

杨荣泉 主编

# 大学英语四级 阅读 200 篇

# 200 篇

第四版

200 Passages to Develop  
Reading Comprehension

上海交通大学出版社

# 大学英语四级阅读 200 篇

(第四版)

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上海交通大学出版社

## 内 容 提 要

提高英语阅读能力的关键在于加大训练量,通过反复实践,培养出语言感和一种临场的熟练反应。本书依照《大学英语四级考试大纲》的要求编写,其目的在于迅速提高学生的阅读水平和应试能力。

本书由 50 个单元组成,每个单元 4 篇短文,每篇为 250~350 个单词,每个单元为 1200~1400 个单词,全书选材广泛,体裁多样,文章通俗有趣、易学易记,有助于锻炼读者的定时定量阅读能力、迅速摘取信息的能力和概括推断能力。

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# 前 言

《大学英语四级阅读 200 篇》(第四版)是根据《大学英语教学大纲》(修订本)、《大学英语四级考试大纲》及《大学英语教学大纲通用词汇表》(1~4 级)修订的。这次修订是在对 1997 年以来的四级考试真题阅读部分进行认真、深入分析研究的基础上进行的。修订版除保留了原有的特点及精华外,对内容进行了大刀阔斧的更换。在选材、题型、生词注解、篇幅及难易度等方面与真题更加一致。使用本书能使學生迅速提高阅读水平,达到《大纲》的要求,顺利通过大学英语四级考试。

本书由 50 个单元组成,按大学英语四级考试样题阅读理解部分的形式,每个单元 4 篇短文,并配有 20 个阅读理解题,每篇短文约 250~350 个单词,文章的难易程度与四级考试中阅读理解部分相近,每个单元的总单词数为 1200~1400 个。

本书选材广泛,有科普常识,有人物传略,有英语国家的风土人情、日常生活、社会、文化教育等方面的内容。全书体裁多样,有叙述文、说明文、议论文等。文章由浅入深,循序渐进,可读性强。对影响阅读理解的超纲词加注了汉语释义。

本书旨在培养学生能顺利阅读并正确理解语言难度中等的一般性题材的文章,掌握中心大意,了解说明中心大意的事实和细节,能根据所读材料进行一定的分析、推理和判断,了解作者的观点和态度,阅读速度达到每分钟 70 词。在阅读篇幅较长、难度略低、生词不超过总词数 3% 的材料时,能正确理解中心大意,抓住主要事实和有关细节,阅读速度达到每分钟 100 词。

本书可供学生自读自测,也可作为阅读教材及强化训练之用。开始时阅读速度可慢些,以后逐渐加快,达到阅读完一个单元的时间为 35 分钟,这个时间包括完成每单元中的 20 个练习题。

本书出版以来深受广大读者的欢迎,已发行了数十万册。为了满足广大读者的要求,根据一些院校老师和学生的意见,这次修订比过去任何一次都更加彻底、更加全面、更加与四级考试中的阅读内容相一致。

《大学英语四级阅读 200 篇》(第四版)由杨荣泉主编,郭晓红和田桂荣任副主编,参加编写工作的还有宋士华、姜保华和杨晓靖。在

此向参加第三版修订的王颖、李玲、刘巧和周晓莉表示衷心的感谢。

由于编者水平有限,时间仓促,谬误疏漏之处在所难免,望广大读者及同行专家不吝赐教。

**杨荣泉**

2003年5月

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# Unit One

## Passage 1

The earliest method of exploiting this power was to make water turn a wheel. This system, in which the force of water was used directly, had one great disadvantage. Factories which used it had to be built on the banks of fast flowing streams, but these were often located in inaccessible, thinly populated areas, which made transportation of goods difficult.

When the steam engine was invented it soon replaced flowing water as a source of power; new factories sprang up in the coal fields. Coal and oil—reserve of power also ultimately derived from the sun — are not always found in accessible places, but they have the advantage of being portable.

In the 20th century the situation changed and water once more became a vital source of power. Methods were devised for producing electricity from the energy of rivers. Once the initial capital has been recovered, electricity from this source is usually cheaper than oil and coal, which are expensive to extract (开采) and transport. The great advantage of hydroelectric power is that nature constantly renews the water that provides the power. Coal and oil are fuels that can only be used once.

Not all rivers are ideal for generating electricity. A suitable river must have an adequate flow of water, and ideally there should be a steep fall. A steep waterfall is ideal, because it concentrates the energy of gravity into a short distance. The amount of water in the river, moreover, should not vary too much from season to season. This means that there must be adequate rainfall throughout the year. The river must be fairly near the industrial centers which will utilize its power, for the greater the distance the electricity has to travel, the more power is wasted.

1. If you want to make water turn a wheel, you should keep in mind



- the difficulty to \_\_\_\_.
- A. use it directly
  - B. carry goods out
  - C. cross the fast flowing streams
  - D. find enough workers
2. The steam engine soon replaced flowing water because \_\_\_\_.
- A. coal and oil are derived from the sun
  - B. coal and oil are not always accessible
  - C. coal and oil are portable
  - D. coal and oil are found in thinly-populated areas
3. After using coal and oil for a time, people find the advantages of water over coal and oil as \_\_\_\_.
- A. it is easy to recover the initial capital
  - B. it is as cheap to use water as to use coal and oil
  - C. it is nature that renews the water without any cost
  - D. it is difficult to extract and transport coal and oil
4. All of the following are required for an ideal river EXCEPT that \_\_\_\_.
- A. there should be energy of gravity
  - B. there should be a steep fall
  - C. the river should be near industrial centers
  - D. there should be an adequate flow of water
5. It can be inferred from the passage that if people want to establish a water power station, they will most probably go to \_\_\_\_.
- A. the mountainous areas
  - B. the plains
  - C. the lake areas
  - D. the river mouths

## Passage 2

When you take your car—or, indeed, any piece of machinery—to be repaired, it is generally an advantage to ask for an estimate. You should make sure an estimate is clearly listed so that you can check it afterwards. Then you cannot be charged for unnecessary work. Sometimes the repair cannot be accurately estimated until some parts have been dismantled. If so, authorize this amount of work first and ask for an accurate estimate after it has been done.

Wages and methods of costing differ from garage to garage.

Some garages pay their mechanics a flat rate per hour and pay one time and a half for overtime. Others add a fixed percentage per hour to the hourly rate. They pay for the overtime at the same rate.

Garages which have an incentive (激励的) scheme pay the mechanic a part, usually thirty per cent or thirty-three and one-third per cent, of what the customer is charged. They don't usually pay attention to the time the mechanic has taken. The charge to the customer is based on manufacturer's suggested time-schedules for work. For example, if the time allowed is three hours and the mechanic takes two and a half, the customer is charged for three hours. The mechanic receives thirty per cent of the total amount charged, not thirty per cent of the charge for the two and a half hours he actually worked on the job.

Labor charged to customers covers not only the cost of wages but also overheads(管理费). To get the cost per hour of the overheads, divide the cost of running the workshop itself by the number of hours of work available. Then add to this an amount for profit.

6. The word "dismantled" in the first paragraph most probably means \_\_\_\_\_.  
A. taken apart  
B. taken away  
C. taken off  
D. taken over
7. It is important to obtain a clearly listed estimate so that \_\_\_\_\_.  
A. you will always obtain a lower price  
B. you will get better service  
C. you will not have to pay for unnecessary work  
D. you will not have to pay any overtime
8. Mechanics are paid \_\_\_\_\_.  
A. at an hourly rate  
B. according to the skill needed  
C. in a number of different ways  
D. by a percentage of the total overheads
9. According to the passage, which of the following does the customer not have to pay for?  
A. Labor charges,  
B. Overheads.  
C. The estimate.  
D. The profit.
10. How can a mechanic estimate the cost of a job?

- A. He is unable to estimate it.
- B. He can charge a percentage of the total workshop costs.
- C. He can use the manufacturer's schedules.
- D. He can ask the customer.

### Passage 3

Many private institutions of higher education around the country are in danger. Not all will be saved, and perhaps not all deserve to be saved. There are low-quality schools just as there are low-quality businesses. We have no duty to save them simply because they exist.

But many promising institutions that deserve to continue are threatened. They are doing a fine job educationally, but they are caught in a financial squeeze, with no way to reduce rising costs or increase income significantly. Raising tuition(学费) doesn't bring in more income, for each time tuition goes up, the enrollment (招收人数) goes down, or the amount that must be given away in student aid goes up. Schools are bad businesses, whether public or private, not usually because of mismanagement but because of the nature of the enterprise. They lose money on every customer, and they can go bankrupt either from too few students or too many students. Even a very good college is a very bad business.

It is such colleges, promising but threatened, that I worry about. Low enrollment is not their chief problem. Even with full enrollments, they may go under. Efforts to save them, and preferably to keep them private, are a national necessity. There is no basis for arguing that private schools are inherently better than public schools. There are many examples to the contrary. Anyone can name state universities and colleges that rank as the finest in the nation and the world. It is now inevitable that public institutions will be dominant (占主导地位), and therefore diversity (多样性) is a national necessity. Diversity in the way we support schools tends to give us a healthy diversity in the forms of education. In an imperfect society such as ours, uniformity of education throughout the nation could be dangerous. In an imperfect society, diversity is a positive good. Supporters of public higher education know the importance of sustaining private higher education.

11. According to the author's opinion schools are bad businesses because of \_\_\_\_\_.  
A. mismanagement B. too few students  
C. too many students D. the nature of schools
12. The author used the phrase "go under" in the third paragraph to mean \_\_\_\_\_.  
A. get into difficulties B. have low enrollment  
C. have low tuition D. bring in more money
13. We can reasonably conclude from this passage that the author made an appeal to the public in order to support \_\_\_\_\_.  
A. public institutions B. private schools  
C. uniformity of education D. high quality of education
14. Which of the following is NOT true? BN  
A. High-quality private schools deserve to be saved.  
B. If the tuition is raised, the enrollment goes down.  
C. There are many cases to show that public schools are better than private schools.  
D. Private schools have more money than public schools.
15. Which of the following ways could possibly save private schools? C  
A. Raising tuition.  
B. Full enrollment.  
C. National awareness and support.  
D. Reduction of rising costs.

#### Passage 4

Sylvester and I are watching television advertisements because we need information for a class research project. We have to discuss realism and distortion(扭曲) in television advertising, and so we are looking for examples of distortions and falsehoods in television commercials. The question we are asking is, "Is the commercial true to life, or does it offer an unreal picture of the product?"

Sylvester is keeping track of the distortions, and he already has quite a long list. He says that all housewives seem to live in lovely homes, dress beautifully, and love their household chores. They smile and boast about floor waxes and proudly display their dirty

laundry, dusty tabletops, and dirty ovens. In addition, he had never seen men doing housework. Sylvester thinks that this view of family life is filled with distortions.

I am keeping track of the people who appear in the advertisements. I have found handsome men courting(求爱) the All-American Girl, and they are always recommending brand X toothpaste or brand Y cologne (科隆香水). I see teenagers and children surrounded by their friends, having wonderful times at parties and at school, and they are usually enjoying large harmonious family gatherings. I think that these advertisements are also filled with distortions.

Sylvester and I have concluded that much of American life is pictured unrealistically in commercials. Teenagers do not always have fun at parties, and very few people love doing chores. People do have problems, but few of these are ever shown in commercials.

16. Sylvester is keeping track of \_\_\_\_\_.  
A. advertisements showing brand X  
B. advertising distortions  
C. advertisements showing housewives  
D. both A and C
17. Housewives in advertisements are \_\_\_\_\_.  
A. disgusted with laundry  
B. happy with their chores  
C. courted by men using cologne  
D. none of the above
18. The best title for this passage is \_\_\_\_\_.  
A. Our Research Project  
B. Keeping Track of Television Advertising  
C. Distortions in Television Advertising  
D. Beautiful People on TV
19. The author found unrealistic advertisements picturing \_\_\_\_\_.  
A. school teachers  
B. city people  
C. suburban housewives  
D. happy teenagers
20. People's real problems are \_\_\_\_\_.  
A. the basis for all advertising  
B. distorted by commercials  
C. never shown in commercials  
D. told honestly in commercials

## Unit Two

### Passage 5

Where money goes? About 70 per cent of the average household's spending goes for necessities such as housing, food, clothes and health care. To be able to afford these items and still have money left for nonessentials such as travel and entertainment, most families find themselves economizing and watching their pennies. The same problem of matching limited resources with seemingly endless demands confronts businesses and public agencies.

That is essentially what the economy is all about—making choices on how to use limited resources of money, manpower, machinery and materials, whether it involves a shopper deciding what to buy in the supermarket or a manufacturer deciding what line of goods to produce.

Choices made in the economy involve a continuous tug of war(拔河比赛) between consumers and producers over price.

If many businesses are offering a product and there is plenty of it to satisfy the needs of all consumers, a producer will be forced to sell at a price not far above costs in order to keep from being stuck with a lot of unmarketable supplies. This is why, for example, the prices of fresh fruits and vegetables normally drop during the summer months when such produce is in abundance.

However, a low price—especially if it falls below what it costs a seller to make the goods—will discourage production, perhaps drive the high-cost producers out of business or force them to make something else.

Again using an example from agriculture, farmers periodically plant less wheat or raise fewer cattle if the prices for those goods give too little return for the costs involved.

21. Most families need to be careful about spending money because

- A. they need money for both essentials and nonessentials
  - B. they need to match limited resources
  - C. they spend 70% of their money on nonessentials
  - D. the businesses and public agencies demand endlessly from them
22. The writer, in order to \_\_\_\_\_, tells us that most families save money.
- A. explain clearly what the nature of economy is
  - B. introduce the new topic—the war between consumers and producers
  - C. answer the question at the beginning of the passage, “Where money goes?”
  - D. suggest ways to save money
23. Fresh fruits and vegetables are sold at low prices when \_\_\_\_\_.
- A. their cost has dropped because of mass production
  - B. there are a lot of unmarketable supplies because of high cost
  - C. it is easy for fruits and vegetables to become rotten in summer months
  - D. there are more than enough in markets
24. Which of the following adjectives best describes the rise and fall of the price?
- A. Regular.
  - B. Unmarketable.
  - C. Continuous.
  - D. Low.
25. According to the passage, if a shoemaker makes shoes at the cost of \$5 a pair and sells it at \$4 a pair, he will most probably \_\_\_\_\_.
- A. increase his production
  - B. think of making something else
  - C. lower the cost
  - D. use more resources

## Passage 6

Looking back on years of living in a working-class home in the north of England, I should say that a good living room must provide three principal things: gregariousness(群集), warmth and plenty of good food. The living-room is the warm heart of the family and

therefore often slightly stuffy to a middle-class visitor. It is not a social centre but a family centre; little entertaining goes on there or in the front room, if there happens to be one; you do not entertain in anything approaching the middle-class sense. The wife's social life outside her immediate family is found over the washing-line, at the little shop on the corner, visiting relatives at a moderate distance occasionally, and perhaps now and again a visit with her husband to his pub or club. Apart from these two places, he has just his work and his football matches. They will have, each of them, friends at all these places, who may well not know what the inside of their house is like, having never "stepped across the threshold," as the old fashioned phrase has it. The family hearth(炉旁) is reserved for the family itself, and those who are "something to us" (another favorite formula) and who look in for a talk or just to sit. Much of the free time of a man and his wife will usually be passed at that hearth. Just staying in is still one of the most common leisure-time occupations.

26. The writer comes to know the conditions he described from \_\_\_\_\_.

- A. his studies as a sociologist  
B. novels with a working-class setting  
C. the work of social historians  
D. his own experience
27. What would strike an outsider was the working-class living-room's lack of \_\_\_\_\_.
- A. air  
B. refinement  
C. friendliness  
D. cooking facilities
28. The kind of family he describes \_\_\_\_\_.
- A. did a lot of entertaining  
B. often had middle-class visitors  
C. rarely entertained  
D. never had visitors
29. The typical working-class wife, according to the writer, \_\_\_\_\_.
- A. never saw people outside the family  
B. usually belonged to a club  
C. disapproved of pubs and clubs  
D. sometimes went out with her husband



30. The passage implies, but does not directly say, that       . D
- A. the working-class living-room is the warm heart of the family ✓
  - B. the working-class living-room is the same with that of a middle-class family
  - C. the middle-class living-room is often the heart of entertaining
  - D. the working-class living-room is not a social centre but a family centre ✓

### Passage 7

Not so long ago it was assumed that the dangers man would meet in space would be terrible, the main ones being radiation and the danger of being hit by meteors. It is perhaps worth remembering that less than two centuries ago, the dangers of train travel seemed similarly terrible. A man would certainly die, it was thought, if carried along at a speed of 30 m. p. h.

There are two sorts of radiation man must fear in space. The first is from the sun, which is deadly. The second, less harmful form, comes from the so-called Van Allen Belts. These two kinds of radiation are as far as about 1,500 miles away from the earth. Neither of these forms of radiation is dangerous to us on the earth, since we are protected by our atmosphere. Specifically, it is that part of our atmosphere known as the ozonosphere (臭氧层) which protects us. This is a belt of the chemical ozone between 12 and 21 miles from the ground which absorbs all the radiation.

Once outside the atmosphere, however, man is no longer protected, and radiation can be harmful in a number of ways. A distinction must be drawn between the short and long-term effects of radiation. The former are merely unpleasant, but just because an astronaut returning from a journey in space does not seem to have been greatly harmed. We cannot assume that he is safe. The long-term effects can be extremely serious, even leading to death.

31. The dangers of space travel are       .
- A. radiation and Van Allen Belts
  - B. ozonosphere and meteors B
  - C. radiation and meteors
  - D. atmosphere and explosion