

# College English · Fast Reading

451041

## 大学英语

### 快速阅读教程

#### 第二册

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上海交通大学出版社

## 编 者 的 话

大学英语快速阅读教程是根据大学英语教学大纲(理工科用)的要求编写的,共分四级。每级一册,本册供第二级用,有15个单元。每单元有快速阅读材料一篇及阅读理解练习题10个。学生在阅读每篇材料时,可以记下开始阅读及结束阅读的时间,根据每篇的词数计算出自己的阅读速度。然后作阅读理解练习,检查自己的理解准确率。

本教程由北京工业大学、北京科技大学、北京理工大学及北京航空航天大学四校合作编写。北京航空航天大学李宝琨任主编。北京工业大学肖日炯、廖大欣负责编写第一级。北京科技大学王秀莲、刘春生负责编写第二级。北京理工大学杨洁负责编写第三级。北京航空航天大学蔡勇负责编写第四级。编写组虽作以上分工,但每位编者也都参加了其他各级的编写工作。

上海交通大学杨惠中、张彦斌教授对本教程作了审阅。

在北京航空航天大学任教的美国专家 Joanna Sizmur 对全部阅读材料练习作了认真校阅,提出了一些宝贵意见。上海交通大学外语系卢国梁同志及出版社的同志们为本教程出版提供了许多帮助。特此致谢。

1990年6月

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## Unit 1

### Bartering(易货贸易): An Old Idea with New Power

Although trade is nothing new, the use of money is relatively new when it is seen in relation to the length of time trade has been conducted. How was trade conducted, then, without money to pay for goods?

The answer is by bartering. Bartering is the process(过程) by which trade takes place through the exchange of goods. Money is not used as payment. Instead, one good is traded for another good.

Recently, because of inflation(通货膨胀) and the differences between types of currency(货币) around the world, bartering has become an important form of trade again.

It seems that Pepsi-Cola was the first company to introduce cola into the USSR, much to the disappointment(失望) of Coca-Cola. Pepsi was able to do this because it was willing to barter Pepsi-Cola for Russian vodka. The Americans sent one gallon(加仑) of concentrated(浓缩的) Pepsi Liquid in exchange for one gallon of vodka, on a gallon-for-gallon basis. Supposedly, the Russian people are now enjoying the quality of Pepsi while Americans are pouring top-quality Russian vodka. Both parties to the contract(合同) appear to be quite satisfied with the barter deal.

Of course, bartering has some great problems that are not always easy to overcome. Finding a market(市场) for the bartered goods can be a problem, as the following example shows.

A Western European auto maker traded 100 automobiles to an Eastern European country in exchange for a certain amount of dried apricots(杏干儿). The Western company was unable to sell the apricots; so they were served in the company's dining hall until the workers refused to eat any more dried apricots. What happened to the remainder of the apricots is not known!

It is unlikely that the world will go back to a totally bartering existence, but until the economic disorder that is present in today's world is cured, bartering will probably become more and more important as an exchange form.

(314 words)

### Comprehension Exercises

1. Trade is \_\_\_\_\_

- A) the same as barter.
- B) exchanging good for other goods.
- C) exchanging things with money
- D) exchanging things with or without money.

2. Bartering is conducted through the exchange
  - A) of goods for money.
  - B) of money for goods.
  - C) of money for money.
  - D) of goods for goods.
3. It is implied in the passage that bartering, as a form of trade, began to appear
  - A) before money was invented.
  - B) after money was invented.
  - C) at the same time that money was invented.
  - D) when money was no longer used.
4. In modern times, we find that
  - A) bartering has replaced money in international trade.
  - B) some trade still occurs through bartering.
  - C) bartering only occurs between less developed nations.
  - D) Eastern European countries have disclosed their bartering deals.
5. Bartering is becoming more frequent because the world economy
  - A) is in a good situation.
  - B) is developing rapidly.
  - C) is still in disorder.
  - D) is looking up.
6. Pepsi-Cola was the first company to introduce cola into USSR because
  - A) the Russian people liked the taste of Pepsi.
  - B) the Americans needed Russian vodka badly.
  - C) Pepsi was willing to exchange cola for vodka.
  - D) Pepsi concentrated their Pepsi Liquid.
7. The Western Company, as mentioned in paragraph 6, was unable to sell the dried apricots because
  - A) they were served to the workers as food.
  - B) the company didn't want to.
  - C) the company couldn't find a market.
  - D) the workers couldn't eat all of them.
8. The examples of bartering in the passage show that
  - A) people all over the world prefer bartering to other forms of trade.
  - B) all the barter deals will benefit the two parties.
  - C) all the barter deals will benefit one party and harm the other.
  - D) though bartering is becoming an important form of trade, sometimes it may raise difficult problems.
9. According to the passage, we can see that
  - A) bartering was, for a time, not so important as now.
  - B) bartering has always been an important form of trade.
  - C) the world may someday again conduct trade only by bartering.
  - D) bartering has only a very short history.
10. What does "this" in paragraph 4 refer to?
  - A) The disappointment of Coca-Cola.
  - B) Being the first company to introduce cola into the USSR.
  - C) Bartering Pepsi-Cola for Russian vodka.
  - D) The contract.

## Unit 2

### Economic(经济的) Growth and the Food Crisis(危机)

Advances in technology have helped more of the world's population live better and longer → and that's part of our problem.

Better health standards have kept larger numbers of people alive. The world's population has reached five billion and is expected to increase by 60% in twenty-five years. The growing population and slowly rising living standards have increased our need for food at the rate of 30 million tons per year. As a result, the world's reserves(储备) of food is declining(下降) by about 10 million tons per year.

From the early 1950s until 1972, world food production increased greatly because of the Green Revolution which extended(扩大) scientific techniques to agriculture. But crop failures in 1972 brought an end to the growth in food production. And it is expected that the drop in world supplies of fertilizers(肥料) will cause a drop in crop production in the future, especially in the underdeveloped nations.

What can be done? At present, there is a worldwide total of 4.3 billion acres(英亩) of land that might be turned into farmlands. But it will cost too much. New foods from the sea are also a possibility, but this is limited by pollution.

However, policy on the problem of food production must eventually deal with the problem of population growth. It is estimated(估计) that one-third of the world's population live in the hungry nations—nations unable to feed themselves. These nations are centered in Asia and Africa. According to some economists, those who can not survive(生存下去) without aid will be left to perish(灭亡). We may not like it, but that's the way the world is.

We continue to hope for a more acceptable solution to the food crisis. However, this will require the best efforts of scientists, sociologists(社会学家) and economists for many years to come.

(296 words)

### Comprehension Exercises

- Given the present growth rate of the world's population and our ability to produce food,
  - hunger will be unknown in the future.
  - the food problem would be partly solved in the near future.
  - the developed nations will change their eating habits.
  - we will be faced with very serious problems in the near future.
- According to the passage, in twenty-five years the world's population is expected

to be

A) 6 billion.

B) 7 billion.

C) 8 billion.

D) 9 billion.

3. The term "Green Revolution" refers to
- A) the political situation in Ireland.
  - B) the increased use of scientific methods in agriculture.
  - C) the revolution in a certain nation.
  - D) the crop shortages experienced in 1972.
4. The world's reserves of food is declining because
- A) the world's food production has decreased greatly and continuously.
  - B) the Green Revolution has failed.
  - C) the growing population has created a greater need than food production can supply.
  - D) farmlands have been reduced.
5. It is expected that crop yields will drop, especially in underdeveloped nations, mainly because of
- A) terrible weather.
  - B) poor farm management.
  - C) fertilizer shortages.
  - D) old farming equipment.
6. The main difficulty in increasing the world's farmlands is
- A) its high cost.
  - B) shortage of manpower.
  - C) rising levels of pollution.
  - D) the unwillingness of people to farm.
7. One possible way the writer suggests to solve the food problem is
- A) to carry on the Green Revolution on a larger scale.
  - B) to obtain food from the sea.
  - C) to improve farming methods.
  - D) to control population and make the growth rate slow down.
8. According to some economists, many nations in Asia and Africa would become perished if they
- A) live only on foreign aid.
  - B) do not farm more land.
  - C) don't have a correct policy on the problem of food production.
  - D) are unable to feed themselves.
9. The writer would likely agree with which one of the following statements?
- A) In the future it will most likely be possible to provide everyone with enough food.
  - B) If the weather could be controlled, the food supply problem would no longer exist.
  - C) In the future it is unlikely that every country will be able to produce enough food for survival.
  - D) Scientists will surely find out the best solution to the food problem.
10. The last paragraph of this passage was written to emphasize the writer's
- A) great hope for the future.
  - B) humorous viewpoint (观点).
  - C) distaste for the world's poor.
  - D) doubts about easy solutions.

## Unit 3

### Hobbies

A hobby can be almost anything a person likes to do in his spare time. Hobbyists raise animals, build model ships, weave(编织) baskets, or carve(雕刻) soap figures. They watch birds, hunt animals, climb mountains, raise flowers, fish, ski, skate, and swim. Hobbyists also paint pictures, attend concerts and plays, and perform on musical instruments. They collect everything from books to butterflies(蝴蝶) and from shells to stamps.

People take up hobbies because these activities offer enjoyment, friendship, knowledge, and relaxation(放松). Sometimes they even bring money. Hobbies help people relax after periods of hard work, and provides a balance(平衡) between work and play. Hobbies also offer interesting activities for persons who have retired(退休). Anyone, rich or poor, old or young, sick or well, can follow a satisfying hobby, regardless of his age, position, or income.

Hobbies can help a person's mental and physical health. Doctors have found that hobbies are valuable in helping patients recover from physical or mental illness. Hobbies give bedridden(卧床不起的) or wheelchair patients something to do, and provide interests that keep them from thinking about themselves. Many hospitals treat patients by having them take up interesting hobbies or pastimes(娱乐).

People today have more time than ever before for hobbies. Machines and automation have reduced the amount of time they must spend on their jobs. Hobbies provide variety for workers who do the same monotonous(单调的) tasks all day long. More people are retiring than ever before, and at an earlier age. Those who have developed hobbies never need to worry about what to do with their newly-found leisure hours.

Sir William Osler, a famous Canadian doctor, expressed the value of hobbies by saying, "No man is really happy or safe without a hobby." (281 words)

### Comprehension Exercises

1. The main idea of paragraph one is
  - A) hobbies are activities enjoyed by people in their spare time.
  - B) hobbies vary in interest and enjoyment for different people.
  - C) people should take up several hobbies at a time.
  - D) some hobbies are more interesting than others.
2. The term "figure" used in paragraph one means



- A) a number. B) shape of a human body.  
C) a diagram. D) a bird.
3. According to the article, which of the following is NOT a hobby?  
A) Collecting beetles. B) Playing table tennis.  
C) Smoking after meal. D) Theatre-going.
4. Hobbyists usually take up hobbies because these activities  
A) fill up their spare time. B) make them happy and healthy.  
C) make them wealthy. D) all of the above.
5. Which of the following statements is NOT true.  
A) One takes up a hobby without regard to his age, position or income.  
B) Hobbies give variety to one's life.  
C) There are various hobbies from which any one can find a satisfying one.  
D) More people develop hobbies now than before.
6. The word "they" in line 2 of paragraph 2 refers to  
A) people.  
B) these activities.  
C) enjoyment, friendship, knowledge and relaxation.  
D) all of the above.
7. Hobbies  
A) can give people longer periods of relaxation.  
B) offer relaxation for the retired persons after periods of hard work.  
C) can be used as a medical treatment  
D) will provide people more play and less work.
8. In what way can hobbies help a patient mentally and physically?  
A) They give him enough exercise.  
B) They bring him enough money.  
C) They keep him interested in being in hospital..  
D) They provide interesting activities that can keep him from thinking about his own trouble.
9. According to the Canadian doctor.  
A) many people have almost the same outside interests.  
B) no man is now living really happily and safely.  
C) things would be different if a person had hobbies.  
D) a person should have hobbies one at a time.
10. It can be inferred from the article that  
A) in the past people had to spend more time on their jobs.  
B) people in the past retired at an earlier age than now.  
C) only rich people can afford hobbies.  
D) hobbies are usually pursued inside people's houses.

## Unit 4

### A Man of Few Words

Calvin Coolidge (1872-1933) was the thirtieth president of the United States. He looked down on a person as being unworthy of respect who was too fond(喜欢) of talking about the details of other people's actions and private lives; he had no time for small talk. The following two incidents clearly show how Coolidge treasured silence.

When he was vice-president(副总统), Coolidge had plenty of opportunity to participate in Washington's social life, especially the many dinner parties. Because of his complete disregard(漠视) for the art of conversation, he couldn't exactly make himself dear to his hostesses(女主人). One lady felt she could solve this problem. She placed him next to Alice Roosevelt Longworth, daughter of former President Theodore Roosevelt. Mrs. Longworth, brilliant conversationalist, began to talk in her usual charming(迷人的) manner, but all attempts(尝试) to awake interest on the part of vice-president were unproductive. Finally, being shamed into annoyance(烦恼), she said, "I'm sure that going to as many dinners as you do, you must get terribly bored."

Without lifting his eyes from his plate, Coolidge said not very clearly, "Well, a man has to eat somewhere."

Later, when he was president and once again at a dinner party, Coolidge was seated next to an outstanding society woman, one of those people who seem to take delight in trying to change the lives of everyone they meet. "Oh, Mr. President," she spoke with too much enthusiasm(热情), "you are always so quiet. I made a bet(打赌) today that I could get more than two words out of you."

In anger, the president made a low, rough sound and then said, "You lose."

(264 words)

### Comprehension Exercises

1. President Coolidge considered those people as being unworthy of respect
  - A) who liked to talk about the affairs of others.
  - B) who never talked about anything serious.
  - C) who spoke insincerely.
  - D) who talked much but did little.
2. To Calvin Coolidge \_\_\_\_\_ was very dear.
  - A) fame
  - B) power



## Unit 5

### The Green Banana

I met with the green banana on a mountain road. I was driving my car when the radiator(冷却器) began to leak, ten miles from the nearest mechanic(机械工). The over-heated engine forced me to stop at a village. People gathered to look. "That's easy to repair," a man said. He sent a boy running for some green bananas. "Green bananas," he smiled. Everyone agreed.

Asking questions would show my ignorance(无知), so I remarked(谈论) on the beauty of the mountains. "Do you see that tall rock over there?" the man asked me. "It marks the center of the world." I looked to see if he was joking, but his face was serious. "The center of the world?" I repeated, trying to show interest. He nodded. "The absolute(绝对的) center. Everyone around here knows it."

At that moment, the boy returned with my green bananas. The man cut one in half and pressed the cut end against the radiator. The banana melted into a glue against the hot metal, stopping up the leak immediately. Everyone laughed at my astonishment.

After I reached my destination(目的地), the local mechanic smiled. "Who taught you about the green banana?" I named the village. "Did they show you the rock marking the center of the world?" he asked. I said they had. "My grandfather came from there," he said. "The exact center."

As a product of American higher education, I had never paid the slightest attention to the green banana, except to regard it as a fruit. But the people in that village could use it for other purposes.

The importance of the rock took me a while to understand. Gradually, I realized that they had a belief, a universal concept(概念). We tend to consider the center of the world as that special place which we know and care about: family, school, town, and local region. Every place represents the center of the world.

The cultures of the world are full of unexpected green bananas with special value and meaning.

(331 words)

### Comprehension Exercises

1. The main idea of the passage is to  
A) introduce an unusual method to repair the car.

- B) point out that all people see the world through their own cultural beliefs.  
 C) illustrate(说明) that people in underdeveloped places do things in crude ways.  
 D) describe a car accident happening on a mountain road.
2. What happened to the writer's car?  
 A) Its engine had gone wrong. B) The car ran out of gasoline.  
 C) The radiator leaked. D) The car could not be started.
3. Where did the writer seek(寻求) assistance when his car had a mechanical trouble?  
 A) From a mechanic. B) From a car-driver who happened to pass by.  
 C) At the nearby town. D) In a village.
4. The people in the village were  
 A) helpful. B) unfriendly.  
 C) imaginative. D) surprised.
5. "I looked to see if he was joking, but his face was serious." This means that  
 A) the writer would like to hear some more jokes.  
 B) the writer intended to ask some more questions.  
 C) the writer didn't want to show his ignorance.  
 D) the writer doubted whether the man really meant what he said.
6. "I named the village" means  
 A) I gave a name to the village. B) I told the name of the village.  
 C) I gave my name to the villagers. D) I knew the name of the village.
7. From the mechanic's talk about the rock, we can infer(推断) that the mechanic  
 A) agreed with the villagers. B) disagreed with the villagers.  
 C) thought differently. D) didn't trust the belief of the villagers.
8. The villagers laughed at the writer's astonishment because  
 A) they were proud of their technique of repairing the car.  
 B) they thought that the writer should not have felt surprised.  
 C) they were happy that they could teach the stranger something.  
 D) they were making fun of him.
9. From his experience, the writer learnt that  
 A) green bananas could be used in an unexpected way.  
 B) the green banana tasted quite good.  
 C) people in the village must grow a lot of bananas and they did almost everything with them.  
 D) the villagers must have used green bananas to repair cars many times.
10. The center of the world is located  
 A) in the small village the writer happened to stop in.  
 B) in a place other than the small village.  
 C) in every place which has a special meaning for the people in it.  
 D) in some place which remains to be recognized.

## Unit 6

### Performing to Meet the Challenge (挑战) of Change

In 1873, a boy was born in a farm house on the central Nebraska plains (平原). His name was Frank Phillips. It is his name that is proudly borne today by one of the world's greatest companies: Phillips Petroleum (石油).

As a farm boy, Frank Phillips dug potatoes for ten cents a day. At 14, he began work in a barbershop (理发店), saving his money. In his 20s, he bought the barbershop, and soon he owned two more.

Fired (激励) by reports of the Oklahoma oil discovery, Frank and his brother went down to Bartleville, drilled three dry wells, and tried one last time. Black gold poured out sky-high! Eighty more times they drilled, and hit 80 more wells. In 1917, they organized the Phillips Petroleum Company.

Ten years later, Uncle Frank, as everyone called him, expanded (扩展) into the gasoline (汽油) business. Big orange-and-black (now red-and-white) signs bearing the company's symbol, "66", rose above Phillips filling stations.

Why "66"? While the company was arguing about what to call the new fuel, an official and a driver were road-testing it on Highway 66. "This car goes like 60 on our gas," the official said satisfactorily. "Sixty nothing," exclaimed (大声说) the driver. "We're doing 66!" Driving 66 miles an hour on Highway 66 — it seemed no other names could be better.

Those were the exciting, do-or-die beginnings — the first decades of Phillips, a company that has always been growing, surviving hard times. Now it owns more U.S. patents (专利) than any other oil company. Today, Phillips is concerned with the improvement of life through other channels as well: the arts, humanities (人文学科), youth athletics. It's been national sponsor of U.S. Swimming since 1973, of U.S. Diving since 1979. In 1976, it began free loans (借出) of educational films to the nation's schools — the most popular, widely studied such films ever produced.

(320 words)

### Comprehension Exercises

1. Frank Phillips was born

A) in the U.S.

B) in Holland.

C) in Central America.

D) in one of the world's greatest companies.

2. Frank earned ten cents a day by
  - A) selling potatoes.
  - B) working in a barbershop.
  - C) digging potatoes on a farm.
  - D) saving money.
3. When Phillips was in his 20's
  - A) he owned 2 barbershops.
  - B) he began work in a barbershop.
  - C) he was the owner of 3 barbershops.
  - D) he began his petroleum business.
4. Frank and his brother
  - A) were fired by the Oklahoma Oil Company.
  - B) were inspired by the prosperity of oil business in Oklahoma.
  - C) went to Bartlesville because their barbershops were destroyed by fire.
  - D) heard reports that there was a fire in Oklahoma.
5. In Bartlesville, Frank and his brother
  - A) drilled four wells, but none of them had oil.
  - B) were surprised at the gold they found when making the last try.
  - C) drilled more than 80 wells before oil was finally found.
  - D) found oil when they tried the fourth well.
6. Which of the following statements is true?
  - A) The wells they drilled did not have enough oil pressure.
  - B) Since Frank and his brother first found oil, they had drilled many wells, most of them containing oil.
  - C) Frank and his brother did not find oil until 1917.
  - D) Frank and his brother were lucky — after the first success they drilled another 80 wells and oil came out of each of them.
7. A filling station is a place where
  - A) you can fuel your car.
  - B) the road testing is conducted.
  - C) oil is refined.
  - D) oil wells are drilled.
8. "66" is
  - A) the company symbol.
  - B) the fuel name.
  - C) the filling station.
  - D) a red-and-white sign.
9. The Phillips company
  - A) has been developing without experiencing any hardship.
  - B) also makes films.
  - C) is mainly engaged in oil business.
  - D) is interested in many areas except petroleum.
10. In 1976 the Phillips company
  - A) began to produce educational films by itself.
  - B) began to loan money to the nation's schools.
  - C) became the national sponsor of U.S. Swimming.
  - D) began to provide free educational films to the nation's schools.

## Unit 7

### About Television

TELEVISION, which made its first serious appearance in 1939, did not become common until the early 1950s. Since then, millions of children have grown up in front of the set, and many people now worry about the effect that TV has on the young, and on society in general.

Like almost anything else, television has its good and its bad sides. One should surely thank its inventors for the joy and the interest that they have brought into the lives of the old, the sick, and the lonely—all those who, without it, would have no pleasure and no window on the world.

In truth, television has opened windows in everybody's life. No newspaper has ever reached so many people and shown so clearly what was happening right now in their own country and everywhere else. TV has transformed information; it not only gives the news instantly, it also shows it in pictures—more powerful than words. Television has also transformed politics. The most remote farmer can now follow political issues (问题).

Unfortunately, television's influence has been extremely harmful to the young. Children do not have enough experience to realize that TV shows present an unreal world; that commercials (商业广告) lie in order to sell products that are sometimes bad or useless. They believe and want to imitate (模仿) what they see. They do believe that they will make more friends if they use a certain soap—or some other product. They do believe that the violence (暴力) they see is normal and acceptable.

According to some experts, the young are also less patient. Used to TV shows, where everything is quick and entertaining, they expect all problems to be solved happily in ten, fifteen, or thirty minutes. That's the time it takes on the screen.

It is certain that television has deeply transformed our lives and our society. It is certain that, along with its benefits (益处), it has brought enormous problems. To these problems we must soon find a solution because—whether we like it or not—television is here to stay.

(340 words)

### Comprehension Exercises

1. According to the article, television became common
  - A) in 1939
  - B) 40 years after its first serious appearance.
  - C) in the early 1950s.
  - D) about 70 years ago.



2. "Millions of children have grown up in front of the set" suggests
- A) parents have used television to teach their children.
  - B) children were born in front of television.
  - C) television is the only one to take care of the children at home.
  - D) children have spent too much time watching television.
3. By saying that television has opened windows in everybody's life, the author means that
- A) many people have television at home.
  - B) people get well-informed of the world's events by television.
  - C) television extends everyone's vision and expands his mind.
  - D) television has good effects on the society.
4. Why does the author say T. V. is better than newspapers?
- A) T. V. has more audience than any newspaper does.
  - B) T. V. shows news in pictures.
  - C) T. V. has more powerful words than newspaper.
  - D) Both A) and B).
5. People should surely thank the T. V. inventors because
- A) they were the pioneers.
  - B) they have helped the parents to bring up their children.
  - C) T. V. has become common nowadays.
  - D) they have brought us joy and interest.
6. Why does the author say that T. V. has been extremely harmful to children?
- A) T. V. will hurt children's eyes.
  - B) Children have spent too much time watching T. V. at home.
  - C) The inexperienced children are often misled by T. V.
  - D) Many people worry about the effects of T. V. on children.
7. The author mentioned the most remote farmer in the article, because he wanted to show that
- A) T. V. has transformed politics.
  - B) T. V. is better than newspapers.
  - C) even the most remote farmers have T. V. at home.
  - D) T. V. should continue to exist.
8. According to some experts, the young are less patient because
- A) they want to see more on T. V.
  - B) they expect everything to be solved as quickly as that on T. V.
  - C) they are inexperienced.
  - D) they want to be entertained more.
9. Which of the following statements is NOT true?
- A) T. V. entertains people.
  - B) T. V. makes the lonely closer to the world.
  - C) T. V. has transformed information quickly.
  - D) T. V. has brought us many problems that can't be solved.
10. What the author mainly suggests in the article is that
- A) many people are worried about the effects that T. V. has on themselves.
  - B) T. V. should be abolished soon.
  - C) Great attention should be paid to the effects T. V. has on the young.
  - D) T. V. has more advantages than disadvantages.