

高等教育“十二五”部委级规划教材

大学英语 分级阅读

第四册

● 主编 阮瑾 王新华

东华大学出版社

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出版前言

《大学英语分级阅读》系列教材全套共四册，全书严格按照美国蓝斯的分级方法分成四个级别，可供大学英语1-4级的学生使用。

蓝斯 (Lexile) 测量是由美国MetaMetrics教育测量公司为了提高美国学生的阅读能力，历经20多年研发的一种衡量学生阅读水平和标识文章难易程度的标准。相对于其他测量方法，蓝斯测量体系独特之处在于它提供了一种衡量阅读能力 (Reading Capability) 与文章难度 (Text Difficulty) 的科学方法，即在一种阅读测量体系下，既可以测定学习者的阅读能力，也可以测定不同级别教材的阅读难度。

基于对2007年6月至2010年12月四年CET-4共8次考试试题阅读难度的实际测量发现：大学英语四级阅读部分难度区间大致在1000L-1400L之间。以此为依据，再根据现行大学英语教学分级教学的实际情况，编者将本阅读教程按阅读难度分为4个级别，1级至4级，其分别对应的阅读难度为1000L-1100L、1100L-1200L、1200L-1300L和1300L-1400L。本教程选编的阅读材料严格遵照上述标准进行选择，从而确保同一级别阅读材料难度符合实际级别水平，避免出现以往因阅读材料难度不一造成学生无所适从的现象，大大提高了阅读材料的使用效率，有助于快速提升学生的阅读能力。

同时，本系列教材内容涵盖面广，从学习者实际出发，把英语学习中接触较多、需求广泛的题材编辑为八大板块，分别以文化、教育、科技、经济、医药卫生、政治、法律和生物等领域的相关文章为主题构成全书的八个单元。每个单元配有一定的翻译、阅读理解和完型填空，帮助学生巩固和消化阅读材料的内容。

本书是《大学英语分级阅读》系列教材的第四册，阅读难度符合蓝斯测量的分级区间 (1300L-1400L)，同时，每个单元的选材在相应的题材范围内，内容更加丰富，比较适合大学CET四级及以上水平的学生使用，对有志于提高考研英语水平的学生也有所帮助。

本教材主编是阮瑾、王新华；夏东、朱静老师参编。他们的智慧和辛劳，以及团队协作精神更使本书稿生辉许多。毋庸赘言，本书的设计、编写和制作过程中，难免会有不足之处，欢迎使用本教材的教师和学生给予批评和指正。

在此，特别感谢李盛老师，他负责对整个阅读材料的分级工作；还要感谢方小菊老师，她对本套丛书提出了许多宝贵的修改意见。东华大学外语学院领导和部门领导也给予了大力支持，同时本书的编写也得到了出版社和校内外专家的许多帮助，在此一并向他们表示由衷的感谢。

任再新

2012年7月

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Unit 1

Modern Marriage in America

Text A

Is There Hope for the American Marriage?

by Caitlin Flanagan

1 In the past 40 years, the face of the American family has changed profoundly. As sociologist Andrew J. Cherlin observes in a landmark new book called *The Marriage-Go-Round: The State of Marriage and the Family in America Today*, what is significant about contemporary American families, compared with those of other nations, is their combination of “frequent marriage, frequent divorce” and the high number of “short-term co-habiting relationships.” Taken together, these forces “create a great turbulence in American family life, a family *flux*, a coming and going of partners on a scale seen nowhere else. There are more partners in the personal lives of Americans than in the lives of people of any other Western country.”

flux [flʌks] n. 变迁

2 An increasingly fragile construct depending less and less on notions of sacrifice and obligation than on the *ephemera* of romance and happiness as defined by and for its adult principals, the intact, two-parent family remains our cultural ideal, but it exists under constant assault. Getting married for life, having children and raising them with your partner—this is still the way most Americans are conducting adult life, but the numbers who are moving in a different direction continue

ephemera [i'femərə] n. 生命极
短促的人或物

to rise. Most notably, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported in May that births to unmarried women have reached an astonishing 39.7%.

3 How much does this matter? More than words can say. There is no other single force causing as much measurable hardship and human misery in this country as the collapse of marriage. It hurts children, it reduces mothers' financial security, and it has landed with particular devastation on those who can bear it least: the nation's underclass.

4 The poor and the middle class are very different in the ways they have forsaken marriage. The poor are doing it by uncoupling parenthood from marriage, and the financially secure are doing it by blasting apart their unions if the principals aren't having fun anymore.

5 The growing tendency of the poor to have children before marriage—the vast majority of unmarried women having babies are undereducated and have low incomes—is a catastrophic approach to life, as three Presidents in a row have tried to convince them. Bill Clinton's welfare-to-work program encouraged marriage, George W. Bush spent millions to promote marriage, and Barack Obama has spoken powerfully on the need for men to stay with their children: "We need fathers to step up, to realize that their job does not end at conception; that what makes you a man is not the ability to have a child but the courage to raise one."

6 The reason for these appeals to lasting unions is simple: on every single significant outcome related to short-term well-being and long-term success, children from intact, two-parent families outperform those from single-parent households. Longevity, drug abuse, school performance and dropout rates, teen pregnancy, criminal behavior and *incarceration*—if you can measure it, a sociologist has; and in all cases, the kids living with both parents drastically outperform the others.

7 Few things *hamper* a child as much as not having a father at home. "As a feminist, I didn't want to believe it," says Maria Kefalas, a sociologist who studies marriage and family issues and co-authored a seminal book on low-income mothers called *Promises I Can Keep: Why Poor Women Put Motherhood Before*

incarceration [in,kɑ:sə'reɪʃən]

n. 监禁

hamper ['hæmpə] vt. 阻碍

Marriage. “Women always tell me, ‘I can be a mother and a father to a child,’ but it’s not true.” Growing up without a father has a deep psychological effect on a child. “The mom may not need that man,” Kefalas says, “but her children still do.”

8 The consequences for more-affluent kids tend to be far less devastating than for poor ones; they are less likely to become teenage parents and high school dropouts. But children of divorced middle-class parents do less well in school and at college compared with *underprivileged* kids from two-parent households.

9 “There’s a ‘sleeper effect’ to divorce that we are just beginning to understand,” says David Blankenhorn, president of the Institute for American Values. It’s dismissive of the human experience, says Blankenhorn, to suggest that kids don’t suffer, extraordinarily, from divorce: “Children have a primal need to know who they are, to love and be loved by the two people whose physical union brought them here. To lose that connection, that sense of identity, is to experience a wound that no child-support check or fancy school can ever heal.”

10 That prompts the question, does the father have to actually be married to the mother of his children to have a positive effect on them?

11 “Not if he behaves exactly like a married man,” says Robert Rector, a senior research fellow of domestic policy at the Heritage Foundation. If a man is willing to contribute 70% of his income to the child’s upbringing, dedicate himself around the clock to the child’s well-being and create a stable home life—a home life that includes his actually living there with mother and child—he might be able to give his child the boon of fatherhood without having to tie the knot. But that rarely happens.

12 Poignantly, the one thing that unites the poor and the middle class in their hopes for family life is the imperishable dream of being married forever, grabbing hold of the golden ring of lasting partnership. The low-income mothers studied by Kefalas and co-author Kathryn Edin spoke repeatedly of their wish to get married; they “cherish marriage and hold it to an impossibly high standard,” the authors found, but too often forgo it as a result. **Meanwhile, the middle class has spent the past 2½ decades—during which the divorce culture became**

underprivileged

[ˌʌndəˈprɪvɪlɪdʒd] adj. 下层社会的, 贫困的

poignantly [ˈpoɪnəntli] adv.

令人心酸地

overwrought ['əuvə'rɔ:t] adj.

过度兴奋的, 过于疲惫的

plunk [plʌŋk] vi. 用力丢下或

放下

RSVP 全称为Repondez Sil

Vous Plait. 请回复

swoon [swu:n] vi. 狂喜, 心醉

神迷

insatiable [in'seɪʃiəbl] adj. 永

不满足的

stigmatize ['stigmataɪz] vt. 侮

辱, 指责

yoke [jəuk] vt. 使成配偶

bout [baut] n. (疾病等的)

发作

hew [hju:] vi. 坚持

a fact of life—turning weddings into *overwrought* exercises in consumer spending, as if by just *plunking* down enough cash for the flower girls' dresses and tissue-lined envelopes for the *RSVP* cards, we can somehow improve our chance of going the distance. Think of the touching moments on Inauguration Night, when at ball after ball, crowds of young people *swooned* at the sight of Barack and Michelle Obama dancing together, artlessly but sincerely and clearly with great affection. They are an immensely appealing couple, and it was a historic night, but what we saw reflected in the faces of those awed young people—and in the country's *insatiable* appetite for photographs of the First Family's private life—was wonder at the sight of a middle-aged man and woman still together, still in love.

13 We want something like that for ourselves; we recognize that it is something of great worth, but we are increasingly less willing to put in the hard work and personal sacrifice to get there. The Obamas, for example, are enjoying their time of family closeness after almost two years of enforced separation, an interlude that would have caused many less committed couples to turn in their cards and give up. A lasting marriage is the reward, usually, of hard work and self-sacrifice.

14 The fundamental question we must ask ourselves at the beginning of the century is this: What is the purpose of marriage? Is it—given the game-changing realities of birth control, female equality and the fact that motherhood outside of marriage is no longer *stigmatized*—simply an institution that has the capacity to increase the pleasure of the adults who enter into it? **If so, we might as well hold the wake now: there probably aren't many people whose idea of 24-hour-a-day good times consists of being *yoked* to the same romantic partner, through *bouts* of stomach flu and depression, financial setbacks and emotional upsets, until after many a long decade, one or the other eventually dies in harness.**

15 Or is marriage an institution that still *hews* to its old intention and function—to raise the next generation, to protect and teach it, to instill in it the habits of conduct and character that will ensure the generation's own safe passage into adulthood?

Think of it this way: the current generation of children, the one watching commitments between adults snap like dry twigs and observing parents who simply can't be bothered to marry each other and who hence drift in and out of their children's lives — that's the generation who will be taking care of us when we are old.

16 Who is left to ensure that these kids grow up into *estimable* people once the Mark Sanfords and other marital *frauds* and casual sadists have *jumped ship*? The good among us, the ones who are willing to sacrifice the thrill of a love letter for the betterment of their children.

estimable ['estiməbl] adj. 可尊

重的

fraud [frɔ:d] n. 欺骗

jump ship 弃船潜逃

Difficult Sentences

1. An increasingly fragile construct depending less and less on notions of sacrifice and obligation than on the ephemera of romance and happiness as defined by and for its adult principals, the intact, two-parent family remains our cultural ideal, but it exists under constant assault.

分析：这是一个“but”连接的并列句，由两个简单句组成，它们的主语分别是“the intact, two-parent family”和“it”。句子的难点在于开头部分，是“family”的同位语，比较长，其核心词是“construct”，指的就是“family”，“depending”是现在分词作为后置定语修饰“construct”，“as defined”在用法上相当于一个定语从句，修饰“romance and happiness”。

参考译文：完整的双亲家庭这一结构如今与牺牲和义务这两种理念渐行渐远，而更多依附于其成年主角为自己所定义的那些昙花一现的浪漫和幸福之上，因而正变得日益脆弱，但它在我们的文化中仍是理想的家庭结构，不过其存在正遭到屡屡攻击。

2. Meanwhile, the middle class has spent the past 2½ decades—during which the divorce culture became a fact of life—turning weddings into overwrought exercises in consumer spending, as if by just plunking down enough cash for the flower girls' dresses and tissue-lined envelopes for the RSVP cards, we

can somehow improve our chance of going the distance.

分析：这是一个由“as if”引导的状语从句。前半部分的主句中，谓语为“spend+time+doing”的结构，破折号中是“which”引导的定语从句，修饰“2½ decades”。后半部分的从句中，“by”的介词结构前置，表示方式，然后是从句的主谓宾成分。从句的难点在于一些词义和词组的理解。

参考译文：与此同时，在过去的二十几年里……在这二十几年里离婚成了生活一个不可否定的事实……中产阶级把婚礼整成了一个耗费过度的消费行为，似乎砸下足够多的银子去购买花童的礼服和有内衬的婚礼请柬信封，我们就可以在某种程度上增加把婚姻进行到底的机会。

3. If so, we might as well hold the wake now: there probably aren't many people whose idea of 24-hour-a-day good times consists of being yoked to the same romantic partner, through bouts of stomach flu and depression, financial setbacks and emotional upsets, until after many a long decade, one or the other eventually dies in harness.

分析：这句话我们主要来看一下冒号后面的部分。它是一个“there be”句型加一个定语从句。句子较复杂的地方出现在“consists of”之后，其后所有部分都是其宾语，“being yoked to”是动名词结构，“until”连词，引导从句，意为“直到……才……”。

参考译文：如果是这样的话，那我们不妨保持清醒的头脑：也许没有多少人会认为他们日复一日每天 24 小时的时光这样度过是美好的——厮守着一位爱人，共同克服病痛（胃肠炎）的发作和情绪的低落，共同经历财政的挫折和感情的失落，直到几十年之后，他或她最终战死在婚姻的沙场。

Exercises

I. Cloze Test

Read the following passage, and fill in each of the numbered blanks with one suitable word from the word bank given below. You may not use any of the words in the blank more than once.

| | | | | |
|-------------|-----------------|----------------|----------------|--------------------|
| A. intact | B. pioneering | C. identity | D. phenomenon | E. underprivileged |
| F. affluent | G. sustained | H. devastation | I. drastically | J. turbulence |
| K. applying | L. catastrophic | M. dedicating | N. value | O. steering |

In the past 40 years, the contour of the American family has undergone a great change. Although most Americans are still 1 their adult life along the way of getting married, having children and then raising them with their partner, there occurs a growing number of people who are moving in different ways—having “frequent marriage, frequent divorce” , “short-term co-habiting relationship” and giving birth to babies before marriage. All these have caused a great 2 in American family life and particular 3 to the underclass.

It is something 4 for the poor to have children before marriage, for these children are most probably left to live with a single parent. Researchers have found that children from 5, two-parent families 6 outperform those from single-parent households on every single significant outcome related to short-term well-being and long-term success. And this is true at every economic level. Children of divorced middle-class parents do less well in school and college than 7 kids from two-parent families. Therefore, it can never be denied that kids are victims of divorce. Just as Blankenhorn says, children should have a primal need to know their 8, otherwise, they are sure to suffer a wound that can never be healed. So, it is of vital importance for the unmarried father to behave like a real father—9 himself both physically and economically to creating a stable home life for the upbringing and well-being of the child. Unfortunately, this is not often the case.

Despite the rigid reality of high divorce and instable relationship between the two, the poor and the middle class still hold the dream of being married forever. The sight of Barack and Michelle Obama dancing together on Inauguration Night has extended our hope for a lasting relationship which is shown to have been 10 by hard work and self-sacrifice.

II. Reading Comprehension

1. According to the passage, what is the main feature in the profound change of American family in the past 40 years?

- A. The number of people in a family is on the sharp decrease.
- B. The number of children in the pre-marriage relationship is on the sharp decrease.
- C. The number of partners in people's personal lives has more than tripled.
- D. The number of families experiencing wobbling relationships is on the sharp increase.

2. People with low incomes usually abandon marriage because ____.

- A. they are over-burdened with their pre-marriage children
- B. they are the ones with less education and less responsibility
- C. they find no pleasure after living together for a certain period of time
- D. they cannot find a better job to ensure a high quality life after marriage

3. Maria Kefalas, a feminist and sociologist, used to think ____ .

- A. the life of children growing up without a father had little difference with that of those who had a father
- B. growing up without a father had a deep psychological effect on a child
- C. children growing up without a father performed as well as those who had one in all aspects
- D. children growing up without a father could not outperform those who had one in some aspects

4. The passage is mainly concerned with ____ as one of the victims of failed marriage.

- A. child
- B. mother
- C. father
- D. single mother

5. According to the author, what can ensure a hopeful marriage?

- A. A better economic basis
- B. The sharing responsibility of child-rearing
- C. A better education background
- D. Necessary self-sacrifice

III. Translation from English to Chinese

- 1. There is no other single force causing as much measurable hardship and human misery in this country as the collapse of marriage.
- 2. The reason for these appeals to lasting unions is simple: on every single significant outcome related to short-term well-being and long-term success, children from intact, two-parent families outperform those from single-parent households.
- 3. Poignantly, the one thing that unites the poor and the middle class in their hopes for family life is the imperishable dream of being married forever, grabbing hold of the golden ring of lasting partnership.
- 4. They are an immensely appealing couple, and it was a historic night, but what we saw reflected in the faces of those awed young people—and in the country's insatiable appetite for photographs of the First Family's private life—was wonder at the sight of a middle-aged man and woman still together, still in love.
- 5. Or is marriage an institution that still hews to its old intention and function—to raise the next generation, to protect and teach it, to instill in it the habits of conduct and character that will ensure the generation's own safe passage into adulthood.

Who Needs Marriage? A Changing Institution

by Belinda Luscombe

1 The wedding of the 20th century, in 1981, celebrated a marriage that turned out to be a huge bust. It ended as badly as a relationship can: scandal, divorce and, ultimately, death and worldwide weeping.

2 So when the firstborn son of that union, Britain's Prince William, set in motion the wedding of this century by getting engaged to Catherine Middleton, he did things a little differently. He picked someone older than he is (by six months), who went to the same university he did and whom he'd dated for a long time. Although she is not of royal blood, she stands to become the first English Queen with a university degree, so in one fundamental way, theirs is a union of equals. In that regard, the new couple reflect the changes in the shape and nature of marriage that have been rippling throughout the Western world for the past few decades.

ripple ['ripl] vi. 逐渐形成

3 In fact, statistically speaking, a young man of William's age—if not his royal English heritage—might be just as likely not to get married, yet. In 1960, the year before Princess Diana, William's mother, was born, nearly 70% of American adults were married; now only about half are. Eight times as many children are *born out of* wedlock. Back then, two-thirds of 20-somethings were married; in 2008 just 26% were. And college graduates are now far more likely to marry (64%) than those with no higher education (48%).

born out of wedlock 非婚生

4 When an institution so central to human experience suddenly changes shape in the space of a generation or two, it's worth trying to figure out why. This fall the Pew Research Center, in association with TIME, conducted a nationwide poll exploring the *contours* of modern marriage and the new American family, posing questions about what people want and expect out

contour ['kɒntʊə] n. 轮廓

revere [ri'viə] vt. 尊敬

of marriage and family life, why they enter into committed relationships and what they gain from them. What we found is that marriage, whatever its social, spiritual or symbolic appeal, is in purely practical terms just not as necessary as it used to be. Neither men nor women need to be married to have sex or companionship or professional success or respect or even children—yet marriage remains *revered* and desired.

5 And of all the transformations our family structures have undergone in the past 50 years, perhaps the most profound is the marriage differential that has opened between the rich and the poor. In 1960 the median household income of married adults was 12% higher than that of single adults, after adjusting for household size. By 2008 this gap had grown to 41%. In other words, the richer and more educated you are, the more likely you are to marry, or to be married—or, conversely, if you're married, you're more likely to be well off.

6 **The question of why the wealth disparity between the married and the unmarried has grown so much is related to other, broader issues about marriage: whom it best serves, how it relates to parenting and family life and how its voluntary nature changes social structures.**

7 In 1978, when the divorce rate was much higher than it is today, a TIME poll asked Americans if they thought marriage was becoming obsolete. Twenty-eight percent did. Now, the Pew survey reveals that nearly 40% of us think marriage is obsolete. This doesn't mean, though, that we're pessimistic about the future of the American family; we have more faith in the family than we do in the nation's education system or its economy. We're just more flexible about how family gets defined.

8 Even more surprising: overwhelmingly, Americans still *venerate* marriage enough to want to try it. The Pew poll found that although 44% of Americans under 30 believe marriage is heading for extinction, only 5% of those in that age group do not want to get married. Sociologists note that Americans have a rate of marriage—and of remarriage—among the highest in the Western world. “Getting married is a way to show family and friends that you have a successful personal life,” says Andrew Cherlin, a sociologist at Johns Hopkins University and

venerate ['venə,reit] vt. 尊敬

the author of *The Marriage-Go-Round: The State of Marriage and the Family in America Today*. “It’s like the ultimate merit badge.”

9 Even when couples are married, family life is a different experience for those with a college education and those without one. Professional occupations are much more likely to offer provisions for parental leave, the ability to work from home and flexible hours. Wealthy people can outsource the more *onerous* or dreary or time-sucking tasks that couples fight over. And the college-educated tend to have picked up more conflict-resolution and negotiation skills along the way. Their marriage is *insulated* from some of the stresses of balancing work and family. A sick child throws a much bigger *wrench* into the machinery of a factory or retail or service worker’s life.

onerous [ˈɒnərəs] adj. 繁重的,
麻烦的

insulate [ˈɪnsjuleɪt] vt. 隔离,
孤立

wrench [rentʃ] n. 猛扭, 痛苦

plateau [ˈplætəʊ] n. 上升后的
稳定水平

offset [ˈɒf, set] vt. 补偿, 抵消

10 In recent years, the overall rate of divorce has *plateaued* somewhat, and leaving a spouse is on the decline among college graduates. But that drop is being *offset* by a rise in splits among those at the lower end of the socioeconomic spectrum, the people least able to afford to divorce, so the rate is still high. Says Cherlin: “**One statistic I saw when writing my book that floored me was that a child living together with unmarried parents in Sweden has a lower chance that his family will disrupt than does a child living with married parents in the U.S.**”

tenuous [ˈtenjuəs] adj. 贫乏,
无力的

11 It seems that the 21st century marriage, with its emphasis on a match of equals, has brought about a surge in inequality. It’s easier for the college-educated, with their dominance of the knowledge economy, to get married and stay married. The less well off delay marriage because their circumstances feel so *tenuous*, then often have kids, which makes marrying even harder.

12 Is marriage, which used to be like the draft, now becoming more like West Point, admitting only the elite and sending the others off to the front line? Depends whom you ask. “The basis of marriage changed in the last century,” says Seth Eisenberg, president and CEO of the *PAIRS* Foundation, one of the biggest relationship-education operations in the country. “But very few couples have had a chance to learn really what are the new