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高中英语活页文选

·C 级·

·第二辑·

上海外语教育出版社

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《高中英语活页文选》编委会名单：

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何林松	上海市英语特级教师
朱震一	上海市英语特级教师

参加本辑编写的作者：

李珮莹	潘和德	宋贤序
韩天霖	郑建	

前 言

我们已经进入了 21 世纪 ,新世纪是“ 知识经济 ”的时代 ,是一个信息发达的社会 ,这对学生的英语阅读能力提出了很高的要求。

《高中英语活页文选》的推出旨在帮助学生养成阅读习惯 ,提高阅读能力和速度 ,迎接新世纪的挑战。

本书采用活页形式 ,一是便于教师在课堂上利用 10 分钟左右的时间 ,指导学生完成一篇短文的阅读 ;二是便于学生随身携带 ,利用零星时间 ,见缝插针地抓紧阅读。

《高中英语活页文选》分 A ,B ,C 三级 ,供高一至高三学生使用 ,每一级拟出版二辑 ,每一辑有 20 篇短文 ,每篇选文均配有多项选择练习 ,以检测学生对短文的理解能力。

全部短文均选自英美教材、阅读材料和报刊杂志 ,并且作了少量删改。选文力求题材多样 ,有时代感和趣味性。

由于选文的题材广泛 ,涉及的内容和词汇相对较多 ,因此 ,读者开始时会感到有一些困难 ,但只要坚持 ,你就会看到自己有提高 ,如同游泳是在水中学会的一样 ,知识和词汇量是在阅读中积累起来的。

如果读者能查阅词典 ,把自己感兴趣的短文中的生词理解透彻 ,那么 ,效果就会更显著。

由于编者水平与经验有限 ,不足之处在所难免 ,希望广大读者批评指正。

编 者

2000. 8

Passage 1

The Year 2000 problem dates back to the 1960's and 1970's , when computer memory(内存) was scarce and expensive. Programmers typically saved memory by expressing dates as two-digit years instead of four(i. e. 72 instead of 1972). This short cut saved millions of dollars at the time , but programmers fully expected this system would be replaced long before the 21st century. This had not been the case. Many businesses around the world were still using computing systems developed over 30 years ago. How would this affect them on January 1 ,2000 ? To put it in a nutshell , computers , machinery or equipment relying on a two-digit date field , might not be able to recognize the century change. If not corrected , systems could recognize 01/ 01/ 00 as January 1 ,1900 or some other date. So the Y2k bug would surely cause some problems.

Before the year 2000 came , some people thought that the Eve of New Millennium would be the end of the world. Fortunately , despite a few small problems , the Y2k bug did not have a serious impact on the world's computers. The most spectacular of the predicted disasters — ranging from elevators that refuse to budge(稍微移动) from the lobby , to malfunctioning air-traffic-control system , all the way to the unintended launch of a nuclear missile — failed to materialize. Essential services were maintained throughout the developed — and still developing — world.

However , users should remain alert for any computer bug problems. “ Y2k bug won't die , ” said an expert.

Understanding of the Passage

()1. Y2k problem might occur because _____.

- A. computers might recognize January 1 , 2000 as January 1 , 1960 or January 1 , 1970
- B. there are computer-viruses(电脑病毒) in computers
- C. computers using a two-digit date system might not be able to recognize the century change

D. computer programmers earned millions of dollars

(2. The phrase *in a nutshell* (Line 8) means _____ .

A. nut and shell

B. in a few days

C. in theory

D. in a sentence

(3. If Y2k occurs , 05/ 26/ 00 will be recognized as _____ by computers.

A. May 26 , 1960

B. May 26 , 1970

C. May 26 , 1972

D. May 26 , 1900 or some other date

(4. According to the passage , all the following were expected to happen EXCEPT _____ .

A. elevators don't move

B. city electricity systems collapse

C. aeroplanes are out of control

D. the unintended launch of a nuclear missile

(5. The word *essential* (Line 19) is closest in meaning to _____ .

A. necessary

B. working

C. most

D. special

Passage 2

I searched and searched for my sister in the big crowd of people waiting in the big hall of the airport. I couldn't find her. I waited and waited. No sister! Finally, I telephoned her office. My sister came to the telephone, and she explained that a big problem had come up at work and, unfortunately, she could not come to the airport to meet me. She told me not to worry, just to take a taxi to her house in Brooklyn and wait for her there.

"But I don't have the key!" I said. "How will I get inside?"

"Oh, don't worry. I left a key in the mailbox for you," she said. "Just go in and make yourself at home. Have something to eat, take a bath, have a nap and, before you know it, I'll be home. We'll go out to a restaurant for a nice dinner."

When the taxi driver got to my sister's street, he pulled over and stopped in front of a house that looked like all the other houses on the block.

I looked at the house number, "135", and I started thinking maybe her house was "137" — or maybe "133". I was completely confused, and I suddenly realized I had left my address book at the airport in the telephone booth. What was I to do? I couldn't call my sister again because I didn't have her telephone number.

Then I remembered about the mailbox, and I cautiously looked inside. Thank goodness! The key was there, so this had to be her house! I opened the door and took my things inside. At last, I felt safe and at ease. I went to the bedroom and immediately lay down on the bed and took a nap. After perhaps a couple of hours, I woke up and had a soft drink and some chicken that was all prepared for me in the refrigerator. I even had a nice big piece of cake that was sitting on a pretty plate on the dining room table. I looked all around the house. What beautiful furniture and things my sister had!

Night was falling, and I started wondering when my sister would arrive home from work. I looked out the window a few times — and suddenly I saw my dear sister walking down the sidewalk! I was so happy! I ran out the door and threw my arms around her and kissed her again and again, I did not want to ever get off her!

"I didn't see you. Where did you come from?" she asked, laughing.

"From the house," I said. "I was in your house. I just came out when I

saw you. ”

“ My house ?” she said. “ What house ?”

I looked at her , trying to figure out why she was joking with me. “ Your house , of course !” I said and pointed at the open door behind me.

She looked up at the door , and then she looked at me , and then she looked back at the door. Her eyes opened wider and wider , and she didn't say a single word for a long time. Suddenly , she started laughing. She laughed so hard that tears were running down her face. Finally , she was able to tell me what was so funny. " That's not my house ! " she said. " I live two houses down ! "

I had gone into her neighbour's house. By coincidence , the neighbour had left her key in the mailbox.

Understanding of the Passage

- () 1. Why couldn't the sister be found at the airport? Because _____.
- A. she didn't know when the plane would arrive
- B. she didn't like the author
- C. she was dealing with something important
- D. she lost her way
- () 2. The author's sister told her to _____.
- A. eat something
- B. take a bath
- C. sleep for a little while
- D. all of the above
- () 3. *At ease* (Para. 6 Line 3) means _____.
- A. without worry
- B. very easy
- C. a rest
- D. pay no attention
- () 4. In fact , the author went to _____ and had a good time.
- A. her sister's house
- B. her own house
- C. the house where her sister's neighbour lives
- D. the house where her sister's friends live
- () 5. The best title for this passage is _____.
- A. Welcome to New York !
- B. The First Day in a New Place
- C. An Absent-minded Girl
- D. The Generous Neighbour

Passage 3

A true apology is more than just an acknowledgement of a mistake. It is the recognition that something you have said or done has damaged a relationship — and that you care enough about that relationship to want it repaired and restored.

It's never easy to admit you are in the wrong. Being human , we all need to know the art of apologising. Look back with honesty and think how often you've judged harshly , said unkind things , pushed yourself ahead at the expense of a friend. Then count the occasions when you indicated clearly and truly that you were sorry. Some deep wisdom in us knows that when even a small wrong has been committed , some mysterious moral feeling is disturbed ; and it stays out of balance until fault is acknowledged and regret expressed.

I remember a doctor friend telling me about a man who came to him with a variety of symptoms : headaches , insomnia and stomach trouble. No physical cause could be found. Finally the doctor said to the man , " Unless you tell me what's worrying you , I can't help you. "

After some hesitation , the man confessed that , as executor(执行者) of his father's will , he had been cheating his brother , who lived abroad , of his inheritance(继承的财产). Then and there the wise old doctor made the man write to his brother asking forgiveness and enclosing a cheque as the first step in reparation(补偿). He then went with him to the mail box in the corridor. As the letter disappeared , the man burst into tears. " Thank you , " he said. " I think I'm cured. " And he was.

A heartfelt apology cannot only heal a damaged relationship but can also make it stronger. If you can think of someone who deserves an apology from you , someone you have wronged , or judged too harshly , or just neglected , do something about it right now.

Understanding of the Passage

() 1. A true apology is _____.

A. just an acknowledgement of a mistake

- B. an acknowledgement of a damaged relationship
- C. a remedy for a damaged relationship
- D. the recognition of a mistake

(2. When we have done something wrong , we should _____ .

- A. think over the fault
- B. feel sorry
- C. escape from being disturbed
- D. admit the fault and express the regret

(3. What caused the patient's disease ?

- A. Physical weakness.
- B. Mental disturbance.
- C. An accidental event.
- D. An unknown factor.

(4. What had the patient done to his brother ?

- A. He had sent his brother abroad.
- B. He had wasted his brother's money.
- C. He had cheated his brother of his inheritance.
- D. He had executed his father's will.

(5. The patient was cured by _____ .

- | | |
|---------------------|--------------------------|
| A. writing a letter | B. mailing a letter |
| C. sending a cheque | D. making a true apology |

Passage 4

COUNTRY : United States of America

AREA : 9 809 155 sq km (3 787 319 sq miles).

POPULATION : 270 298 524 (1998).

POPULATION DENSITY : 27.6 per sq km.

CAPITAL : Washington , DC. Population : 543 213 (1996). Nineteen other cities have a population larger than that of Washington , DC. New York is the largest city , with a population of over seven million.

GEOGRAPHY : Covering a large part of the North American continent , the United States of America shares borders with Canada to the north and Mexico to the south and has coasts on the Atlantic , Pacific and Arctic oceans , the Caribbean Sea and the Gulf of Mexico. The State of Alaska , in the northwest corner of the continent , is separated from the rest of the country by Canada , and Hawaii lies in the central Pacific Ocean. One of the largest countries in the world , the USA has an enormous diversity of geographical features(特征). The climate ranges from subtropical(亚热带) to Arctic.

GOVERNMENT : Federal Republic since 1789. Gained independence from the UK in 1776.

LANGUAGE : English , with significant Spanish-speaking minorities.

ELECTRICITY : 110/120 volts AC , 60Hz. Plugs are of the flat 2-pin type. European electrical appliances not fitted with dual-voltage capabilities will require a plug adaptor , which is best purchased before arrival in the USA.

COMMUNICATIONS : Telephone : Full IDD is available. Country code : 1. Outgoing international code : 011. For emergency police , fire or medical services in major cities , dial 911. Fax : Fax services are very widely available. Telegram : These can be sent through all telegraph and post offices. Post : There are only a limited number of post offices , so it is advisable to buy stamps in bulk. There are , however , stamp machines in hotels and shops , but these have a 25% price markup. Airmail to Europe takes up to a week. Post office hours : 09 : 00 – 17 : 00 (24 hours at main offices in larger cities). If sending gifts valued at less than US \$ 50 to the USA , the recipient will not have to pay tax if the package is marked ' Unsolicited Gift '. Press : The most influential papers are *The New York Times* , *Washington Post* , *Los Angeles Times* and *The Wall Street Journal* . Owing to the high degree of self-

government of each State , newspapers tend to be regionalised , although recent economic pressures have resulted in large-scale mergers. Even so , the USA publishes more newspapers than any other country , and has perhaps the bulkiest Sunday newspapers in the world , particularly the Sunday edition of *The New York Times* .

Understanding of the Passage

- (1. All of the following are true EXCEPT _____ .
- A. the area of USA is 3 787 319 square miles
 - B. the city of New York has the largest population in USA
 - C. Washington's population ranks 19th in USA in 1996
 - D. population density of USA is over 27 per square kilometer
- (2. Which of the following does NOT border USA ?
- A. Canada.
 - B. Mexico.
 - C. The Pacific and Arctic oceans.
 - D. The Antarctic and the Gulf of Mexico.
- (3. From the sentence " LANGUAGE : English , with significant Spanish-speaking minorities "(Line 18) , we know _____ .
- A. most Americans speak Spanish
 - B. there are significant English-Spanish minorities in USA
 - C. the majority of the American speaks English
 - D. there are not many Spanish-speaking minorities in USA
- (4. What's true about USA's communication ?
- A. You can dial 119 for help in emergency
 - B. Fax and telegrams are not widely available.
 - C. *The Wall Street Journal* is among the most influential newspapers in USA.
 - D. Air mail from the US to Europe takes only 7 hours.
- (5. This passage is most probably selected from _____ .
- A. a tourist guide book
 - B. an art book
 - C. a sports book
 - D. a history text book

Passage 5

Demands for stronger protection for wildlife in Britain sometimes hide the fact that similar needs are felt in the rest of Europe. Studies by the Council of Europe , of which 21 countries are members , have shown that 45 per cent of reptile species and 24 per cent of butterflies are in danger of dying out.

European concern for wildlife was outlined by Dr. Peter Baum , an expert in the environment and natural resources division of the Council , when he spoke at a conference arranged by the administrators of a British national park. The park is one of the few areas in Europe to hold the Council's diploma for nature reserves of the highest quality , and Dr. Baum had come to present it to the park once again. He was afraid that public opinion was turning against national parks , and that those set up in the 1960s and 1970s could not be set up today. But Dr. Baum clearly remained a strong supporter of the view that natural environments needed to be allowed to survive in peace in their own right.

" No area could be expected to survive both as a true nature reserve and as a tourist attraction , " he went on. The short-sighted view that reserves had to serve immediate human demands for outdoor recreation should be replaced by full acceptance of their importance as places to preserve nature for the future.

" We forget that they are the guarantee of life systems , on which any built-up area ultimately depends , " Dr. Baum went on. " We could manage without most industrial products , but we could not manage without nature. However , our natural environment areas , which are the original parts of our countryside , have shrunk to become mere islands in a spoiled and highly polluted land mass. "

Understanding of the Passage

() 1. Recent studies by the Council of Europe have indicated that

_____.

A. wildlife needs more protection only in Britain

B. all species of wildlife in Europe are in danger of dying out

C. there are fewer species of reptiles and butterflies in Europe than elsewhere

D. many species of reptiles and butterflies in Europe need protecting

(2. Why did Dr. Baum come to a British national park ?

A. Because he needed to present it with the Council's diploma.

B. Because he was concerned about its management.

C. Because it was the only national park of its kind in Europe.

D. Because it was the only park which had ever received a diploma from the Council

(3. The last sentence in the second paragraph implies that _____.

A. people should make every effort to create more environment areas

B. people would go on protecting national parks

C. certain areas of countryside should be left intact

D. people would defend the right to develop the areas around national parks

(4. In Dr. Baum's opinion , the view that a nature reserve should serve as a tourist attraction is _____.

A. idealistic

B. revolutionary

C. short-sighted

D. traditional

(5. Which of the following can be inferred from the last paragraph ?

A. We have developed industry at the expense of countryside.

B. We have forgotten what our original countryside looked like.

C. People living on islands should protect natural resources for their survival.

D. We should destroy all the built-up areas.

Passage 6

What is the Millennium ?

The word comes from the Latin mille (meaning “ 1000 ”) and annus (meaning “ years ”) — “ 1000 years ”.

When does the Millennium begin ?

It is interesting to note that the Millennium should not actually begin until January 1st 2001. The calendars of the western world are based on the Gregorian calendar. This was originally developed using Roman numerals , which do not have a value of “ zero ”. So when Dionysus Exiguus , a Scythian monk in the 5th century , introduced the concept of “ AD ”(Anno Domini , Latin for “ after the birth of Christ ”) using Roman numerals , and created a calendar based on the birth of Jesus Christ , he hit a problem. He did not have access to the value “ 0 ”, so his calculations show Jesus being born in the year 1 AD , not “ 0 ”.

Our calendar is one year behind !

Please note that they also made a similar error for “ BC ”(before the birth of Christ), it begins at 1 BC.

Where does 2000 start ?

According to the International Meridian Conference , all dates are based upon the date line in Greenwich UK. So 00:00 on January 2000 at Greenwich is the start of the Millennium. However , the world operates in different times periods so it could be stated that “ the Millennium starts at sunrise on January 1st. ”

Where does the sun rise first ?

Well , here we have another problem , the first land to see the sun on January 1st 2000 AD occurs at some islands in the Pacific , with time differences of just minutes between islands. Some of the islands are physically in different time zones , but to make life easy they have put a “ kink ” in the time line so that all the islands have the same time.

Understanding of the Passage

- (1. Which is NOT true of Gregorian calendar ?
- A. It was originally developed using Arabic numerals.
 - B. It was created by Dionysus Exiguus.
 - C. It's based on the birth of Jesus Christ.
 - D. It was created in the 5th century AD.
- (2. The phrase *have access to* (Line 11) means _____ .
- A. exceed
 - B. have got
 - C. get opportunity to use something
 - D. come across
- (3. The first land to see the sun on January 1st , 2000 AD is _____ .
- A. Greenwich , UK
 - B. Rome
 - C. New York
 - D. among some islands in the Pacific
- (4. All the following are true EXCEPT _____ .
- A. " Millennium " comes from two Latin words
 - B. Gregorian calendar is one year behind it should be
 - C. all dates are based on the date line in Greenwich US
 - D. some islands in Pacific are in different time zones
- (5. The word *kink* (Line 26) is closest in meaning to _____ .
- A. large clock
 - B. link
 - C. sharp twist in something that is normally straight
 - D. kind of calendar

Passage 7

Imagine a worker who never gets tired. This employee needs no lunch hours or holidays. Working 24 hours a day is no problem. Best of all , he or she is both accurate and efficient. There are few mistakes and tasks are finished quickly.

Any manufacturer would want a worker like this in a factory. Many more products could be made and sold if workers never stopped. That's why there are more and more robots at work today.

Robots do a wide variety of tasks. They weld , drill , and paint new cars. They locate underwater pollution sites. Robots handle poisons. Most of their work is too dangerous , difficult , or unpleasant for people to do. By doing the dirty work , a robot is a worker's helper , or aide.

Few robots look anything like people. They are machines. Like other pieces of machinery , they come in different shapes and sizes. The way they are built depends on the jobs they do. Most have a single arm that can lift things. Most are built to handle tools.

Each robot has a computer inside it. The computer tells it what to do. Skilled technicians enter directions into this computer. They are trained for this job.

The years ahead may well be the era of robots. People are using them more and more. Already robots have explored active volcanoes and the ocean floor. Modern robots can maneuver in space. With their skillful movements , they can service satellites that cannot be reached by humans. Some new uses will include harvesting crops and working in open pit mines. Robots can help us to live better and learn more about our world.

Understanding of the Passage

() 1. What mentioned in this passage is really _____ .

- A. a hard-working worker
- B. a day-dreamer
- C. a robot