

梯级活页

# 新课程英语 课外阅读

高中二年级



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# 《新课程英语课外阅读梯级活页》

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# 前 言

阅读是打好语言基础、获取所需信息的重要途径,大量阅读是从根本上提高英语综合能力的最基本手段。普通高等学校招生全国统一考试中,阅读理解试题占 40 分,而其他部分试题也有赖于考生具备较强的阅读理解能力。因而,在英语学习过程中,应把提高阅读理解能力放在突出位置。

《普通高中英语课程标准(实验)》对高中阶段语言技能(六级至八级)的目标描述中规定:除教材外,课外阅读量应累计分别达到 18 万词、23 万词和 30 万词以上。这就需要考生在平时的学习中接触相当数量的阅读材料,并以此来提高阅读能力。

为了帮助广大考生全面提高英语阅读理解能力,系统掌握高考中阅读理解的内容和技能,我们在总结长期教学经验、广泛研究教材、研究高考的基础上,精心策划、编写了这本《新课程英语课外阅读梯级活页》,目的是为广大考生提供既符合考生认识特点,又有助于培养学生驾驭语言能力、增强学生考试信心和实力的阅读理解材料。

本书选编短文 50 篇,内容新颖,体裁多样,既注重知识性、信息性,又不失趣味性与实用性。为了方便读者监控自己的阅读速度,我们对每篇短文的词数、时间(高一按每分钟 60 个单词计算;高二按每分钟 70 个单词计算)都做了标注,供读者参考。

《新课程英语课外阅读梯级活页》既便于教师在课堂上指导学生做定时阅读训练,又便于学生随身携带。我们相信本书一定会对学生的英语学习有所帮助。

限于水平和经验,书中疏漏和不妥之处在所难免,恳请广大读者批评指正。

编 者

2004 年 8 月

# Passage 1

短文词数:260 阅读时间:4 分钟

In Kansas City, Missouri, a computer helps firemen. The computer contains information about every one of the 350,000 street addresses in the city. When firemen answer a call, the computer gives them important information about the burning building. The computer can give the location of the building and its size, type, and contents(内部情况). In fact, the computer system has many different ways of helping fire-fighters with their problems. For example, it can give medical information about sick people living in a burning building. With this information, the firemen can take special care to find these sick persons and remove them quickly and safely from the burning building.

The speed of the computer is amazing. Within two or three seconds after a call is received, the computer provides necessary information for the firemen. The information is then sent to them by radio from the computer center in City Hall.

The Kansas City computer system also contains medical records of each of the city's 900 firemen. This kind of information is especially useful when a fire fighter is injured. With this medical information, doctors at the hospital can treat the injured firemen more quickly and easily.

Kansas City firemen themselves are thankful for the computer's help. The computer tells them about possible dangers ahead and helps them prepare for them. Many times the computer information helps to save lives and property. Sometimes the lives are those of the

firemen themselves !

1. What is the main idea of this passage ?
  - A. Computers are very fast.
  - B. These computers contain all the addresses in the city.
  - C. Computers can be used by doctors.
  - D. Computers help firemen in many ways.
2. Why does the computer contain medical records of each fireman ?
  - A. Because they live at 350,000 different addresses.
  - B. With the records doctors can treat injured fire fighters quickly.
  - C. Because they need medical examinations.
  - D. With the records they can be removed from burning buildings.
3. How does the computer help firemen ?
  - A. By helping them prepare for possible dangers.
  - B. By answering calls.
  - C. By sending information to City Hall.
  - D. By putting out fires.
4. Where is this computer containing medical records of each fireman ?
  - A. In Kansas City.
  - B. In Kandahar.
  - C. In Maryland.
  - D. In New York City.

## Passage 2

短文词数:266 阅读时间:4 分钟

To us it seems so natural to put up an umbrella to keep the water off when it rains. But actually the umbrella was not invented as protection against the rain. Its first use was as a shade against the sun!

Nobody knows who first invented it, but the umbrella was used in very ancient times. Probably the first to use it were the Chinese, way back in the eleventh century B. C. .

We know that the umbrella was used in ancient Egypt and Babylon as a sunshade. And there was a strange thing connected with its use; it became a symbol(象征) of honor. In the Far East in ancient times, the umbrella was allowed to be used only by those in high office.

In Europe, the Greeks were the first to use the umbrella as a sunshade. And the umbrella was in common used in ancient Greece. But it is believed that the first persons in Europe to use the umbrella as protection against the rain were the ancient Romans.

During the Middle Ages, the use of the umbrella practically disappeared. Then it appeared again in Italy in the late sixteenth century. And again it was considered as a symbol of power. By 1680, the umbrella appeared in France, and later on in England.

By the eighteenth century, the umbrella was used against rain throughout most of Europe. Umbrellas have not changed much in style during all this time, though they have become much lighter in weight. It wasn't until the twentieth century that women's umbrellas

began to be made, in a whole variety of colours.

1. According to this passage, the umbrella was probably first invented in ancient \_\_\_\_\_.  
A. China    B. Egypt    C. Greece    D. Rome
2. Which of the following statements is not true about the umbrella?  
A. No one exactly knows who was the inventor of the umbrella.  
B. The umbrella was first invented to be used as protection against the sun.  
C. The umbrella changed much in style in the eighteenth century.  
D. In Europe, the Greeks were the first to use the umbrella as a sunshade.
3. A strange feature(特征) of the umbrella's use is that it was used as \_\_\_\_\_.  
A. protection against rain  
B. a shade against the sun  
C. a symbol of honour and power  
D. women's decoration
4. In Europe, the umbrella was first used against the rain \_\_\_\_\_.  
A. during the Middle Ages  
B. by the eighteenth century  
C. in Rome  
D. in Greece
5. This passage talks mainly about \_\_\_\_\_.  
A. when and how the umbrella was invented  
B. why the umbrella was so popular in Europe  
C. the development of the umbrella  
D. the history and use of the umbrella

## Passage 3

短文词数:269 阅读时间:4 分钟

There are two factors which determine an individual's intelligence. The first is the sort of brain he was born with. Human brains differ considerably some being more capable than others. But no matter how good a brain he has to begin with, and individual will have a low order of intelligence unless he has opportunities to learn. So the second factor is what happens to the individual—the sort of environment in which he is reared. If an individual is handicapped environmentally, it is likely that his brain will fail to develop and he will never attain the level of intelligence of which he is capable.

The importance of environment in determining an individual's intelligence can be demonstrated by the case history of the identical twins, Peter and Mark X. Being identical, the twins had identical brains at birth, and their growth processes were the same. When the twins were three months old, their parents died, and they were placed in separate foster homes. Peter was reared by parents of low intelligence in an isolated community with poor educational opportunities. Mark was reared in the home of well-to-do parents who had been to college. He was read to as a child, sent to good schools, and given every opportunity to be stimulated intellectually. This environmental difference continued until the twins were in their late teens, when they were given tests to measure their intelligence. Mark's I. Q. was 125, twenty-five points higher than the average and fully forty points higher than his identical brother. Given equal opportunities, the twins, having identical brains, would have tested at roughly the same level.

1. This selection can be titled \_\_\_\_\_.
  - A. Measuring Your Intelligence
  - B. Intelligence and Environment
  - C. The Case of Peter and Mark
  - D. How the Brain Influences Intelligence
2. The best statement of the main idea of this passage is that \_\_\_\_\_.
  - A. human brains differ considerably
  - B. the brain a person was born with is important in determining his intelligence
  - C. environment is essential in determining a person's intelligence
  - D. persons having identical brains will have roughly the same intelligence
3. According to the passage, the average I. Q. is \_\_\_\_\_.
  - A. 85
  - B. 100
  - C. 110
  - D. 125
4. The case history of the twins appears to support the conclusion that \_\_\_\_\_.
  - A. individuals with identical brains seldom test at the same level
  - B. an individual's intelligence is determined only by his environment
  - C. lack of opportunity blocks the growth of intelligence
  - D. changes of environment produce changes in the structure of the brain
5. This passage suggests that an individual's I. Q. \_\_\_\_\_.
  - A. can be predicted(须知) at birth
  - B. stays the same throughout his life
  - C. can be increased by education
  - D. is determined by his childhood

## Passage 4

短文词数:276 阅读时间:4 分钟

A man once said how useless it was to put advertisements in the newspapers. “Last week,” said he, “my umbrella was stolen from a London church. As it was a present, I spent twice its worth in advertising, but didn’t get it back.”

“How did you write your advertisement?” asked one of the listeners, a merchant(商人).

“Here it is,” said the man, taking out of his pocket a slip(一条纸) cut from a newspaper. The other man took it and read, “Lost from the City Church last Sunday evening, a black silk umbrella. The gentleman who finds it will receive ten shillings on leaving it at No. 10 Broad Street.”

“Now,” said the merchant, “I often advertise, and find that it pays me well. But the way in which an advertisement is expressed(表达) is of extreme importance. Let us try for your umbrella again, and if it fails, I’ll buy you a new one.”

The merchant then took a slip of paper out of his pocket and wrote: “If the man who was seen to take an umbrella from the City Church last Sunday evening doesn’t wish to get into trouble, he will return the umbrella to No. 10 Broad Street. He is well known.”

This appeared in the paper, and on the following morning, the man was astonished(吃惊的) when he opened the front door. In the doorway lay at least twelve umbrellas of all sizes and colours that had been thrown in, and his own was among the number. Many of them had notes fastened to them saying that they had been taken by

mistake, and begging the loser not to say anything about the matter.

1. The man once thought advertising was \_\_\_\_\_.  
A. of little use                      B. of some use  
C. practical                              D. valuable
2. According to his advertisement, anyone who \_\_\_\_\_ would receive ten shillings.  
A. found the thief  
B. gave a message  
C. left the umbrella at No. 10 Broad Street  
D. left the umbrella in the City Church
3. The result of the first advertisement was that \_\_\_\_\_.  
A. The man got his umbrella back  
B. the man wasted some money advertising  
C. nobody found the missing umbrella  
D. the umbrella was found somewhere near the church
4. The merchant suggested that the man should \_\_\_\_\_.  
A. buy a new umbrella  
B. go on looking for the umbrella  
C. write another advertisement  
D. report to the police
5. This is a story about \_\_\_\_\_.  
A. a useless advertisement  
B. how to make an effective advertisement  
C. how the man lost and found his umbrella  
D. what the merchant did for the umbrella owner

## Passage 5

短文词数:283 阅读时间:4 分钟

There seems never to have been a civilization without toys, but when and how they developed is unknown. They probably came about just to give children something to do.

In the ancient world, as is today, most boys played with some kinds of toys and most girls with another. In societies where social roles are rigidly determined, boys pattern their play after the activities of their fathers and girls are being prepared, even in play, to step into the roles and responsibilities of the adult world.

What is remarkable about the history of toys is not so much how they changed over the centuries but how much they have remained the same. The changes have been mostly in terms of craftsmanship, mechanics, and technology. It is the universality of toys with regard to their development in all parts of the world and their persistence to the present that is amazing. In Egypt, the Americas, China, Japan and among the Arctic peoples, generally the same kinds of toys appeared. Variations depended on local customs and ways of life because toys imitate their surroundings. Nearly every civilization had dolls, little weapons, toy soldiers, tiny animals and vehicles.

Because toys can be generally regarded as a kind of art form, they have not been subject to technological leaps that characterize inventions for adult use. The progress from the wheel to the oxcart to the automobile is a direct line of ascent(进步). The progress from a rattle(拨浪鼓) used by a baby in 3000 BC to one used by an infant today, however, is not characterized by inventiveness. Each rattle is the product of the artistic tastes of the times and subject to the limitations of available materials.

1. The reason why the toys most boys play with are different from those that girls play with is that \_\_\_\_\_.

- A. they like challenging activities
  - B. their social roles are rigidly determined
  - C. most boys would like to follow their fathers' professions
  - D. boys like to play with their fathers while girls with their mothers
2. One aspect of "the universality of toys" lies in the fact that \_\_\_\_\_.
- A. the basic characteristics of toys are the same the world over
  - B. technological advances have greatly improved the durability of toys
  - C. the exploration of the universe has led to the creation of new kinds of toys
  - D. the improvement of craftsmanship in making toys depends on the efforts of universalities
3. Which of the following is the author's view on the historical development of toys ?
- A. Toys are playing an increasingly important role in shaping a child's character.
  - B. The toy industry has witnessed great changes in technology in recent years.
  - C. The craftsmanship in toy-making has remained essentially unchanged.
  - D. Toys have remained basically the same all through the centuries.
4. Regarded as a kind of art form, toys \_\_\_\_\_.
- A. reflect the pace of social progress
  - B. are not characterized by technological progress
  - C. follow a direct line of ascent
  - D. also appeal greatly to adults
5. The author uses the example of a rattle to show that \_\_\_\_\_.
- A. it often takes a long time to introduce new technology into toy-making
  - B. even the simplest toys can reflect the progress of technology
  - C. even a simple toy can mirror the artistic tastes of the time
  - D. in toy-making there is a continuity in the use of materials

## Passage 6

短文词数:284 阅读时间:4 分钟

Uncle Sam is a tall, thin man. He's an older man with white hair and a white beard. He often wears a tall hat, a bow tie (蝴蝶结), and the stars and stripes (条纹) of the American flag.

Who is this strange-looking man? Would you believe that Uncle Sam is the U. S. government Uncle Sam?

During the War of 1812, the U. S. government hired meat packers (罐头食品厂老板) to provide meat to the Army. One of these meat packers was a man named Samuel Wilson. Samuel was a friendly and fair (正直的) man. Everyone liked him and called him Uncle Sam.

Sam Wilson stamped the boxes of meat for the army with a large U. S., which stands for (代表) United States. Some government inspectors (监察员) came to look over Sam's company. They asked a worker what the U. S. on the boxes stood for. As a joke, the worker answered that these letters stood for the name of his boss, Uncle Sam.

The joke spread, and soldiers began saying that their food came from Uncle Sam. Before long, people called all things that came from the government "Uncle Sam". "Uncle Sam" became a nickname (绰号) for the U. S. government.

Soon there were drawings and cartoons of Uncle Sam in newspapers. In these early pictures, Uncle Sam was a young man. He wore stars and stripes, but his hair was dark and he had no beard. The beard was added when Abraham Lincoln was President. President Lincoln had a beard.



## Passage 5

短文词数:289 阅读时间:4 分钟

**Zhuhai:** China will soon put a person into space and become the third nation in the world to have manned space-flight, a top Chinese aerospace official said on November 5.

A manned launch (发射) was not far off, Vice President Hu Hongfu of China Aerospace Science Technology Corp (CASTC) told a news conference at the third Zhuhai Air Show. "It will not be long before Chinese astronauts can ride locally-made spaceships into space," Hu said. The official gave no timetable but said it would happen "at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century."

The former Soviet Union and the United States have been putting people into orbit since the early 1960s, but other nations have not considered the challenge worth following.

China has already built and sent up its own satellites for communications and weather forecasting. The new communication satellite would help to encourage the country's broadcasting industry, Hu said.

But the company, which includes over 130 aerospace agencies, said the lifting ability and success rate of China's space-launches were almost equal in quality to those of other countries.

China would gradually close the distance between its country's space industry and that of other nations. He added that they were willing to send up commercial satellites for Taiwan.

On China's plan to send up space-flights, Hu said China had made important development after the successful launch in November