子结构a large population gives more scope for与题句的结构相近,也是一条解题线索。

第23题是内容细节题,正确答案为B。我们可以在第二段中有关发达国家对人口问题的



态度一部分找到解题线索,即A decreasing birthrate may lead to unemployment, 其中unemployment和题句中的go out of work相对应, decreasing则和选择项B对应。

第24题为要点题,测试的是短文中的一个重要信息,即发达国家希望人口出生率缓慢上升而不是稳定或下降。此题正确答案为B,可以从developed country may well prefer to see a slowly increasing population中找到答案线索。

第25题测试的是短文的主题内容,正确答案为C。我们可以从第二段第一句(主题句)中找到答题信息,其中One of the difficulties in carrying out ...与题句中的It is no easy job to carry out ...相对应,official attitudes ... vary from country to country恰好与选择项C的意义相同。

Passage Two

"It hurts me more than you,"and "This is for your own good." These are the statements my mother used to make years ago when I had to learn Latin, clean my room, stay home and do homework.

That was before we entered the permissive period in education in which we decided it was all right not to push our children to achieve their best in school. The schools and the educators made it easy on us. They thought that it was all right to be parents who take a let-alone policy. We stopped making our children do homework. We gave them calculators, turned on the television, left the teaching to the teachers and went on vacation.

Now teachers, faced with children who have been developing at their own pace for the past 15 years, are realizing we've made a terrible mistake. One such teacher is Sharon Klompus who says of her students—"so passive"—and wonders what happened. Nothing was demanded of them, she believes. Television, says Klompus, contributes to children's passivity. "We're not training kids to work any more," says Klompus. "We're talking about a generation of kids who've never been hurt or hungry. They have learned somebody will always do it for them. Instead of saying 'go look it up', you tell them the answer. It takes greater energy to say no to a kid."

Yes, it does. It takes energy and it takes work. It's time for parents to end their vacation and come back to work. It's time to take the car away, to turn the TV off, to tell them it hurts you more than them but it's for their own good. It's time to start telling them no again.

26. Children are becoming more inactive in study because _____.

- A. they watch TV too much B. they have done too much homework
C. they have to fulfil too many duties D. teachers are too strict with them

27. To such children as described in the passage _____.



- A. it is easier to say no than to say yes B. neither is easy—to say yes or to say no
C. it is easier to say yes than to say no D. neither is difficult—to say yes or to say no
28. We learn from the passage that the author's mother used to lay emphasis on _____.
A. learning Latin B. natural development C. discipline D. education at school
29. By "permissive period in education" the author means a time _____.
A. when children are allowed to do what they wish to
B. when everything can be taught at school
C. when every child can be educated
D. when children are permitted to receive education
30. The main idea of the passage is that _____.
A. parents should leave their children alone
B. kids should have more activities at school
C. it's time to be more strict with our kids
D. parents should always set a good example to their kids

这篇材料共四个自然段:

1. 作者的母亲过去对他要求十分严格。
2. 进入了“允许孩子随便发展”的时期后,有些父母放松了对子女的管教。
3. 现在一些教师开始认识到,听凭孩子任意发展是一个错误。
4. 现在该是父母们对孩子严格要求的时候了。

第26题为内容细节题,答案为A。题句中inactive一词可以在短文第三段中找到对应词passive, passivity,而后者所在的句子Television contributes to children's passivity恰好与选择项A相对应,所以我们可以确定该项为正确答案。干扰项B和C都是针对第一自然段的内容来设计的,考生做第一题往往到首段去找答案,因而可能会出错。

第27题是语义题,答案为C。该选项可以在第三自然段找到对应句,即It takes greater energy to say no to a kid。如果答案选的是A,那可能是由于粗心所致;若选了B或D,则说明对句意理解有误。

第28题是推论题,答案为C。从第一自然段中I had to learn Latin, clean my room, stay home and do homework可以推断,作者的母亲当年很注意对作者严格要求,所以我们选择discipline作为答案。如果选了A,则说明对该段的理解片面了,如选了B或D,则是推断错误。

第29题是语义题,答案为A。permissive period in education短语出自第二自然段,我们可以根据该词组的定语从句in which we decided it was all right not to push our children to



achieve their best in school 推断, 它的意义与选择项 A 相符。干扰项 B 是针对 left the teaching to teachers 设计的, 干扰项 C 和 D 则是主观想像。

第30题为主旨大意题, 只有正确理解了整篇材料的内容, 才能总结出其中心思想 it's time to be more strict with our kids, 所以该题答案是 C。干扰项 A 是针对第二自然段中 it was all right to be parents who take a let-alone policy 设计的, 干扰项 B 针对第三段中 We're not training kids to work any more 设计的, 干扰项 D 则是针对第四自然段 It's time for parents to end their vacation and come back to work 设计的。如果对材料内容没有全面正确的了解, 就有可能选择了其中一个干扰项。

Passage Three

They are among the 250,000 people under the age of 25 who are out of work in the Netherlands, a group that accounts for 40 percent of the nation's unemployed. A storm of anger boils up at the government-sponsored(政府资助的)youth center, even among those who are continuing their studies.

"We study for jobs that don't exist," Nicolle Steggerda, 23, said.

After three decades of prosperity, unemployment among 10 member nations of the European Community has exceeded 11 percent, affecting a total of 12.3 million people, and the number is climbing.

The bitter disappointment long expressed by British youths is spreading across the Continent. The title of a rock song "No Future" can now be seen written on the brick walls of closed factories in Belgium and France.

Recent surveys have found that the increasing argument in the last few years over the deployment (部署) in Europe of North Atlantic Treaty Organization missiles and the possibility of nuclear war have clouded European youths' confidence in the future.

One form of protest tends to put the responsibility for a country's economic troubles on the large numbers of "guest workers" from Third World nations, people welcomed in Western Europe in the years of prosperity.

Young Europeans, brought up in an extended period of economic success and general stability, seem to resemble Americans more than they do their own parents. Material enjoyment has given them a sense of expectation, even the right, to a standard of living that they see around them.

"And so we pass the days at the discos, or meet people at the cafe, and sit and stare," said Isabella Gault. "There is usually not much conversation. You look for happiness. Sometimes you even find it."

31. Unemployment in the Netherlands has affected _____.

A. one million people

B. roughly 0.6 million people



- C. 250,000 people D. less than half of the population
32. What Nicolle Steggerda said (paragraph 2) means that _____.
A. school education is not sufficient
B. what the students learn is more than necessary
C. the students cannot get work after graduation
D. the students' aim in study is not clear
33. The word "prosperity" (line 3, paragraph 6) most probably means _____.
A. achievements in economy B. advance in politics
C. economic troubles D. political crisis
34. Which of the following statements is NOT TRUE?
A. The rock song "No Future" is an expression of the disappointment of European youths.
B. 40% of the guest workers are out of work in Western Europe now.
C. European youths are worried about a new world war in the future.
D. Wide spread unemployment is beyond European youths' expectation
35. British youths _____.
A. are trying to find work on the Continent
B. are sympathetic with the unemployed on the Continent
C. have been the first to show their disappointment over joblessness
D. show their concern for unemployment in France and Belgium
36. It seems that young Europeans _____.
A. look upon life as their elders do
B. are more like Americans than their elders in their way of thinking
C. look more like Americans than their elders do
D. expect more from Americans than from their elders

1. 在荷兰25岁以下的青年有25万人失业，占全国失业总人数的40%。
2. 经历了30多年的经济繁荣之后，欧共体10个成员国失业率已超过11%。
3. 最近的一些调查发现，近年来关于在欧洲部署北大西洋公约组织导弹的争论以及核战争的可能性使欧洲青年对未来失去了信心。
4. 有些人把欧共体国家经济上出现的问题归罪于外国工人的流入。
5. 欧洲青年很像美国人，他们渴望得到周围的人们所享受的生活。

第31题测试的是细节内容，要求我们通过计算找出荷兰的总失业人数。从第一自然段



提供的答题信息可知,荷兰青年失业人数为25万,占全国失业总人数的40%,所以全国失业总数约为60万人,选项B为正确答案。干扰项C是荷兰青年人的失业数;干扰项A是青年失业人数的4倍,与材料内容不符;干扰项D则没有根据,因为材料中没提到荷兰的总人口。

第32题为语义题,检验考生是否正确理解了第二自然段的句子,答案是C。干扰项A、B、D的释义均与原句意义不符。

第33题为语义题,检验考生对prosperity一词的理解情况。我们可以根据自己掌握的该词词义来答题,也可参照上文中的economic troubles和下文中的economic success来答题,正确答案为A。干扰项B、C和D显然都与该词词义不相符。

第34题为判断题,答案为B,因为材料中没提到在西欧工作的外国人的失业率,第一段中的40%指的也不是外国人的失业率。答题时应注意题句的大写字NOT TRUE,不可将NOT忽略,否则就会出现判断失误。

第35题为推论题。我们可以从第四自然段第一句The bitter disappointment long expressed by British youths is spreading across the Continent.推断,英国青年是最早对失业问题表示强烈不满的,所以正确答案为C。干扰项A、B和D都与材料内容不符。

第36题为语义题,检验考生是否正确理解了resemble一词在本文中的意思。我们从下文中的Material enjoyment has given them a sense of expectation可知,该词指的是思维方式像美国人,而不是长得像美国人或其他意思,所以答案应该是B。该题也可以理解为掌握材料中重要信息类型的题,答题线索与上述线索相同。

Passage Four

The news of the escape first got around on Sunday night. It threw the oldest son into anxiety, almost panic, possibly because he was old enough to know what it meant. The youngest didn't seem to care: he was too young. Mrs. Birnam—an unimaginative mother, easy-going, busy with family matters—seemed to take the attitude that if danger was involved, it was danger to somebody else besides themselves. Don's reaction, the middle son, was romantic: what a pity that it had happened forty miles away, and thus the consequent exciting danger or threat would never reach as far as their town of Arcadia. He was twelve at the time.

There had been a break at the state prison in Auburn. Six dangerous criminals had shot their way out and were even now—so everybody said—terrorizing the countryside, though no one had seen them since their rush to freedom after a wounded guard, at gun point, had raised the outer gate for their escape. They might equally have vanished off the face of the earth or hidden in somebody's abandoned barn, too frightened to stir from their hiding places for weeks to come.