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四级考试

历年真题解析

胡东华 主编
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第一部分 全真试题

1997 年 1 月大学英语四级考试

试 卷 一

Part I

Listening comprehension

(20 minutes)

Section A

Directions: In this section, you will hear 10 short conversations. At the end of each conversation, a question will be asked about what was said. Both the conversation and the question will be spoken only once. After each question there will be a pause. During the pause, you must read the four choices marked A), B), C) and D), and decide which is the best answer. Then mark the corresponding letter in the Answer Sheet with a single line through the centre.

Example: You will hear:

You will read: A) At the office. B) In the waiting room.
C) At the airport. D) In a restaurant.

From the conversation we know that the two were talking about some work they had to finish in the evening. This is most likely to have taken place at the office. Therefore, A) "At the office" is the best answer. You should choose [A] on the Answer Sheet and mark it with a single line through the centre.

Sample Answer {A}[B][C][D]

1. A) Look for a more expensive hotel. B) Try to find a quiet place.
C) Go to another hotel by bus. D) Take a walk around the city.
2. A) They're talking about nice children.
B) The man has a house for sale.
C) The woman lives in a nice house.
D) The man has three children.
3. A) In a hotel. B) At a dinner table.
C) In the street. D) At the man's house.
4. A) Relatives. B) Roommates.
C) Colleagues. D) Neighbors.
5. A) 5:00. B) 5:15. C) 5:30. D) 5:45.
6. A) He wants to have more sleep. B) Women need more sleep than men.
C) His wife doesn't sleep well. D) He doesn't need as much sleep as his wife.
7. A) A student. B) A reporter.
C) A visitor. D) A lecturer.
8. A) To the school. B) To a friend's house.
C) To the post office. D) Home.
9. A) He is afraid he won't be chosen for the trip.
B) The boss has not yet decided where to go.
C) Such a trip is necessary for the company.
D) It's not certain whether the trip will take place.
10. A) It was boring. B) It was entertaining.
C) It was touching. D) It was encouraging.

Section B

Directions: in this section, you will hear 3 short passages. At the end of each passage, you will hear some questions. Both the passage and the questions will be spoken only once. After you hear a question, you must choose the best answer from the four choices marked A), B), C), and D). Then mark the corresponding letter on the Answer Sheet with a single line through the centre.

Passage One

Questions 11 to 13 are based on the passage you have just heard.

11. A) He wanted to find a place to read his papers.
B) He wanted to kill time before boarding the plane.
C) He felt thirsty and wanted some coffee.
D) He went there to meet his friends.
12. A) Toys for children.
B) Important documents.
C) Food and coffee.
D) Clothes and scientific papers.
13. A) The women took his case on purpose.
B) All his papers had been stolen.
C) He had taken the woman's case.
D) The woman played a joke on him.

Passage Two

Questions 14 to 16 are based on the passage you have just heard.

14. A) The liberation movement of British women.
B) Rapid economic development in Britain.
C) Changing attitudes to family life.
D) Reasons for changes in family life in Britain.
15. A) Because millions of men died in the war.
B) Because women had proved their worth.
C) Because women were more skillful than men.
D) Because factories preferred to employ women.
16. A) The concept of "the family" as a social unit.
B) The attitudes to birth control.
C) The attitudes to religion.
D) The ideas of authority and tradition.

Passage Three

Questions 17 to 20 are based on the passage you have just heard.

17. A) Those who are themselves spoiled and self-centered.
B) Those who expected to have several children but could only have one.
C) Those who like to give expensive jewels to their children.
D) Those who give birth to their only children when they are below 30.
18. A) Because their parents want them to share the family burden.
B) Because their parents are too strict with them in their education.
C) Because they have nobody to play with.
D) Because their parents want them to grow up as fast as possible.
19. A) Two types of only children.
B) Parents' responsibilities.
C) The necessity of family planning.
D) The relationship between parents and children.
20. A) They have no sisters or brothers.

- B) They are overprotected by their parents.
C) Their parents expect too much of them.
D) Their parents often punish them for minor faults.

Part II

Vocabulary and Structure

(20 minutes)

Directions: There are 30 incomplete sentences in this part . For each sentence there are four choices marked A), B), C), and D) . Choose the One answer that best completes the sentence . Then mark the corresponding letter on the Answer Sheet with a single line through the centre .

21. Until then, his family _____ from him for six months.
A) didn't hear B) hasn't been hearing
C) hasn't heard D) hadn't heard
22. The conference _____ a full week by the time it ends.
A) must have lasted B) will have lasted
C) would last D) has lasted
23. Students or teachers can participate in excursions to lovely beaches around the island at regular _____.
A) gaps B) rate C) length D) intervals
24. Physics is _____ to the science which was called natural philosophy in history.
A) alike B) equivalent C) likely D) uniform
25. There's a man at the reception desk who seems very angry and I think he means _____ trouble.
A) making B) to make C) to have made D) having made
26. After the Arab states won independence, great emphasis was laid on expanding education, with girls as well as boys _____ to go to school.
A) to be encouraged B) been encouraged
C) being encouraged D) be encouraged
27. The new appointment of our president _____ from the very beginning of next semester.
A) takes effect B) takes part C) takes place D) takes turns
28. The president made a _____ speech at the opening ceremony of the sports meeting, which encouraged the sportsmen greatly.
A) vigorous B) tedious C) flat D) harsh
29. It is useful to be able to predict the extent _____ which a price change will affect supply and demand.
A) from B) with C) to D) for
30. Finding a job in such a big company has always been _____ his widest dreams.
A) under B) over C) above D) beyond
31. It is not easy to learn English well but if you _____, you will succeed in the end.
A) hang up B) hang about
C) hang in D) hang onto
32. It is reported that _____ adopted children want to know who their natural parents are.
A) the most B) most of
C) most D) the most of
33. Last year the advertising rate _____ by 20 percent.
A) raised B) aroused C) arose D) rose
34. _____ before we depart the day after tomorrow, we should have a wonderful dinner party.
A) Had they arrived B) Would they arrive
C) Were they arriving D) Were they to arrive
35. The strong storm did a lot of damage to the coastal villages: several fishing boats were _____ and many houses col-

lapsed.

- A) wrecked B) spoiled C) torn D) injured
36. The little man was _____ one meter fifty high.
A) almost more than B) hardly more than
C) nearly more than D) as much as
37. As _____ announced in today's papers, the Shanghai Export Commodities Fair is also open on Sunday.
A) being B) is C) to be D) been
38. You see the lightning _____ it happens, but you hear the thunder later.
A) the instant B) for an instant
C) on the instant D) in an instant
39. The manager lost his _____ just because his secretary was ten minutes late.
A) mood B) temper C) mind D) passion
40. Great as Newton was, many of his ideas _____ today and are being modified by the work of scientists of our time.
A) are to challenge B) may be challenged
C) have been challenged D) are challenging
41. Please be careful when you are drinking coffee in case you _____ the new carpet.
A) crash B) pollute C) spot D) stain
42. I'd rather read than watch television; the programs seem _____ all the time.
A) to get worse B) to be getting worse
C) to have got worse D) getting worse
43. Convenience foods which are already prepared for cooking are _____ in grocery stores.
A) ready B) approachable C) probable D) available
44. When I caught him _____ me I stopped buying things there and started dealing with another shop.
A) cheating B) cheat C) to cheat D) to be cheating
45. It is vital that enough money _____ to fund the project.
A) be collected B) must be collected
C) is collected D) can be collected
46. Some old people don't like pop songs because they can't _____ so much noise.
A) resist B) sustain C) tolerate D) undergo
47. If only the committee _____ the regulations and put them into effect as soon as possible.
A) approve B) will approve
C) can approve D) would approve
48. _____ one time, Manchester was the home of the most productive cotton mills in the world.
A) On B) By C) At D) Of
49. _____ it or not, his discovery has created a stir in scientific circles.
A) Believe B) To believe
C) Believing D) Believed
50. Mr. Morgan can be very sad _____, though in public he is extremely cheerful.
A) by himself B) in person
C) in private D) as individual

Part III

Reading Comprehension

(35 minutes)

Directions: There are 4 passages in this part. Each passage is followed by some questions or unfinished statements. For each of them there are four choices marked A), B), C), and D). You should decide on the best choice and mark the corresponding letter on the Answer Sheet with a single line through the centre.

Questions 51 to 55 are based on the following passage.

Statutes are marvelous human inventions that enable us to get along with one another and to determine where we "fit" in society. As we go about our everyday lives, we mentally attempt to place people in terms of their statuses. For example, we must judge whether the person in the library is a reader or a librarian, whether the telephone caller is a friend or a salesman, whether the unfamiliar person on our property is a thief or a meter reader, and so on.

The statuses we assume often vary with the people we encounter, and change throughout life. Most of us can, at very high speed, assume the statuses that various situations require. Much of social interaction consists of identifying and selecting among appropriate statuses and allowing other people to assume their statuses in relation to us. This means that we fit our actions to those of other people based on a constant mental process of appraisal and interpretation. Although some of us find the task more difficult than others, most of us perform it rather effortlessly.

A status has been compared to ready-made clothes. Within certain limits the buyer can choose style and fabric. But an American is not free to choose the costume (服装) of a Chinese peasant or that of a Hindu prince. We must choose from among the clothing presented by our society. Further more, our choice is limited to a size that will fit, as well as by our pocketbook (钱包). Having made a choice within these limits we can have certain alterations made, but apart from minor adjustments, we tend to be limited to what the stores have on their racks. Statues too come ready made, and the range of choice among them is limited.

51. In the first paragraph, the writer tells us that statuses can help us _____.
 - A) determine whether a person is fit for a certain job
 - B) behave appropriately in relation to other people
 - C) protect ourselves in unfamiliar situations
 - D) make friends with other people
52. According to the writer, people often assume different statuses _____.
 - A) in order to identify themselves with others
 - B) in order to better identify others
 - C) as their mental processes change
 - D) as the situation changes
53. The word "appraisal" (Para. 2, Line 4) most probably means _____.
 - A) involvement
 - B) appreciation
 - C) assessment
 - D) presentation
54. In the last sentence of the second paragraph, the pronoun "it" refers to _____.
 - A) fitting our actions to those of other people appropriately
 - B) identification of other people's statuses
 - C) selecting one's own statuses
 - D) constant mental process
55. By saying that "an American is not free to choose the costume of a Chinese peasant or that of a Hindu prince" (Para. 3, Lines 1-2), the writer means _____.
 - A) different people have different styles of clothes
 - B) ready-made clothes may need alterations
 - C) statuses come ready made just like clothes
 - D) our choice of statuses is limited

Questions 56 to 60 are based on the following passage.

Many a young person tells me he wants to be a writer. I always encourage such people, but I also explain that there's a big difference between "being a writer" and writing. In most cases these individuals are dreaming of wealth and fame, not the long hours alone at a typewriter. "You've got to want to write," I say to them, "not want to be a writer."

The reality is that writing is a lonely, private and poor-paying affair. For every writer kissed by fortune there are thousands more whose longing is never rewarded. When I left a 20-year career in the U. S. Coast Guard to become a freelance writer (自由撰稿人), I had no prospects at all. What I did have was a friend who found me my room in a New York apartment building. It didn't even matter that it was cold and had no bathroom. I immediately bought a used manual typewriter and felt like a genuine writer.

After a year or so, however, I still hadn't gotten a break and began to doubt myself. It was so hard to sell a story that barely made enough to eat. But I knew I wanted to write. I had dreamed about it for years. I wasn't going to be one of those people who die wondering. What if? I would keep putting my dream to the test even though it meant living with uncertainty and fear of failure. This is the Shadowland of hope, and anyone with a dream must learn to live there.

56. The passage is meant to _____.

- ☒ A) warn young people of the hardships that a successful writer has to experience
- ☐ B) advise young people to give up their idea of becoming a professional writer
- ☐ C) show young people it's unrealistic for a writer to pursue wealth and fame
- ☐ D) encourage young people to pursue a writing career

57. What can be concluded from the passage?

- ☐ A) Genuine writers often find their work interesting and rewarding.
- ☐ B) A writer's success depends on luck rather than on effort.
- ☐ C) Famous writers usually live in poverty and isolation.
- ☐ D) The chances for a writer to become successful are small.

58. Why did the author begin to doubt himself after the first year of his writing career?

- ☐ A) He wasn't able to produce a single book.
- ☐ B) He hadn't seen a change for the better.
- ☒ C) He wasn't able to have a rest for a whole year.
- ☐ D) He found his dream would never come true.

59. "...people who die wondering. What if?" (Para. 3, Line 3) refers to "those _____".

- ☐ A) who think too much of the dark side of life
- ☐ B) who regret giving up their career halfway
- ☐ C) who think a lot without making a decision
- ☐ D) who are full of imagination even upon death

60. "Shadowland" in the last sentence refers to _____.

- ☐ A) the wonderland one often dreams about
- ☐ B) the bright future that one is looking forward to
- ☒ C) the state of uncertainty before one's final goal is reached
- ☐ D) a world that exists only in one's imagination

Question 61 to 65 are based on the following passage.

It is, everyone agrees, a huge task that the child performs when he learns to speak, and the fact that he does so in so short a period of time challenges explanation.

Language learning begins with listening. Individual children vary greatly in the amount of listening they do before they start speaking, and late starters are often long listeners. Most children will "obey" spoken instructions some time before they can speak, though the word obey is hardly accurate as a description of the eager and delighted cooperation usually shown by the child. Before they can speak, many children will ask questions by gesture and by making questioning noises.

Any attempt to trace the development from the noises babies make to their first spoken words leads to considerable difficulties. It is agreed that they enjoy making noises, and that during the first few months one or two noises sort themselves out as particularly indicative of delight, distress, sociability, and so on. But since these cannot be said to show the

imitate 模仿

baby's intention to communicate. they can hardly be regarded as early forms of language. It is agreed, too, that from about three months they play with sounds for enjoyment, and that by six months they are able to add new sounds to their repertoire (能发出的全部声音). This self-imitation leads on to deliberate (有意识的) imitation of sounds made or words spoken to them by other people. The problem then arises as to the point at which one can say that these imitations can be considered as speech.

61. By "...challenges explanation" (Para. I, Line 2) the author means that _____.
A) no explanation is necessary for such an obvious phenomenon
B) no explanation has been made up to now
C) it's no easy job to provide an adequate explanation
D) it's high time that an explanation was provided
62. The third paragraph is mainly about _____.
A) the development of babies' early forms of language
B) the difficulties of babies in learning to speak
C) babies' strong desire to communicate
D) babies' intention to communicate
63. The author's purpose in writing the second paragraph is to show that children _____.
A) usually obey without asking questions
B) are passive in the process of learning to speak
C) are born cooperative
D) learn to speak by listening
64. From the passage we learn that _____.
A) early starters can learn to speak within only six months
B) children show a strong desire to communicate by making noises
C) imitation plays an important role in learning to speak
D) children have various difficulties in learning to speak
65. The best title for this passage would be _____.
A) How Babies Learn to Speak
B) Early Forms of Language
C) A Huge Task for Children
D) Noise Making and Language Learning

Questions 66 to 70 are based on the following passage.

Psychologists take opposing views of how external rewards, from warm praise to cold cash, affect motivation and creativity. Behaviorists, who study the relation between actions and their consequences, argue that rewards can improve performance at work and school. Cognitive (认识派的) researchers, who study various aspects of mental life, maintain that rewards often destroy creativity by encouraging dependence on approval and gifts from others.

The latter view has gained many supporters, especially among educators. But the careful use of small monetary (金钱的) rewards speaks creativity in grade-school children, suggesting that properly presented inducements (刺激) indeed aid inventiveness, according to a study in the June Journal of Personality and Social Psychology.

"If kids know they're working for a reward and can focus on a relatively challenging task, they show the most creativity," says Robert Eisenberger of the University of Delaware in Newark. "But it's easy to kill creativity by giving rewards for poor performance or creating too much anticipation for rewards."

A teacher who continually draws attention to rewards or who hands out high grades for ordinary achievement ends up with uninspired students, Eisenberger holds. As an example of the latter point, he notes growing efforts at major universities to tighten grading standards and restore failing grades.

In earlier grades, the use of so-called token economies, in which students handle challenging problems and receive performance-based points toward valued rewards, shows promise in raising effort and creativity, the Delaware psycholo-

gist claims.

66. Psychologists are divided with regard to their attitudes toward _____.

- A) the choice between spiritual encouragement and monetary rewards
- B) the amount of monetary rewards for students' creativity
- C) the study of relationship between actions and their consequences
- D) the effects of external rewards on students' performance

67. What is the response of many educators to external rewards for their student?

- A) They have no doubts about them.
- B) They have doubts about them.
- C) They approve of them.
- D) They avoid talking about them.

68. Which of the following can best raise students' creativity according to Robert Eisenberger?

- A) Assigning them tasks they have not dealt with before.
- B) Assigning them tasks which require inventiveness.
- C) Giving them rewards they really deserve.
- D) Giving them rewards they anticipate.

69. It can be inferred from the passage that major universities are trying to tighten their grading standards because they believe _____.

- A) rewarding poor performance may kill the creativity of students
- B) punishment is more effective than rewarding
- C) failing uninspired students helps improve their overall academic standards
- D) discouraging the students' anticipation for easy rewards is a matter of urgency

70. The phrase "token economies" (Para. 5, Line 1) probably refers to _____.

- A) ways to develop economy
- B) systems of rewarding students
- C) approaches to solving problems
- D) methods of improving performance

试 卷 二

Part IV

Short Answer Questions

(15 minutes)

Directions: In this part, there is a short passage with five questions or incomplete statements. Read the passage carefully. Then answer the questions or complete the statements in the fewest possible words.

In Britain, the old Road Traffic Act restricted speeds to 2 m. p. h. (miles per hour) in towns and 4 m. p. h. in the country. Later parliament increased the speed limit to 14 m. p. h. But by 1903 the development of the car industry had made it necessary to raise the limit to 20 m. p. h. By 1930, however, the law was so widely ignored that speeding restrictions were done away with altogether. For five years motorists were free to drive at whatever speeds they liked. Then in 1935 the Road Traffic Act imposed a 30 m. p. h. speed limit in built-up areas, along with the introduction of driving tests and pedestrian crossings.

Speeding is now the most common motoring offence in Britain. Offences for speeding fall into three classes: exceeding the limit on a restricted road, on any road, exceeding the limit for the vehicle you are driving, and exceeding the 70 m. p. h. on any road. A restricted road is one where the street lamps are 200 yards apart, or more.

The main *controversy* (争论) surrounding speeding laws is the extend of their safety value. The Ministry of Transport maintains that speed limits reduce accidents. It claims that when the 30 m. p. h. limit was introduced in 1935 there was a fall of 15 percent in fatal accidents. Likewise, when the 40 m. p. h. speed limit was imposed on a number of roads in London in the late fifties, there was a 28 percent reduction in serious accidents. There were also fewer *casualties* (伤亡) in the year after the 70 m. p. h. motorway limit was imposed in 1966.

In America, however, it is thought that the reduced accident figures are due rather to the increase in traffic density. This is why it has even been suggested that the present speed limits should be done away with completely, or that a guide should be given to inexperienced drivers and the speed limits made advisory, as is done in parts of the USA.

Questions:

71. During which period could British motorists drive without speed limits?

72. What measures were adopted in 1935 in addition to the speeding restrictions?

73. Speeding is a motoring offence a driver commits when he

74. What is the opinion of British authorities concerning speeding laws?

75. What reason do Americans give for the reduction in traffic accidents?

Part V

Writing

(30 minutes)

Directions: For this part, you are allowed thirty minutes to write a composition on the topic **Practice Makes Perfect**.

You should write at least 100 words and you should base your composition on the outline (given in Chinese) below.

1、怎样理解“熟能生巧”?

2、例如:在英语学习中……

3、又如……

Practice Makes Perfect

1997 年 6 月大学英语四级考试

试 卷 一

Part I

Listening comprehension

(20 minutes)

Section A

Directions: In this section, you will hear 10 short conversations. At the end of each conversation, a question will be asked about what was said. Both the conversation and the question will be spoken only once. After each question there will be a pause. During the pause, you must read the four choices marked A), B), C), and D), and decide which is the best answer. Then mark the corresponding letter on the Answer Sheet with a single line through the centre.

Example: You will hear:

You will read: A) At the office.

B) In the waiting room.

C) At the airport.

D) In a restaurant.

From the conversation we know that the two were talking about some work they had to finish in the evening. This is most likely to have taken place at the office. Therefore, A) "At the office" is the best answer. You should choose [A] on the Answer Sheet and mark it with a single line through the centre.

Sample Answer [~~A~~][B][C][D]

1. A) Skating.

C) Boating and swimming.

B) Swimming.

D) Boating and skating.

2. A) Put her report on his desk.

C) Improve some parts of her paper.

B) Read some papers he recommended.

D) Mail her report to the publisher.

3. A) She takes it as a kind of exercise.

C) She loves doing anything that is new.

B) She wants to save money.

D) Her office isn't very far.

4. A) A shop assistant.

C) A waitress.

B) A telephone operator.

D) A clerk.

5. A) A railway porter.

C) A taxi driver.

B) A bus conductor.

D) A postal clerk.

6. A) Most people killed in traffic accidents are heavy drinkers.

B) She does not agree with the man.

C) Drunk drivers are not guilty.

D) People should pay more attention to the danger of drunk driving.

7. A) \$ 1.40

B) \$ 4.30

C) \$ 6.40

D) \$ 8.60

8. A) Collect papers for the man.

C) Check the paper for typing errors.

B) Do the typing once again.

D) Read the whole newspaper.

9. A) The woman does not want to go to the movies.

B) The man is too tired to go to the movies.

C) The woman wants to go to the movies.

D) The man wants to go out for dinner.

10. A) By bus.

B) By bike.

C) By taxi

D) On foot.

Section B Compound Dictation

注意: 听力理解的 Section B 节为复合式听写 (Compound Dictation), 题目在试卷二上。

Part II

Reading Comprehension

(35 minutes)

Directions: There are 4 passages in this part. Each passage is followed by some questions or unfinished statements. For

each of them there are four choices marked A), B), C), and D). You should decide on the best choice and mark the corresponding letter on the Answer Sheet with a single line through the centre.

Questions 11 to 15 are based on the following passage.

The fridge is considered a necessity. It has been so since the 1960s when packaged food first appeared with the label: "store in the refrigerator."

In my fridgeless fifties childhood, I was fed well and healthily. The milkman came daily, the grocer, the Butcher (肉商), the baker, and the ice-cream man delivered two or three times a week. The Sunday meat would last until Wednesday and surplus (剩余) bread and milk became all kinds of cakes. Nothing was wasted, and we were never troubled by rotten food. Thirty years on food deliveries have ceased, fresh vegetables are almost unobtainable in the country. The invention of the fridge contributed comparatively little to the art of food preservation. A vast way of well-tried techniques already existed - natural cooling, drying, smoking, salting, sugaring, bottling...

What refrigeration did promote was marketing - marketing hardware and electricity, marketing soft drinks, marketing dead bodies of animals around the globe in search of a good price.

Consequently, most of the world's fridges are to be found, not in the tropics where they might prove useful, but in the wealthy countries with mild temperatures where they are climatically almost unnecessary. Every winter, millions of fridges hum away continuously, and at vast expense, busily maintaining an artificially-cooled space inside an artificially-heated house - while outside, nature provides the desired temperature free of charge.

The fridge's effect upon the environment has been evident, while its contribution to human happiness has been insignificant. If you don't believe me, try it yourself, invest in a food cabinet and turn off your fridge next winter. You may miss the hamburgers (汉堡包), but at least you'll get rid of that terrible hum.

11. The statement "In my fridgeless fifties childhood, I was fed well and healthily." (Para. 2, Line 1) suggests that ____

- A) the author was well-fed and healthy even without a fridge in his fifties
- B) the author was not accustomed to use fridges even in his fifties
- C) there was no fridge in the author's home in the 1950s
- D) the fridge was in its early stage of development in the 1950s

12. Why does the author say that nothing was wasted before the invention of fridges?

- A) People would not buy more food than was necessary.
- B) Food was delivered to people two or three times a week.
- C) Food was sold fresh and did not get rotten easily.
- D) People had effective ways to preserve their food.

13. Who benefited the least from fridges according to the author?

- A) Inventors.
- B) Consumers.
- C) Manufacturers.
- D) Travelling salesmen.

14. Which of the following phrases in the fifth paragraph indicates the fridge's negative effect on the environment?

- A) "Hum away continuously".
- B) "Climatically almost unnecessary".
- C) "Artificially-cooled space".
- D) "With mild temperatures"

15. What is the author's overall attitude toward fridges?

- A) Neutral.
- B) Critical.
- C) Objective.
- D) Compromising.

Questions 16 to 20 are based on the following passage.

The human brain contains 10 thousand million cells and each of these may have a thousand connections. Such enormous numbers used to discourage us and cause us to dismiss the possibility of making a machine with human-like ability, but now that we have grown used to moving forward at such a pace we can be less sure. Quite soon, in only 10 or 20 years perhaps, we will be able to assemble a machine as complex as the human brain, and if we can we will. It may then

take us a long time to render it intelligent by loading in the right software (软件) or by altering the architecture but that too will happen.

I think it certain that in decades, not centuries, machines of silicon (硅) will arise first to rival and then exceed their human ancestors. Once they exceed us they will be capable of their own design. In a real sense they will be able to reproduce themselves. Silicon will have ended carbon's long control. And we will no longer be able to claim ourselves to be the finest intelligence in the known universe.

As the intelligence of robots increased to match that of humans and as their cost declines through economies of scale we may use them to expand our frontiers, first on earth through their ability to withstand environments, harmful to ourselves. Thus, deserts may bloom and the ocean beds be mined. Further ahead, by a combination of the great wealth this new age will bring and the technology it will provide, the construction of a vast, man - created world in space, home to thousands or millions of people, will be within our power.

16. In what way can we make a machine intelligent?

- A) By making it work in such environments as deserts, oceans or space.
- ☒ B) By working hard for 10 or 20 years.
- ☒ C) By either properly programming it or changing its structure.
- D) By reproducing it.

17. What does the writer think about machines with human - like ability?

- ☒ A) He believes they will be useful to human beings.
- B) He believes that they will control us in the future.
- C) He is not quite sure in what way they may influence us.
- D) He doesn't consider the construction of such machines possible.

18. The word carbon (Para. 2, Line 3) stands for "_____".

- ☒ A) intelligent robots
- B) a chemical element
- ☒ C) an organic substance
- D) human beings

19. A robot can be used to expand our frontiers when _____.

- ☒ A) its intelligence and cost are beyond question
- B) it is able to bear the rough environment
- C) it is made as complex as the human brain
- D) its architecture is different from that of the present ones

20. It can be inferred from the passage that _____.

- A) after the installation of a great number of cells and connections, robots will be capable of self-reproduction
- ☒ B) with the rapid development of technology, people have come to realize the possibility of making a machine with human - like ability
- C) once we make a machine as complex as the human brain, it will possess intelligence
- D) robots will have control of the vast, man - made world in space

Questions 21 to 25 are based on the following passage.

After the violent earthquake that shook Los Angeles in 1994, earthquake scientists had good news to report; The damage and death toll (死亡人数) could have been much worse.

More than 60 people died in this earthquake. By comparison, an earthquake of similar intensity that shook America in 1988 claimed 25, 000 victims.

Injuries and deaths were relatively less in Los Angeles because the quake occurred at 4:31 a. m. on a holiday, when traffic was light on the city's highways. In addition, changes made to the construction codes in Los Angeles during the last 20 years have strengthened the city's buildings and highways, making them more resistant to quakes.

Despite the good news, civil engineers aren't resting on their successes. Pinned to their drawing boards are blueprints

(蓝图的) for improved quake-resistant buildings. The new designs should offer even greater security to cities where earthquakes often take place.

In the past, making structures quake-resistant meant firm yet flexible materials, such as steel and wood, that bend without breaking. Later, people tried to lift a building off its foundation, and insert rubber and steel between the building and its foundation to reduce the impact of ground vibrations. The most recent designs give buildings brains as well as concrete and steel supports, called smart buildings, the structures respond like living organisms to an earthquake's vibrations. When the ground shakes and the building tips forward, the computer would force the building to shift in the opposite direction.

The new smart structures could be very expensive to build. However, they would save many lives and would be less likely to be damaged during earthquakes.

21. One reason why the loss of lives in the Los Angeles earthquake was comparatively low is that ____.

- A) new computers had been installed in the buildings
- B) it occurred in the residential areas rather than on the highways
- C) large numbers of Los Angeles residents had gone for a holiday
- D) improvements had been made in the construction of buildings and highways

22. The function of the computer mentioned in the passage is to ____.

- A) counterbalance an earthquake's action on the building
- B) predict the coming of an earthquake with accuracy
- C) help strengthen the foundation of the building
- D) measure the impact of an earthquake's vibrations

23. The smart buildings discussed in the passage ____.

- A) would cause serious financial problems
- B) would be worthwhile though costly
- C) would increase the complexity of architectural design
- D) can reduce the ground vibrations caused by earthquakes

24. It can be inferred from the passage that in minimizing the damage caused by earthquakes attention should be focused on ____.

- A) the increasing use of rubber and steel in capital construction
- B) the development of flexible building materials
- C) the reduction of the impact of ground vibrations
- D) early forecasts of earthquakes

25. The author's main purpose in writing the passage is to ____.

- A) compare the consequences of the earthquakes that occurred in the U.S.
- B) encourage civil engineers to make more extensive use of computers
- C) outline the history of the development of quake-resistant building materials
- D) report new developments in constructing quake-resistant building

Questions 26 to 30 are based on the following passage.

Even plants can run a fever, especially when they're under attack by insects or disease. But unlike humans, plants can have their temperature taken from 3,000 feet away - straight up. A decade ago, adopting the infrared (红外线) scanning technology developed for military purposes and other satellites, physicist Stephen Paley came up with a quick way to take the temperature of crops to determine which ones are under stress. The goal was to let farmers precisely target pesticide (杀虫剂) spraying rather than rain poison on a whole field, which invariably includes plants that don't have pest problems.

Even better, Paley's Remote Scanning Services Company could detect crop problems before they became visible to the