

**TV UNIVERSITY  
ENGLISH**

**电大英语选读**

江苏科学技术出版社

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任 泳 徐 新 编著

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## 内 容 简 介

本书中的课文选自国外书籍，分自然科学和社会科学两部分。

本书以语法分析为主，着重介绍比较复杂的语法结构。读者通过阅读课文和注释可以提高阅读能力，巩固已学的语法知识。对尚未学到的语言现象也可起到预习作用。课文注释较为详尽，语法分析所使用的语言比较简单，便于读者掌握。

本书读者对象以电大学员为主，也适合其他搞科技的工作人员、高等院校理工科的学生。

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## 1. Rockets in the Sky

What is the sky? Where is it? How high is it? What lies above the sky? I am sure that you have asked these questions. They are very difficult to answer, aren't they? <sup>1</sup>

If someone asked you: "What colour is the sky?" I expect that you would answer: "Blue." I am afraid<sup>2</sup> that you would be wrong. The sky has no colour. When we see blue, we are looking at blue sunlight. The sunlight is shining on little bits of dust<sup>3</sup> in the air.

Is the sky full of air? I am sure that you have asked this question, too. We know that there is air all around the world. We could not breathe without air.<sup>4</sup> Aeroplanes could not fly without air.<sup>5</sup> They need air to lift their wings. Aeroplanes cannot fly very high because as they go higher, the air gets thinner. If we go far enough away from the earth, we find there is no air.

Perhaps we can answer some of our questions now. What is the sky? Nothing. Where is it? It is all around the world. The sky is space. In this space

there is nothing except the sun, the moon, and all the stars.

Scientists have always wanted to know more about the other worlds in space. They have looked at them through telescopes and in this way they have found out a great deal.<sup>6</sup> They know many facts about the moon, for example. They know how big it is and how far away.<sup>7</sup> But they wanted to know more about it. The only way to find out more was to send men to the moon. Then they would know all about it.<sup>8</sup>

The moon is about 384,000<sup>9</sup> kilometres away from the earth. An aeroplane cannot fly to the moon because the air reaches only 240 kilometres. Then there is no air. But there is something that can fly even when there is no air. This is a rocket.

I am sure that you are asking<sup>10</sup>: "How does a rocket fly?" If you want to know, get a balloon and then blow it up, until it is quite big. Do not tie up the neck of the balloon.<sup>11</sup> Let go! The air tries to get out. It rushes out through the neck of the balloon and this pushes the balloon through the air. It does not need wings like an aeroplane.

This is how a rocket works.<sup>12</sup> It is not made of rubber like a balloon, of course. It is made of metal. The metal must not be heavy but it must be very

strong. There is a gas inside the rocket which is made very hot.<sup>13</sup> When it rushes out of the end of the rocket, the rocket is pushed up into the air.

Rockets can fly far out into space. Rockets with men inside them have already reached the moon. Several rockets without men inside them have been sent to other worlds much farther away.<sup>14</sup> One day rockets may be able to go anywhere in space.

### Notes

1. They are very difficult to answer, aren't they?

它们很难回答，不是吗？

这是一句反意疑问句，是为了判别一种情况而提出的。它通常由陈述句和简略疑问句构成。陈述句如用肯定式，简略疑问句就用否定式；反之，陈述句如用否定式，简略疑问句就用肯定式。两部分在人称、数、时态等方面均需一致。

2. I am afraid...

我恐怕……

这是一个习惯用法，语气比较婉转，后面常跟一个由 that 引导的从句，这个 that 往往可以省略。

3. little bits of dust

微小的尘埃

4. We could not breathe without air.

没有空气我们就无法呼吸。

这句句子的谓语动词用的是虚拟语气，对目前情况的一种不合实际的假设。without air 指“如果没有空气”（事实上 有空气），could not breathe 指产生的结果：“不能呼吸”（事实上能呼吸）。

5. Aeroplane could not fly without air.

没有空气飞机就不能飞行。

这句句子的谓语动词用的也是虚拟语气（说明见注4）。

aeroplane [ˈɛərəpleɪn] n. 飞机

6. They have looked at them through telescopes and in this way they have found out a great deal.

他们通过望远镜对它们进行观察，用这个办法发现了大量情况。

through telescopes [ˈtelɪskəʊp] 通过望远镜

in this way 用这个办法

find out 常常指事先有计划有安排并经过努力而作出的发现。

7. ...and how far away.

（他们知道月球）……离我们有多远。

在这个宾语从句中，后面省略了 it is。

8. Then they would know all about it.

这样，他们便会了解月亮的一切。

这句子用的是虚拟语气。它包含的意思是：“如果把 人送上月球的话，那么……”。

9. 384,000 读作 three hundred and eighty-four

thousand。

10. I am sure that you are asking...

我肯定你会问……

you are asking 虽然是现在进行时的结构，但并不表示动作正在进行，而是表示即将进行的动作。又如：

He is coming to the office this afternoon. (他下午将到办公室来。)

11. Do not tie up the neck of the balloon.

别扎住气球的颈部。

这是一句否定祈使句，要求对方不要做某事。

tie up 扎住

12. This is how a rocket works.

这就是火箭飞行的原理。

how 引导的是表语从句。动词 work 应当根据具体情况予以翻译。又如：

I don't know how a TV set works. (我不懂电视机是怎样显示图象的。)

13. There is a gas inside the rocket which is made very hot.

火箭内部有一种温度升得很高的气体。

which is made very hot 是定语从句，修饰前面的 a gas。

在这个从句中，which 代替 gas 作主语，is made 是被动语态的结构。hot 是主语的补足语，补充说明主语。

14. Several rockets without men inside them have been sent to other worlds much farther away.

若干不载人的火箭已经被送到其他更远的星球上去了。

have been sent to... 是动词 send 的被动语态的现在完成时。worlds 在这里指其他星球。much farther away 是形容词短语。farther 是 far 的比较级，much 修饰 farther。这个短语作后置定语，修饰 worlds。

**参考译文：**

### 天空中的火箭

天空是什么？它在哪儿？它有多高？天空上面还有什么？我肯定你问过这些问题。它们很难回答，不是吗？

要是有人问你：“天空是什么颜色？”我想你会回答说：“蓝色。”恐怕你的回答是错的。天空是没有颜色的。当我们看到蓝色时，我们看到的是蓝色的阳光。阳光正照射在空气中的微小的尘埃上。

天空是不是充满了空气？我肯定你也问过这个问题。我们知道世界上到处都有空气。没有空气我们是不能呼吸的。没有空气飞机就不能飞行。它们需要空气来托起机翼。飞机不能飞得很高，这是因为它们飞得越高，空气就变得越稀薄。如果离开地球很远很远，我们就会发现空气没了。

也许我们现在能够回答我们所提出的一些问题。天空是什么？它什么也不是。它在哪儿？它在世界各处。天空就是空间。在这个空间里，除太阳、月亮和所有的星星以外，什么也没有。

科学家总想多知道一些有关空间里其他世界的情况。他们通过望远镜对它们进行观察，用这个办法他们发现了大量的情况。比方说，他们知道了有关月亮的许多情况。他们知道月亮有多大，离我们多远。不过，他们一直想更多地了解月亮，而唯一的办法是把人送到月亮上去。这样他们便能了解月亮的一切。

月亮距地球大约有384 000公里。飞机是飞不到月亮上去的，因为空气只有 240 公里厚，在这以外就没有空气了。不过，有另外的物体能够在没有空气的情况下飞行。这就是火箭。

我肯定你会问：“火箭是怎样飞行的呢？”假如你想知道，得弄一只气球来，把它吹起来，直到它变得很大很大。别扎住气球的颈部。松开手！气球里的空气会设法跑出来，它会顺着气球的颈部冲出，从而推动气球在空中行进。它不象飞机那样需要翅膀。

这就是火箭飞行的原理。当然，火箭不象气球那样由橡胶制成。它是用金属制成的。这种金属既不能很重，但又必须非常坚固。火箭内部有一种温度升得很高的气体。当它从火箭的尾部冲出时，火箭便被推向空中。

火箭能够飞得很远，一直飞向太空。载人的火箭已经到达过月亮。若干不载人的火箭已经被送到其他更远的星球上去了。总有一天火箭能够到达宇宙的任何地方。

## 2. Volcanoes

There are thousands of volcanoes all over the world.<sup>1</sup> What makes volcanoes? What happens?

The inside of the earth is very, very hot. Because it is very hot, the rock has melted like ice. It has become liquid, like water. It is always boiling,<sup>2</sup> like water in a kettle. If you have seen a kettle boiling, you know that the steam and boiling water try to get out.<sup>3</sup> The very hot melted rock<sup>4</sup> inside the earth also tries to get out. Usually it cannot<sup>5</sup> because the outside of the earth is too thick and strong.

But in some places the outside of the earth is thin and weak. Sometimes a crack appears. The hot melted rock, which we call "lava", pushes up through the crack and bursts through.<sup>6</sup> Steam and gas shoot up into the air<sup>7</sup> and the hot melted lava pours out. Big pieces of rock may be thrown high into the air.<sup>8</sup>

After a while<sup>9</sup> the volcano becomes quiet again. The melted lava becomes hard. Later the same thing happens again and again. Each time more hot lava pours out on top of the cold lava and then becomes



hard. In this way a kind of mountain is built up,<sup>10</sup> with a hole down the middle. Perhaps the volcano will then be quiet and no more lava will burst out.<sup>11</sup> Perhaps it will start again hundreds of years later.

Although there are thousands of volcanoes in the world, most of them are dead. Only about 500 sometimes start to throw out lava again. A famous volcano which is now dead is Mount Fujiyama in Japan.<sup>12</sup> It is covered with<sup>13</sup> snow in the winter.

Vesuvius<sup>14</sup> is a very famous volcano in Italy. It first came to life<sup>15</sup> many, many years ago. It was quiet for hundreds of years. Then in the year 79 it suddenly burst through. A great cloud of smoke shot up into the sky with great burning rocks, which fell all around.<sup>16</sup> Hot lava poured down its sides. About 3,000 people were killed.

This has happened again many times since that year. Sometimes no damage was caused, or only little damage.<sup>17</sup> But there was serious damage in the years 472, 1631, 1794, 1861, 1872 and 1906.<sup>18</sup> You can see that a volcano can stay alive<sup>19</sup> for many years. In 1906 part of the top of the mountain fell off. There was also serious damage in 1914 but there has not been any since that year.