

英语专业八级

阅读200篇

200 Passages to Develop Reading Skills for TEM 8

常春藤英语考试研究组 主 编

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前 言

英语专业八级考试是目前国内难度最大的英语水平考试，其中的阅读部分占总分值的25%，分为1. Reading Comprehension，一般包括4篇文章，文章通常较长，而且涉及面广，难度大，考试时间为30分钟。2. Skimming&Scanning，包括数篇文章，共有10道多项选择题，要求考生运用速读及跳读的技巧，在10分钟内完成试题。

《英语专业八级阅读200篇》是根据《大学英语专业高年级教学大纲》和《英语专业八级考试大纲》编写的，旨在帮助英语专业学生迅速提高英语阅读水平，达到《大纲》的要求，顺利通过英语专业八级考试。本书主要内容分为两部分：1. 阅读理解（Reading Comprehension）80篇，每个单元4篇材料，分为20个单元。2. 快速阅读（Skimming&Scanning）120篇，每个单元6篇材料，也分为20个单元。

本书选材广泛，内容主要来自近几年英语国家主流报纸杂志，或其他国内外出版的相关阅读材料，在体裁和题材、长度与难易度方面均与英语专业八级考试大纲的要求相符合。Reading Comprehension部分的文章主要包括社论、政论和书评，中等难度的传记、散文、小说等文学作品的节录以及涉及英语国家文化、经济、历史、科技、社会等方面的其他文章。Skimming&Scanning所选文章题材、体裁丰富，涉及通知、公告、信函、广告等实用文体。

自1999年秋，我们在英语专业八级辅导课上使用这些阅读材料。这次出版前又经过进一步的完善，选用了最新的材料，目的是使本书更加符合八级考试大纲的要求，也更切合英语专业八级考生的实际需求。

本书可供参加英语专业八级考试的英语专业与非英语专业学生作为平时的阅读材料，更可以供考生考前强化训练之用。

常春藤英语考试研究组

Contents

Part 1	Reading Comprehension	1
UNIT 1	.....	1
UNIT 2	.....	10
UNIT 3	.....	20
UNIT 4	.....	29
UNIT 5	.....	39
UNIT 6	.....	49
UNIT 7	.....	59
UNIT 8	.....	69
UNIT 9	.....	81
UNIT 10	.....	92
UNIT 11	.....	104
UNIT 12	.....	112
UNIT 13	.....	120
UNIT 14	.....	129
UNIT 15	.....	138
UNIT 16	.....	148
UNIT 17	.....	158
UNIT 18	.....	168
UNIT 19	.....	178
UNIT 20	.....	185

Part 2 Skimming & Scanning..... 193

UNIT 1.....	193
UNIT 2.....	202
UNIT 3.....	211
UNIT 4.....	222
UNIT 5.....	232
UNIT 6.....	242
UNIT 7.....	254
UNIT 8.....	262
UNIT 9.....	273
UNIT 10.....	284
UNIT 11.....	297
UNIT 12.....	308
UNIT 13.....	317
UNIT 14.....	329
UNIT 15.....	337
UNIT 16.....	347
UNIT 17.....	355
UNIT 18.....	366
UNIT 19.....	376
UNIT 20.....	385

Part 3 Keys..... 393

1 . Keys to Reading Comprehension.....	393
2 . Keys to Skimming & Scanning.....	396

Part 1 Reading Comprehension

UNIT 1

Passage 1

A history of long and effortless success can be a dreadful handicap, but, if properly handled, it may become a driving force. When the United States entered just such a glowing period after the end of the Second World War, it had a market eight times larger than any competitor, giving its industries unparalleled economies of scale. Its scientists were the world's best, its workers the most skilled. America and Americans were prosperous beyond the dreams of the Europeans and Asians whose economies the war had destroyed.

It was inevitable that this primacy should have narrowed as other countries grew richer. Just as inevitably, the retreat from predominance proved painful. By the mid-1980s Americans had found themselves at a loss over their fading industrial competitiveness. Some huge American industries, such as Consumer Electronics, had shrunk or vanished in the face of foreign competition. By 1987 there was only one American television maker left, Zenith. (Now there is none: Zenith was bought by South Korea's LG Electronics in July.) Foreign-made cars and textiles were sweeping into the domestic market. America's machine-tool industry was on the ropes. For a while it looked as though the making of semiconductors, which America had sat at the heart of the new computer age, was going to

be the next casualty.

All of this caused a crisis of confidence. Americans stopped taking prosperity for granted. They began to believe that their way of doing business was failing, and that their incomes would therefore shortly begin to fall as well. The mid-1980s brought one inquiry after another into the causes of America's industrial decline. Their sometimes sensational findings were filled with warnings about the growing competition from overseas.

How things have changed! In 1995 the United States can look back on five years of solid growth while Japan has been struggling. Few Americans attribute this solely to such obvious causes as a devalued dollar or the turning of the business cycle. Self-doubt has yielded to blind pride. "American industry has changed its structure, has gone on a diet, has learnt to be more quick-witted," according to Richard Cavanagh, executive dean of Harvard's Kennedy School of Government. "It makes me proud to be an American just to see how our businesses are improving their productivity," says Stephen Moore of the Cato Institute, a think-tank in Washington, D.C. And William Sahlman of the Harvard Business School believes that people will look back on this period as "a golden age of business management in the United States."

1. The U. S. achieved its predominance after World War because
 - A. it had made painstaking efforts towards this goal.
 - B. its domestic market was eight times larger than before.
 - C. the war had destroyed the economies of most potential competitors.
 - D. the unparalleled size of its workforce had given an impetus to its economy.
2. The loss of U. S. predominance in the world economy in the 1980s

is manifested in the fact that the American

- A . TV industry had withdrawn to its domestic market.
- B . semiconductor industry had been taken over by foreign enterprises.
- C . machine-tool industry had collapsed after suicidal actions.
- D . auto industry had lost part of its domestic market.

Passage 2

Every minute of every day, what ecologist James Carlton calls a global “ conveyor belt ” , redistributes ocean organisms. It ' s planetwide biological disruption that scientists have barely begun to understand.

Dr. Carlton—an oceanographer at Williams College in Williamstown, Mass.—explains that, at any given moment, “ There are several thousand marine species traveling... in the ballast water of ships. ” These creatures move from coastal waters where they fit into the local web of life to places where some of them could tear that web apart. This is the larger dimension of the infamous invasion of fish-destroying, pipe-clogging zebra mussels.

Such voracious invaders at least make their presence known. What concerns Carlton and his fellow marine ecologists is the lack of knowledge about the hundreds of alien invaders that quietly enter coastal waters around the world every day. Many of them probably just die out. Some benignly—or even beneficially—join the local scene. But some will make trouble.

In one sense, this is an old story. Organisms have ridden ships for centuries. They have clung to hulls and come along with cargo. What's new is the scale and speed of the migrations made possible by the massive volume of ship-ballast water—taken in to provide ship stability—continuously moving around the world...

Ships load up with ballast water and its inhabitants in coastal waters of one port and dump the ballast in another port that may be thousands of kilometers away. A single load can run to hundreds of gallons. Some larger ships take on as much as 40 million gallons. The creatures that come along tend to be in their larva free-floating stage. When discharged in alien waters they can mature into crabs, jellyfish, slugs, and many other forms.

Since the problem involves coastal species, simply banning ballast dumps in coastal waters would, in theory, solve it. Coastal organisms in ballast water that is flushed into midocean would not survive. Such a ban has worked for North American Inland Waterway. But it would be hard to enforce it worldwide. Heating ballast water or straining it should also halt the species spread. But before any such worldwide regulations were imposed, scientists would need a clearer view of what is going on.

The continuous shuffling of marine organisms has changed the biology of the sea on a global scale. It can have devastating effects as in the case of the American comb jellyfish that recently invaded the Black Sea. It has destroyed that sea's anchovy fishery by eating anchovy eggs. It may soon spread to western and northern European waters.

The maritime nations that created the biological "conveyor belt" should support a coordinated international effort to find out what is going on and what should be done about it.

3. According to Dr. Carlton, ocean organisms are
- A. being moved to new environments.
 - B. destroying the planet.
 - C. succumbing to the zebra mussel.
 - D. developing alien characteristics.

- 4 . Oceanographers are concerned because
- A . their knowledge of this phenomenon is limited.
 - B . they believe the oceans are dying.
 - C . they fear an invasion from outer-space.
 - D . they have identified thousands of alien webs.
- 5 . According to marine ecologists, transplanted marine species
- A . may upset the ecosystems of coastal waters.
 - B . are all compatible with one another.
 - C . can only survive in their home waters
 - D . sometimes disrupt shipping lanes.
- 6 . The identified cause of the problem is
- A . the rapidity with which larvae mature.
 - tB . a common practice of the shipping industry.
 - C . a centuries old species.
 - D . the world wide movement of ocean currents.
- 7 . The article suggests that a solution to the problem
- A . is unlikely to be identified.
 - B . must precede further research.
 - C . is hypothetically easy.
 - D . will limit global shipping.

Passage 3

New ' Endangered ' List Targets Many US Rivers

It is hard to think of a major natural resource or pollution issue in North America today that does not affect rivers.

Farm chemical runoff, industrial waste, urban storm sewers, sewage treatment, mining, logging, grazing, military bases, residential and business development, hydropower, loss of wetlands. The list goes on.

Legislation like the Clean Water Act and Wild and Scenic Rivers

Act have provided some protection, but threats continue.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) reported yesterday that an assessment of 642,000 miles of rivers and streams showed 34 percent in less than good condition. In a major study of the Clean Water Act, The Natural Resources Defense Council last fall reported that poison runoff impairs more than 125,000 miles of rivers.

More recently, the NRDC and Izaak Walton League warned that pollution and loss of wetlands—made worse by last year's flooding—is degrading the Mississippi River ecosystem.

On Tuesday, the conservation group American Rivers issued its annual list of 10 “endangered” and 20 “threatened” rivers in 32 states, the District of Columbia, and Canada.

At the top of the list is the Clarks Fork of the Yellowstone River, where Canadian mining firms plan to build a 74-acre reservoir as part of a gold mine less than three miles from Yellowstone National Park. The reservoir would hold the runoff from the sulfuric acid used to extract gold from crushed rock.

“In the event this tailings pond failed, the impact to the greater Yellowstone ecosystem would be cataclysmic and the damage irreversible.” Sen. Max Baucus of Montana, chairman of the Environment and Public Works Committee, wrote to Noranda Minerals Inc., an owner of the “New World Mine”.

Last fall, an EPA official expressed concern about the mine and its potential impact, especially the plastic-lined storage reservoir. “I am unaware of any studies evaluating how a tailings pond could be maintained to ensure its structural integrity forever,” said Stephen Hoffman, chief of the EPA's Mining Waste Section. “It is my opinion that underwater disposal of tailings at New World may present a potentially significant threat to human health and the environment.”

The results of an environmental-impact statement, now being drafted by the Forest Service and Montana Department of State Lands, could determine the mine's future ...

In its recent proposal to reauthorize the Clean Water Act, the Clinton administration noted “dramatically improved water quality since 1972,” when the act was passed. But it also reported that 30 percent of rivers continue to be degraded, mainly by silt and nutrients from farm and urban runoff, combined sewer overflows, and municipal sewage. Bottom sediments are contaminated in more than 1,000 waterways, the administration reported in releasing its proposal in January. Between 60 and 80 percent of riparian corridors (riverbank lands) have been degraded.

As with endangered species and their habitats in forests and deserts, the complexity of ecosystems is seen in rivers and the effects of development—beyond the obvious threats of industrial pollution, municipal waste, and in-stream diversions to slake the thirst of new communities in dry regions like the Southwest ...

While there are many political hurdles ahead, reauthorization of the Clean Water Act this year holds promise for US rivers. Rep. Norm Mineta of California, who chairs the House Committee overseeing the bill, calls it “probably the most important environmental legislation this Congress will enact.”

8. According to the passage, the Clean Water Act

- A. has been ineffective.
- B. will definitely be renewed.
- C. has never been evaluated.
- D. was enacted some 30 years ago.

9. “Endangered” rivers are

- A. catalogued annually.

travels among them most still referred themselves as Gypsies.

In Europe their persecution by the gadje began quickly, with the church seeing heresy in their fortune-telling and the state seeing anti-social behavior in their nomadism. At various times they have been forbidden to wear their distinctive bright clothes, to speak their own language, to travel, to marry one another, or to ply their traditional crafts. In some countries they were reduced to slavery—it wasn't until the mid-1800s that Gypsies slaves were freed in Romania. In more recent times the Gypsies were caught up in Nazi ethnic hysteria, and perhaps half a million perished in the Holocaust. Their horses have been shot and the wheels removed from their wagons, their names have been changed, their women have been sterilized, and their children have been forcibly given for adoption to non-Gypsy families.

But the Gypsies have confounded predictions of their disappearance as a distinct ethnic group, and their numbers have burgeoned. Today there are an estimated 8 to 12 million Gypsies scattered across Europe, making them the continent's largest minority. The exact number is hard to pin down. Gypsies have regularly been undercounted, both by regimes anxious to downplay their profile and by Gypsies themselves, seeking to avoid bureaucracies. Attempting to remedy past inequities, activist groups may overcount. Hundreds of thousands more have emigrated to the Americas and elsewhere. With very few exceptions Gypsies have expressed no great desire for a country to call their own—unlike the Jews, to whom the Gypsy experience is often compared. “Romanestan,” said Ronald Lee, a Canadian Gypsy writer, “is where my two feet stand.”

13 . Gypsies are united only when they

- A . are engaged in traditional crafts.
 - B . call them Roma.
 - C . live under a clan system.
 - D . face external threats.
- 14 . In history hostility to Gypsies in Europe resulted in their persecution by all the following EXCEPT
- A . the Egyptians.
 - B . the state.
 - C . the church.
 - D . the Nazis.
- 15 . According to the passage, the main differences between Gypsies and the Jews lies in their concepts of
- A . language.
 - B . culture.
 - C . identity.
 - D . custom.

UNIT 2

Passage 1

The sea lay like an unbroken mirror all around the pine-girt, lonely shores of Orr's Island. Tall, kingly spruces wore their regal crowns of cones high in air, sparkling with diamonds of clear exuded gum; vast old hemlocks of primeval growth stood darkling in their forest shadows, their branches hung with long hoary moss; while feathery larches, turned to brilliant gold by autumn frosts, lighted up the darker shadows of the evergreens. It was one of those hazy, calm, dissolving days of Indian summer, when everything is so quiet that the faintest kiss of the wave on the beach can be heard, and white clouds seem to faint into the blue of the sky, and soft swathing bands of violet vapor make all earth look dreamy, and give to the sharp, clear-cut outlines of the northern landscape all those mysteries of light and shade which impart such tenderness to Italian scenery.

The funeral was over,—the tread of many feet, bearing the heavy burden of two broken lives, had been to the lonely graveyard, and had come back again,—each footstep lighter and more unconstrained as each one went his way from the great old tragedy of Death to the common cheerful of Life.

The solemn black clock stood swaying with its eternal “tick-tock, tick-tock,” in the kitchen of the brown house on Orr's Island. There was there that sense of a stillness that can be felt,—such as settles down on a dwelling when any of its inmates have passed through its doors for the last time, to go whence they shall not return. The best room was shut up and darkened, with only so much light as could fall through a little heart-shaped hole in the window-shutter,—for except on solemn visits, or prayer-meetings or weddings, or funerals, that room formed no part of the daily family scenery.

The kitchen was clean and ample, hearth, and oven on one side, and rows of old-fashioned splint-bottomed chairs against the wall. A table scoured to snowy whiteness, and a little work-stand whereon lay the Bible, the Missionary Herald, and the Weekly Christian Mirror, before named, formed the principal furniture. One feature, however, must not be forgotten,—a great sea-chest, which had been the companion of Zephaniah through all the countries of the earth. Old, and battered, and unsightly it looked, yet report said that there was good store within that which men for the most part respect more than anything else; and, indeed, it proved often when a deed of grace was to be done—when a woman was suddenly made a widow in a coast gale, or a fishing-smack was run down in the fogs off the banks, leaving in some neighboring cottage a family of orphans,—in all such cases, the opening of this sea-chest was an event of good omen to the bereaved; for Zephaniah had a large heart and a large

hand, and was apt to take it out full of silver dollars when once it went in. So the ark of the covenant could not have been looked on with more reverence than the neighbors usually showed to Captain Pennel' s sea-chest.

- 1 . The author describes Orr's Island in a(n) way.
 - A . emotionally appealing, imaginative
 - B . rational, logically precise
 - C . factually detailed, objective
 - D . vague, uncertain
- 2 . According to the passage, the “ best room ”
 - A . has its many windows boarded up.
 - B . has had the furniture removed.
 - C . is used only on formal and ceremonious occasions.
 - D . is the busiest room in the house.
- 3 . From the description of the kitchen we can infer that the house belongs to people who
 - A . never have guests.
 - B . like modern appliances.
 - C . are probably religious.
 - D . dislike housework.
- 4 . The passage implies that
 - A . few people attended the funeral.
 - B . fishing is a secure vocation.
 - C . the island is densely populated.
 - D . the house belonged to the deceased.
- 5 . From the description of Zephaniah we can see that he
 - A . was physically a very big man.
 - B . preferred the lonely life of a sailor.
 - C . always stayed at home.

D . was frugal and saved a lot.

Passage 2

Black Americans have served with honor in every American military action, though this fact is often omitted in history books. Even though black men almost had to beg to be allowed to serve in the Revolutionary War, they went on to serve well. Two blackmen, Oliver Cromwell and Prince Whipple, were with Washington when he crossed the Delaware on Christmas Day, 1776, to attack the British at Trenton. A black man named Estabrook captured the Royal Army's general Prescott Newport, and Peter Salem, a black, killed Major Pitcairn as he was savoring his expected victory at Bunker Hill.

Even though they were forced to serve in separated units, black soldiers distinguished themselves in combat. This was despite the fact the whites had long believed that blacks could neither command nor use firearms. In 1863, William Carney of the Massachusetts Colored Infantry received the Congressional Medal of Honor for his role in battles with the Plains Indians. Isaiah Dorman, Coster's black scout, served and died at the Little Big Horn in 1876. Henry Flipper was the first black graduate of West Point in 1877.

In World War I, 40,000 black American combat soldiers served with the French command. Neither U. S. nor British commanders would use these men. But Henry Johnson and Needham Roberts, soldiers in the 369th Infantry's black "Hell fighters" were still the first Americans to win the Croix de Guerr, France's top military award.

During World War II over 600,000 black men and women served in the armed forces, including some 400,000 who served overseas. Dorie Miller, a black mess attendant in navy, was one of our first heroes in this war. At Pearl Harbor during the Japanese sneak