

复旦大学托福教程

托福阅读理解

钟桂芬 编

TOEFL

上海科学出版社

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复旦大学英语系

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写在前面

中美邦交恢复以来,两国间经济文化交流日渐频繁,我国学者、研究生去美国访问、学习者也逐年增多。对于那些去美国进修深造的人,美国方面先要对他们的英语掌握程度进行一番测验,办法就是进行 TOEFL 考试。TOEFL 成绩单已成为留学生取得去美国签证必要的证件之一。还有一些人因为工作或学习上的需要,也要求参加 TOEFL 考试,以证明自己英语业已达到的水平。这就使 TOEFL 应考人成为一支数量不小的队伍。

对于本来就是英语专业的应考人来说,TOEFL 并不难,但他们在知识面方面仍有困难;而对于绝大多数非英语专业的应考人来说,TOEFL 对他们则并不容易。理由如下:

第一,TOEFL 要求全面,有听力测验、结构及书面表达能力以及词汇及阅读理解三方面的要求;

第二,要求有较扎实的语法基础;

第三,词汇要求量大,面广;

第四,要求具有较广泛的知识面。

就笔者几年来所见,我国的 TOEFL 应考人员在听力及语法结构方面大都还能达到一定的要求,但在词汇量以及知识面方面差距可就大了。

说到知识面,有些应考人员已经狭窄到令人感到不安的程度。文科生尚可,理工医农则很多人只了解本专业,对于文、史、哲、地、政、经和社会,往往连常识也很缺乏,而 TOEFL 考试偏偏是大到宇航、星际,小到飞鸟、昆虫,遍及立法、教育、广告、海报、书目等等,几乎无所不包。结果就是处处概念陌生,条条难以下笔。

如何为众多的 TOEFL 应考人员提供具体帮助,使他们能用较少的时间、精力,学到较多的东西,不但能在 TOEFL 考试中取得良好的成绩,而且在到达美国之后,学习上也感到方便一些。这是笔者几年来一直在思考的问题。

这本阅读理解资料,除介绍阅读方法,帮助提高阅读效率外,还大量摘

录和摘译了有关美国国情的知识性资料,分别门类,英汉对照,供应考人员阅读、参考。

这些资料一部分摘自美国驻华大使馆文化处不久前出版的简介美国情况的一套丛书,一部分摘译自其他原著、报告,内容都是较新的。

在阅读这些背景材料的基础上,应考人员再试读那几大类(地理、历史、教育、立法、科普、数字、广告及其他,全部来自历年试题)阅读资料,看看有无困难。如能象每类前面两段示范文一样,加以译出,理解效果会更好一些。

为了能提供最新的信息,笔者不得不仓卒成书,并且由于个人水平有限,编写上一定有不少疏漏不妥之处,尚望读者们不吝赐教,予以指正。

钟桂芬

1987年6月

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如何提高阅读能力

如何提高阅读能力,具体说来,应该按以下四步去做:

第一步,尽可能广泛地阅读——一切能看得到的、有一读价值的文章都应取来一读。读报对提高阅读理解力更有帮助。报上的社论、新闻报道、剧评、书评、专栏文章、广告、物价及生活指数以及航空班期表等等,对你参加 TOEFL 考试都很有参考价值,因为这些内容为你理解考试中的阅读理解部分提供了最好的材料。

第二步,熟悉以下 5 项阅读技巧:

1. 确定中心思想;
2. 看清重要细节;
3. 引出逻辑结论;
4. 进行推论引伸;
5. 明白词汇意义。

下面我们将对上述各项技巧逐一解释,并用一段短文,附以问题和答案,进行示范说明。

第三步,利用 TOEFL 实测试卷中阅读理解部分的标准答案对照检查一下,看看你的阅读技巧哪几项比较差。

第四步,为了提高阅读理解能力,还需要有更多的有关美国历史、地理、立法、教育等方面的背景资料。

一、5 项阅读技巧例解

(一)确定中心思想

(1) 粗读——将所给的一段文字粗略地看一遍,这能够使

你很快地抓住那段文字的中心思想。一般文章的开头一句就道出了中心思想，间或也有直到最后一句才画龙点睛的。段落的各个句子中，又有些关键字眼用来加强和突出中心思想。

(2) 划线——边阅读边在重要字句及重要概念下划线。读完全段后再回过头来看看下面划过线的部分，这样就不难看出作者的用意何在了。

下面摘录一段文字，建议你用上述两个方法找出作者的中心思想是什么，然后我们再针对问题提出几个答案，进行分析。

To keep clear of concealment, to keep clear of the need of concealment, to do nothing which he might not do out on the middle of Boston Common at noonday. I cannot say how more and more it seems to me to be the glory of young man's life. It is an awful hour when the first necessity of hiding anything comes. The whole life is different thenceforth. When there are questions to be feared and eyes to be avoided and subjects which must not be touched, then the bloom of life is gone. Put off that day as long as possible. Put it off forever if you can.

QUESTION

The main idea of this passage is

- (1) a time for concealment
- (2) noonday on Boston Common
- (3) a code for living
- (4) penalties for putting things off
- (5) youth vs. age

问题

本文的中心思想是:

- (1) 隐瞒的时间;
- (2) 大白天在 Boston Common;
- (3) 生活的准则;
- (4) 推迟一件事情的罪过;
- (5) 青年对抗老年.

答案

答案(3)是对的. 作者的中心思想是要推荐一种无欺骗、无隐瞒的行为方式; 答案(1)和(2)是错的, 因为相对而言都比较次要, 自然不能算作中心思想; 答案(4)跟文章最后两句的劝导正好反一反, 当然不会对; 答案(5)更不对, 因为“老少冲突”文章中根本就没有提到过.

(二) 看清重要细节

上文提到的划线法, 对看清重要细节极为有用.

如果你在下面划线的地方对形成中心思想很有用, 那个地方肯定就是一条重要细节.

下面请看一段文字, 后面就哪里是“重要细节”提出一组问题, 阅读时请勿忘记划线.

To a philosopher, wisdom is not the same as knowledge. Facts may be known in prodigious numbers without the knower of them loving wisdom. Indeed, the person who possesses encyclopedic information may actually have a genuine contempt for those who love and seek wisdom. The philosopher is not content with a mere knowledge of facts. He desires to integrate and evaluate facts, and to probe beneath the obvious to the deeper orderlines behind the immediately given facts. Insight into the hidden depths of reality, perspective on human life and nature in their

entirely, in the words of Plato, to be a spectator of time and existence — these are the philosopher's objectives. Too great an interest in the small details of science, may, and often does, obscure these basic objectives.

Philosophers assume that the love of wisdom is a natural endowment of the human being. Potentially every man is a philosopher because in the depths of his being there is an intense longing to fathom the mysteries of existence. This inner yearning expresses itself in various ways prior to any actual study of philosophy as a technical branch of human culture. Consequently every human being, in so far as far as he has ever been or is a lover of wisdom, has, to that extent, a philosophy of life.

QUESTION

According to the author, which statement concerning philosophers is most nearly accurate?

- (1) They are an impractical lot.
- (2) They are too radical.
- (3) They are a thoughtful group.
- (4) They have contempt for humanity.
- (5) They turn away from the findings of science.

问题

根据作者的论述, 下面的五种说法, 哪一种最能准确地描述哲学家?

- (1) 他们是不切实际的一群;
- (2) 他们太激进;
- (3) 他们是一些爱思考的人;

- (4) 他们鄙视人类;
- (5) 他们对科学上的创造发明感到厌恶.

答案

答案(3)是对的. 因为文中有一小段作者给的“重要细节”: 哲学家“总是爱联系起来思考和评价事实并探求在显而易见现象下面的……”; 答案(1)不对. 理由与文中所述的恰恰相反; 答案(2)也不对, 因为文中没有讨论到这个问题; 答案(4)是错的, 因为常常是腹有百科全书而又不象哲学家那样去思考的人才轻视人类; 答案(5)也不对, 因为哲学家爱引用事实——这点与科学家相同——但却又决不为科学上的琐碎细节 (small details) 所纠缠.

(三) 引出逻辑结论

在重要细节下划线之后, 就要谨慎地使用它们, 以正确回答问题. 不要匆匆忙忙地下结论.

Most people want to know how things are made. They frankly admit, however, that they feel completely at sea when it comes to understanding how a piece of music is made. Where a composer begins, how he manages to keep going——in fact, how and where he learns his trade——all are shrouded in impenetrable darkness. The composer, in short, is a man of mystery, and the composer's workshop an unapproachable ivory tower.

One of the first things the layman wants to hear about is the part inspiration plays in composing. He finds it difficult to believe that composers are not much preoccupied with that question, that composing is as natural for the composer as eating or sleeping. Composing is something

that the composer happens to have been born to do; and because of that, it loses the character of a special virtue in the composer's eyes.

The composer, therefore, does not say to himself: "Do I feel inspired?" He says to himself: "Do I feel like composing today?" And if he feels like composing, he does. It is more or less like saying to himself: "Do I feel sleepy?" If you feel sleepy, you go to sleep. If you don't feel sleepy, you stay up. If the composer doesn't feel like composing, he doesn't compose. It's as simple as that.

QUESTION

We may most safely conclude that the author is

- (1) a layman
- (2) a violinist
- (3) a working composer
- (4) an amateur musician
- (5) a novelist

问题

我们可以放心地得出结论说, 本文的作者是:

- (1) 一个外行;
- (2) 一位小提琴手;
- (3) 一位正在创作中的作曲家;
- (4) 一位业余音乐家;
- (5) 一位小说家.

答案

答案(3)是对的, 因为从作者在整段文字中所谈论的是作曲家是怎么想的和怎么做的, 就可以推测出这一合乎逻辑的结论;

答案(1)不对,因为作者在文中已经将普通人(外行)与作曲家作了区分(请看第二段第一句);答案(2)和(4)都不对,因为全段文字谈的是如何作曲,而不是讲演奏小提琴或其他乐器;答案(5)更不对,因为文章根本没有提到小说的事儿。

(四)进行推论引申

学会把所给的一段文章中的思想与文中没有提到,但与之有关(可推论出)的思想联系起来。

不要满足于只了解全段讲了些什么就完事,要能推论出作者暗示了些什么——也就是说,要明白他的用意何在,虽然他实际上并没有说出他就是这个用意。

试读以下一段文章,再回答后面的推论性问题。

I find it takes the young writer a long time to become aware of what language really is as a medium of communication. He thinks he should be able to put down his meaning at once and be done with it, and he puts it down and releases his feeling for it in language that is meaningless to anyone else. He has to learn he can load almost any form of words with his meaning and be expressing himself but communicating nothing. He has to learn that language has grown naturally out of the human need to communicate, that it belongs to all those who use it, and its communicative capacities have developed to meet the general need, that it is most alive when the language is spoken, supported as it always is by the look and action of the speaker. He must come to see that speech is filled with clichés which are the common counters best serving the general need. Words and phrases that come off his tongue made alive by the living

presence of himself become on paper dead transcriptions. Somehow he must overcome the capacity of words to remain dead symbols of meaning as they are in the dictionary. He must breathe life into them as he sets them on paper.

QUESTION

The author implies that young writers are

- (1) in too much of a hurry to have their say
- (2) lacking in confidence
- (3) too critical in analyzing their own work
- (4) too emotional in their approach to writing
- (5) lacking in the ability to find topics

问题

作者暗示青年作家们是:

- (1) 太急于要写出作品;
- (2) 缺乏信心;
- (3) 分析自己作品时要求过严;
- (4) 写作态度太动感情;
- (5) 缺乏发现主题的能力。

答案

答案(1)是对的。从上文的第二句,我们不难推论出作者认为一位作家“以为可以立即写出自己的思想,并能表达自如”是太过于匆忙了点;答案(2)及(3)都是错的,因为作者在四、五两句中所申述的与此正好相反;答案(4)同样是错的,因为作者在讨论感受时是按照思想而不是按照情绪来谈论的(请看第三句);答案(5)也不对,那是因为本段文章并没有触及作家寻找主题能力这个问题。

(五) 明白词汇意义

在阅读技巧测试中，了解词汇的确切意义是取得成功的极为重要的因素。然而，掌握大量词汇的能力又是另一种技巧。先举一例如下：

It is obvious that jazz responds in several ways to what is loosely spoken of as the "American psychology"; that while its ancestry may be African and European, it is none the less a peculiarly American form of expression. The spontaneous, improvisatory aspect of jazz is remarkably adapted to the musical needs of a pragmatic people. Like the typical American, the jazz musician goes his own syncopated way, making instantaneous and novel adjustments to problems as they present themselves. He is little concerned about precedent and is inclined to respect that which "works" rather than that which is laid down in theory books. The discipline of tradition "cramps his style." He cannot abide the idea of foregone conclusions: an art-form that demands a beginning, a middle, and an inevitable end is alien to his psychology. His greatest "kick" is in feverish activity; his goal, often indefinite.

Jazz relies on suspense, on sudden adjustments to the unexpected, for its essential vitality. The best of it is created impulsively and forgotten almost instantly afterward. From its listeners it invites, not contemplation or applause, but participation. It is a "get-together" art for "regular fellows." In fact, it emphasizes their very "regularity" by submerging individual consciousness in a sort of mass self-hypnotism.

QUESTION

The meaning of pragmatic is

- (1) helpless
- (2) warlike
- (3) selfish
- (4) thoughtful
- (5) practical

问题

pragmatic 这个字的意思是:

- (1) helpless 无助的;
- (2) warlike 好战的;
- (3) selfish 自私的;
- (4) thoughtful 富有思想的;
- (5) practical 重实际的.

答案

答案(5)是对的. pragmatic 的同义词就是 practical(重实际的),也就是重行动而不是重思想;答案(1)~(4)都不对,因为作者不是明明说“爵士音乐极为适合一个重视实际的民族的需要”吗(第五行);纵读全文,作者要说的就是爵士音乐反映了美国精神,而美国精神总的说来也就是注重实用的精神.

二、提高阅读技巧的其他建议

(一)专心致志地阅读

1. 若要专心阅读,最重要的是要看你的体力与脑力是否都充沛. 对以下一系列问题,你的回答必须是肯定的,否则很难在阅读过程中专心:

眼睛充分休息过吗？

现在视觉很清楚吗？

看书时灯光是否适宜？

身体总的健康状况是否良好？

此刻情绪紧张吗？

2. 选定阅读材料，自己规定好在一定的时间内读完，这个办法能避免精神分散；

3. 在关键词汇下划线。如果思想集中不起来，就看看这些关键字眼，一经思考，思想也就集中到读物上来了。

(二) 调节读书速度，顺乎读物的自然

1. 灵活地读，也就是按照读物内容或疾或徐顺乎自然，这是一条重要的阅读技巧；

2. 将全文略看一遍，决定如何读法。若是一篇内容较轻松的文字，比如有关郊游野餐经过的散文，不妨读得快些。反之，如是一篇牵涉到很多方面的科技文章，那就必须慢读细嚼，以便完全搞懂。这样的文章就是再细读一遍也是很有必要的；

3. 但再读就不必那么慢了，不妨快一点，因为其中许多事实和思想第一遍读时已经熟悉了；

4. 即使是同一篇文章也可用不同速度去读，因为其中第二段就可能比第一段讲得详细，牵涉得广，就得比第一段读得慢一些。

(三) 记住读过的东西

如果时间允许，用划线法读书最为有用，因为它不但帮你突出重要词汇、概念，有助于你理解全文，而且还能加深印象，使你能记住读过的东西。

(四) 加快目光移动的速度

在你读书的时候，只有6%的时间是停留在所读的字上的，