

大学英语

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College English · Fast Reading

大学英语

快速阅读教程

第一册

李宝琨 主编
肖曰峒 编写
廖大欣
杨惠中 审阅
张彦斌



00357922

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,本册供第一级用,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。北京工业大学肖曰峒、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籍专家 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

上海交通大学出版社

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Unit 1

Man and Apes (类人猿)

Man has always been interested in apes because they are at the same time so like him and so unlike him. In their basic body structure (结构), they are very similar and for this reason they both belong to primates, the highest form of animal. They also resemble (相象) each other in having hands and feet. And neither has a tail.

Both man and apes have large brains compared to their body size, and this helps again to distinguish (区分) them from other species (种类) of animals. But, compared to the chimpanzee (黑猩猩), for example, man's brain is four times as large. Like man, apes can use tools. For instance, an ape may pick up a stick and put it in an ants' nest (巢穴) to make the ants come out. Apes have been known to make tools, by breaking off branches to use as sticks, for example. Man, however, is quite different because he can make a plan, and then make a tool by following that plan.

All human beings everywhere have a language, and there are thousands of different languages in the world. All these languages are equally complex (复杂的), and they are very different from the cries of apes and other animals.

Another distinction (区别) between man and apes is in fire-making. Man has possessed (掌握) the secret of making fire for thousands of years. In contrast (相反), neither apes nor any other animals possess this secret.

(229 words)

Comprehension Exercises

1. Man has always taken a great interest in apes because

- A) he likes and dislikes them at the same time.
- B) apes are a very rare species of animals.
- C) there are so many similarities and differences between man and apes.
- D) apes have hands and feet like man.

2. Man and apes differ little in their

- A) behaviours.
- B) body structure.
- C) basic needs.
- D) intelligence.

3. According to the passage,

- A) the ape has a large brain compared to its body size.

- B) the ape's brain is not large in size.
 C) humans have a brain four times larger than that of any other animal.
 D) the ape's brain is somewhat small in comparison with man's.
4. Which of the following statements is not true?
 A) It is possible for a chimpanzee to use a stick to reach for something in the distance.
 B) Apes can walk in the same manner as men.
 C) Like man, apes can communicate with each other.
 D) Man has no close relationship with apes.
5. Which of the following animals is a primate?
 A) A tiger. B) A chimpanzee.
 C) A horse. D) A panda.
6. According to the writer, the cries of apes
 A) can be considered as the basic form of a language.
 B) are as complex as man's languages.
 C) cannot be regarded as a real language.
 D) are entirely different from those of other animals.
7. From the passage, we can see that apes
 A) can use and make simple tools.
 B) can make whatever tools they need.
 C) can only use tools.
 D) can neither use nor make any tools.
8. Fire-making is
 A) a big contrast between primates and other animals.
 B) a secret that has been kept for thousands of years.
 C) what apes want to learn.
 D) a clear distinction between man and apes.
9. How many kinds of differences between man and apes are mentioned in the passage?
 A) 4. B) 3.
 C) 2. D) 5.
10. The purpose of this passage is
 A) to distinguish apes from other species of animals.
 B) to point out that man is superior (优越) to apes.
 C) to explain what primates are.
 D) to make a comparison between man and apes.

Unit 2

After All, That Leaves You with Nine

A little girl was given so many picture books on her seventh birthday that her father, who should have run his office and let her mother run the home, thought his daughter should give one or two of her new books to a little neighbor boy named Robert, who had visited, more by design (故意) than by chance.

Now, taking books, or anything else, from a little girl is like taking candy from a baby, but the father of the little girl had his way and Robert got two of her books. "After all, that leaves you with nine," said the father, who thought he was a philosopher (哲学家) and a child psychologist (心理学家), and couldn't shut his big stupid mouth on the subject (题目).

A few weeks later, the father went to his library to look up "father" in the Oxford English Dictionary, to feast his eyes on (一饱眼福) the praise of fatherhood through the centuries, but he couldn't find volume (卷) F-G, and then he discovered that three others were missing, too—A-B, L-M, V-Z. He began a probe (搜索) of his household, and learned what had happened to the four missing volumes.

"A man came to the door this morning," said his little daughter, "and he didn't know how to get from here to Torrington, or from Torrington to Winsted, and he was a nice man, much nicer than Robert, and so I gave him four of your books. After all, there are thirteen volumes in the Oxford English Dictionary, and that leaves you with nine."

(253 words)

Comprehension Exercises

1. According to the writer's opinion,

- A) a mother should keep house and a father educate his children.
- B) a father should run the home as well as his office.
- C) a father should run his office and a mother run the home.
- D) a father should not only run his office, but educate his children.

2. The little neighbor boy

- A) visited the girl from time to time.
- B) called on the girl more purposely than accidentally.
- C) rushed into the girl's house occasionally.

- D) paid a formal visit to the girl very often.
3. How does the writer feel about taking picture books from a little girl?
- A) This sort of thing is quite common,
 B) It makes no difference to a child,
 C) It's nothing to be surprised at,
 D) It may hurt the girl's feelings.
4. "The father of the little girl had his way" means
- A) the father went out to work.
 B) the father made his own decision.
 C) the father left his daughter alone.
 D) the father did what he wanted.
5. Considering himself a philosopher, the father couldn't _____ the subject.
- A) avoid discussing B) stop talking about
 C) refuse to listen to D) give an explanation of
6. The father didn't find the word "father" because
- A) the volume F-G disappeared.
 B) there isn't such a word in his dictionary.
 C) he looked it up in a wrong volume.
 D) both A) and C)
7. The girl's father learned what had happened to his missing volumes. It was _____ that led him into trouble.
- A) his carelessness B) his own actions
 C) his daughter's fault D) his daughter's joke
8. Which of the following sentences may best reflect the girl's attitude toward her father?
- A) "A man came to the door this morning."
 B) "He was a nice man, much nicer than Robert."
 C) "I gave him four of your books."
 D) "After all, that leaves you with nine."
9. What does the writer think of the father?
- A) He was very strict with his daughter.
 B) He was too proud to listen to his daughter.
 C) As a child psychologist, he didn't understand his daughter's psychology very well.
 D) As a father, he showed little care for his daughter.
10. This short story tells us that
- A) failure is the mother of success.
 B) what you do not wish done to yourself, do not do to others.
 C) we should put others first and ourselves last.
 D) everything is hard in the beginning.

Unit 3

The History of Flying

The very first flight in the history of man was made in 1783 in a basket hanging under a balloon (气球). The most successful kind of balloon was the hydrogen balloon which made its first flight on 1st December 1783. But the first successful flight man ever made was ten days previously (先前地), on 21st November 1783, in a hot-air balloon.

The balloon was not the best answer to the problem of flying because it had no engine (发动机) and went where the wind blew it. Seventy years passed before the next big step forward. During this time people worked on plans for airships (飞艇), gliders (滑翔机) and aeroplanes. In 1852, an airship flew for the first time. It was driven by a 3-horsepower steam engine at a speed of 10 kilometres an hour. At about the same time the first glider flew with a man on board.

People continued trying to make bigger and better airships right up to 1938, but the aeroplane was much safer, faster and easier to control. The first flight in an aeroplane had to wait until the petrol (汽油) engine was developed. Perhaps the greatest day in the history of flying was 17th December 1903 when a petrol-driven aeroplane flew the length of a modern Boeing (波音) 747 jumbo jet (大型喷气式客机) — at 40 kilometres per hour. The last big advance in ordinary flying was the jet aeroplane which flew for the first time in 1941 at a speed of about 500 kilometres an hour.

The helicopter (直升飞机) came late into the history of flying. A helicopter was designed (设计) as early as 1910 but the first successful flight did not occur until 1937.

(269 words)

Comprehension Exercises

1. According to the passage, which of the following events happened first?
A) Man flew in a hydrogen balloon. B) Man flew in an airship.
C) Man flew in a hot air balloon. D) Man flew in a helicopter.
2. The first successful balloon flight man ever made was
A) on 1st December 1783. B) on 21st November 1783.
C) ten days before 1st December 1783. D) ten days after 1st December 1783.
3. To fly with the balloon, man used a basket to

- A) put the balloon in.
 - B) hang the balloon.
 - C) sit himself in.
 - D) balance the balloon.
4. From Paragraph two we know that
 - A) people flew successfully in airships between 1783 and 1852.
 - B) the first flights in a glider and an airship happened at almost the same time.
 - C) the first glider flew at a speed of 10 kilometers an hour.
 - D) people stopped making balloon flights.
 5. The balloon was not the best thing to fly with because
 - A) it often flew with the wind.
 - B) it could not fly very high.
 - C) it flew slowly.
 - D) it cost too much.
 6. Paragraph two states, "Seventy years passed before the next big step forward."
"The next big step forward" here means
 - A) people began working on airships, gliders and aeroplanes.
 - B) the first flight man made in a glider.
 - C) a steam engine was first used in an airship.
 - D) both B and C.
 7. The aeroplane was much safer, faster and easier to control because
 - A) it was bigger than the airship.
 - B) it was more advanced than the airship.
 - C) it had a petrol engine.
 - D) it could fly above bad weather.
 8. Which of the following statements is true?
 - A) The world's first aeroplane flew very fast.
 - B) The first aeroplane covered a distance as long as a modern Boeing 747 jet-plane measures from end to end.
 - C) The first power-driven aeroplane travelled the same distance as a Boeing 747 can.
 - D) The first petrol engine fixed in the aeroplane was very powerful.
 9. 17th December 1903 was perhaps the greatest day in the history of flying because on that day
 - A) a petrol-driven aeroplane was made.
 - B) a modern Boeing 747 jumbo jet was made.
 - C) a Boeing 747 flew at a speed of about 500 km per hour.
 - D) a petrol-driven aeroplane flew for several seconds.
 10. From the information given in the last paragraph we could conclude that
 - A) man flew in a jet aeroplane before he did in a helicopter.
 - B) man flew in a jet aeroplane after he did in a helicopter.
 - C) helicopters were designed earlier than gliders.
 - D) the first successful helicopter-flight occurred some time before 1937.

Unit 4

The Best in Cars — The Model T and the SJ

When cars first started appearing on the streets of the world, few people took them seriously. They were toys — playthings for grown men who didn't have much to do. No one thought that the automobile would ever become the world's most popular form of transportation.

When Henry Ford started selling his Model T in 1908, he changed all that. Ford believed that a car should be low-cost transportation that everyone could afford (买得起). So he decided to make such a car. First, he wanted a dependable (可靠的) automobile that wouldn't break down easily. Then he wanted a simple engine (发动机) that almost anyone could fix.

Ford wanted to sell the car for a low price, so he had to make it at a low cost. So, he made only one model and he made it in only one color — black.

In 1932, the Duesenberg brothers produced a car that many people think is the most luxurious (豪华的) automobile ever made — the Duesenberg SJ. Every Duesenberg was custom-made (定做的), so each one was different. But it usually weighed (重) about 7,000 pounds and had a very wide wheelbase (轴距) — 150 inches. It also had an strong 400 horsepower engine that could move the huge car from zero to 100 miles per hour in 17 seconds.

The interior (内部) was as luxurious as the motor was big. It had the finest silk, leather (皮革), silver (银) and wood. An SJ was very expensive, but rich people often felt they had to own one. Unfortunately, the car cost so much to produce that the company lost money. In 1937, after making only 500 of them, the Duesenbergs stopped production of the SJ forever.

(272 words)

Comprehension Exercises

1. When cars first appeared,

- A) they attracted everybody's attention.
- B) they were a great surprise to all people.
- C) they were nothing but toy cars.
- D) not many people thought of them to be of much use.

2. For what reason did Henry Ford decide to make the Model T?
 - A) Because he wanted to make a lot of money by selling cars.
 - B) Because he did not have much to do.
 - C) Because he wanted to compete with other car makers.
 - D) Because he wanted to make it become a popular means of transportation.
3. The Model T made by Ford was
 - A) a car that could run very fast.
 - B) a car that had a powerful engine.
 - C) a car that was simple enough for anyone to operate.
 - D) a low-cost car that everyone could afford.
4. Henry Ford wanted a simple engine so that
 - A) he could lower the car cost.
 - B) everyone would be able to repair it by himself.
 - C) everyone would like it.
 - D) he could make his cars more dependable.
5. The Duesenberg cars were different from one another because
 - A) they were made for different people.
 - B) they were designed and made by different engineers.
 - C) they were made according to the customer's wishes.
 - D) each car was more luxurious than the other.
6. Nobody could afford the Duesenberg SJ except
 - A) well-to-do people.
 - B) government officials.
 - C) clerks.
 - D) workers.
7. Which of these statements is false?
 - A) The SJ had an enormous engine.
 - B) The wheelbase of the SJ was 150 inches wide.
 - C) Few of the SJs had a weight as great as 7,000 pounds.
 - D) All of the SJs were very expensive.
8. The word "interior" in the last paragraph means
 - A) frame.
 - B) inferior.
 - C) inside.
 - D) size.
9. The company that produced the SJ
 - A) went bankrupt (破产).
 - B) suffered losses in business.
 - C) was the biggest in the country.
 - D) expanded rapidly.
10. The Duesenbergs stopped production of the SJ
 - A) for good.
 - B) for the time being.
 - C) once in a while.
 - D) again and again.

Unit 5

For Women Only: A Saudi(沙特) Factory

In the Middle East, women have traditionally (传统上) stayed at home. They were responsible (对...负责) for maintaining the home and did not work. In fact, when women went out in public, they covered their faces and walked behind their husbands. Today the way of life is changing. Many women want to take an active role in the economy (经济).

Only rarely are women in Saudi Arabia allowed a taste of life beyond their home and family. Now, in a nod not just to modernization but to the desert kingdom's economic needs, Saudi women may be about to make an important step into the outside world. Two weeks ago the Saudi Cable Company (电缆公司) announced (宣布) plans to set up a "women only" factory in an as yet unpublished area and have it operating within five years. The plant would find a way to get around the Saudi labor laws, which do not allow men and women to share the same work area. The several hundred women workers would communicate with male (男的) supervisors (管理人员) through TV screens, which are already in use in Saudi universities to separate male professors from female (女的) students. King Fahd has reportedly approved (批准) the factory plan, which is believed to be the first of its kind in the Arab world. Saudi women have been graduating (毕业) from universities in increasing numbers, but it is reported that by 1990 about 50,000 university-educated women looking for jobs won't find any. That has not gone unnoticed by the Saudi government, which is trying to reduce the kingdom's heavy dependence on foreign labor at a time of lowering oil prices.

(262 words)

Comprehension Exercises

1. Traditionally, most women in the Middle East were
 - A) servants.
 - B) farmers.
 - C) traders.
 - D) housewives.
2. A few women in Saudi will soon be allowed to
 - A) go to school.
 - B) step into the outside world.
 - C) go out and eat in restaurants.
 - D) come into contact with men.

3. Here, "in a nod to" is similar in meaning to
 - A) in agreement with.
 - B) on the basis of.
 - C) in honor of.
 - D) in addition to.
4. The women only plant to be set up would.
 - A) observe the Saudi labor laws.
 - B) avoid the Saudi labor laws by passing around them.
 - C) be punished according to the Saudi labor laws.
 - D) break the Saudi labor laws.
5. In Saudi, it is illegal for men and women
 - A) to go to separate schools.
 - B) to greet each other in public.
 - C) to work together in the same place.
 - D) to communicate through a TV screen.
6. In Saudi universities, male professors are not allowed
 - A) to communicate with female students.
 - B) to teach male students through TV screens.
 - C) to teach girls personally.
 - D) to ask girl students any questions.
7. "Reportedly" means
 - A) by report.
 - B) in a report.
 - C) officially.
 - D) formally.
8. It is roughly calculated that by 1990
 - A) about 50,000 girls will graduate from universities.
 - B) about 50,000 female university students will be faced with unemployment.
 - C) about 50,000 girls won't receive a higher education.
 - D) about 50,000 university graduates won't get any jobs.
9. The sentence "That has not gone unnoticed by the Saudi government ..." means most nearly the same as
 - A) the Saudi government has paid attention to that.
 - B) the Saudi government let that pass unnoticed.
 - C) the Saudi government took no notice of that.
 - D) that escaped the Saudi government's notice.
10. From this article, we can see that
 - A) few Saudi Arabian women want to change their traditional way of life
 - B) a woman's place is in the home.
 - C) Saudi women know almost nothing about the Women's Liberation Movement.
 - D) it will take some time before Saudi Arabian women are allowed to join the work force.

Unit 6

Chinese Food — What a Way to Cook!

My interest in Chinese food started many years ago, when I had my first job. I was a young reporter for the *Daily Journal* in San Francisco. Our office wasn't far from Chinatown. I usually managed to arrange my schedule (日程, 时间表) so that I could go there at least two or three times a week for a good meal.

The first time I ever ate Chinese food I loved it. And since then, it just tastes better and better to me. The first thing I noticed was the fresh taste of the meat and vegetables. When I learned more about the food, I began to understand why it has this unique feature (特色).

About 5000 years ago, China lost much of its wood because of over-population and poor management of its forests (森林). This loss was very bad for the country, of course, but it turned out to be very good for the food. Wood became very expensive and hard to get, so the Chinese had to either find a substitute (替换物) for their valuable wood, or learn how to use it better. There weren't any substitutes available, so people found ways to economize (节俭).

In order to economize in cooking, they had to use very little wood. So they started cutting their meat and vegetables into small pieces before they put them in the hot oil. That way, the food cooked faster and they saved their fuel. The food prepared in this manner (方式) kept its fresh flavor (味道)——and it's this flavor that attracts people to the art of Chinese cooking.

I often wonder if the Chinese understood their solution to that ancient energy crisis (危机) as much as I do now——whenever I eat Chinese food,

(281 words)

Comprehension Exercises

1. The writer's interest in Chinese food started
 - A) from his childhood.
 - B) before he was a reporter,
 - C) when he had his first job.
 - D) weeks ago.
2. He could have Chinese food two or three times a week because
 - A) the food was delicious.
 - B) he loved the food,

- C) he worked for the Daily Journal in San Francisco.
D) he arranged the time well.
3. What was the first thing he noticed about Chinese food?
A) The fresh taste. B) The unique feature.
C) The pleasant smell. D) The meat and vegetables.
4. The word "unique" in paragraph two means
A) wonderful. B) specific.
C) unusual. D) pleasant.
5. The reason wood was so valuable in ancient China was that
A) wood was very good for food. B) wood was expensive.
C) much of the wood was lost. D) both A) and B)
6. Why did the Chinese cut the food into small pieces before they cooked it?
A) They wanted to make it more attractive to people.
B) They did not have enough wood.
C) They wanted to make it tasty.
D) They wanted to keep its fresh flavor.
7. The ancient Chinese people had to learn how to use wood better because
A) they were economical.
B) they wanted to find new ways of cooking.
C) they lost too much wood.
D) they had a large population.
8. What about Chinese food attracts people most?
A) The way it was cooked. B) The hot oil.
C) The small pieces. D) The flavor.
9. Which of the following statements is not given in the article?
A) Chinese food has a long tradition.
B) Chinese food is served everywhere in the world.
C) The Chinese have a special way of cooking.
D) Chinese food tastes wonderful.
10. According to the article, we can say that the ancient Chinese energy problem
A) made the Chinese helpless in their cooking.
B) was a great disaster to the Chinese people.
C) helped the Chinese to find economical ways of cooking.
D) enabled the Chinese food to be cooked in hot oil.

Unit 7

Antoine de St. Exupéry—A Brave Pilot

In 1929, when aviation(航空) was still very new, a French pilot and novelist — Antoine de St. Exupéry—took on a job that changed the mail(邮政) service in South America. He set up an air mail route that joined the cities of South America and cut the delivery (投递) time of mail from several months to a few days.

Delivering the mail by air was not a new idea in 1929, but it was still a very brave one. Flying was full of dangers. The aviation technology we have today wasn't yet invented. Pilots had to use simple instruments such as compasses and road maps. Airplanes had small engines and lost a lot of power when they flew at high altitudes (海拔高度). These planes couldn't fly over heights(高处), so mountains, tall buildings, and even trees were dangerous. Also, these small planes didn't have enough power to fly above storms and bad weather. They had to go through them. Once he was in the storm, the pilot couldn't navigate(导航). So when he came out of the clouds, he was lost.

The rugged(崎岖的) landscape(地形) made St. Exupéry's job very dangerous. He and his men had to fly over high mountains, deserts, and rain forests. Large areas had almost no people, and there were very few roads. So even when a lost pilot landed safely, he had little chance to survive(幸存下来).

St. Exupéry, however, welcomed all these difficulties. He believed that people are most alive when they are risking(冒...之险) their lives. In 1944 he joined the French air force in North Africa. Like the pilot in his novel, *Night Flight*, he disappeared while flying a mission. No trace of him or his plane was ever found.

(280 words)

Comprehension Exercises

1. Antoine de St. Exupéry was

- A) an American.
- B) a French pilot.
- C) a famous traveller.
- D) a South American scientist.

2. His job cut the delivery time of mail from

- A) several months to a few weeks.
- B) several days to a few hours.
- C) several months to a few days.
- D) several years to a few months.