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英文閱讀

Reading Smart 特訓班

中高級篇

Improving Your Reading Ability
and Comprehension Skills

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附

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Section 1

Acquiring Reading Skills

In this section, you will learn the following reading skills:

1. Identifying Topic Sentences
2. Making Inferences
3. Comparing and Contrasting
4. Scanning a Text for Information
5. Identifying Shifts in Thought/Perspective
6. Analyzing the Supporting Details of a Paragraph
7. Extracting Salient Points to Summarize
8. Synthesizing

Unit 1

1 Pre-reading

- What do you think is the most useful object that has ever been invented?
- If you were an inventor, what would you want to invent?
- What kind of existing problem would your invention solve?



Reading Vocabulary



smartphone



shopping cart



handyman



burr



hide



Swiss Alps



Velcro



copper rivet

Everyday Inventions

The Wonder of Human Ingenuity



The modern world is full of useful objects that were invented by someone, from the refrigerator in our kitchens to the smartphones in our pockets. Each invention is an example of the creative power of the human mind. Where do inventors derive¹ their inspiration to create useful things? To find out, here are three inventions that we often use without thinking about their origins. The inspiration behind each of these inventions came from different sources.

1. to take from something



Our first example is the shopping cart. Sylvan Goldman was a grocery store owner. Like most businessmen, he wished that 10 his customers would buy more so that he could make more money. He knew that if they could carry more merchandise² easily as they were shopping, then his sales would go up. While thinking about the problem one night, he had an idea. Working with a local handyman named Fred Young, he designed the 15 first shopping cart. Today, retailers³ who use shopping carts sell more goods and make more money than those who do not. Without the desire for making money as a motivating force, many inventions would never have been invented.

Nature has also inspired inventors throughout history. This 20 is what happened to inventor Georges de Mestral one day. While hunting with his dog in the Swiss Alps, he noticed how the burrs of certain plants stuck to his clothing and to his dog's fur. After examining them under a microscope, he found they had tiny

2. products that people buy and sell

3. a person or business that sells products to the public



3 Post-reading

I. Reading Skill: Identifying Topic Sentences

Most paragraphs contain two organizational elements: 1) a topic sentence that summarizes the paragraph's main idea and 2) details that support the main idea. Knowing how to identify these two elements is a critical part of developing good reading skills, and will help you understand the broad theme or message of a text in its entirety. In this unit, we will focus on identifying topic sentences.

A topic sentence is a sentence that tells the reader in a general way what the paragraph is about (i.e., the main idea). It organizes the paragraph and acts as a core from which the paragraph develops. Although the topic sentence is often the first sentence of a paragraph, it can also be found in the middle or at the end.

To identify the topic sentence, just ask yourself "What is this paragraph about?" Continue to ask yourself that question as you read the paragraph until the answer becomes clear. Sometimes you can spot the topic by looking for a word or two that repeat. Here is an example:

In the West, it is considered healthy and sexy to have a nicely tanned body. By contrast, in the East, a fair complexion is essential to looking beautiful. As the Chinese saying goes, "One white complexion hides three flaws." Whether you prefer dark or light skin is your choice, but protecting your skin from harmful UV rays should always be a priority.

In this paragraph, we see that the first sentence cannot be the topic sentence because it does not summarize the entire paragraph. In other words, the paragraph is not entirely about "tanned skin" or the Western concept of beauty and health. The same is true for sentences 2 and 3. Instead, it is from the idea of the last sentence that the first three sentences develop. Therefore, the last sentence is the topic sentence.

Test Your Skills

Identify the topic sentences in the article “Everyday Inventions: The Wonder of Human Ingenuity.”

1. Paragraph One

Topic Sentence:

2. Paragraph Two

Topic Sentence:

3. Paragraph Three

Topic Sentence:

4. Paragraph Four

Topic Sentence:

5. Paragraph Five

Topic Sentence:

II. Reading Comprehension:

- _____ ① Why did sales go up in Sylvan Goldman's grocery store after he began providing shopping carts?
- Because grocery stores without shopping carts made less money
 - Because he also lowered the prices of his merchandise
 - Because customers liked the shopping cart's innovative design
 - Because customers were able to carry more items to buy
- _____ ② Which of the following best describes the aim of the author in writing this article?
- To show three important inventions common to the modern world
 - To highlight important inventors in the history of the world
 - To illustrate sources of human creativity
 - To design new inventions
- _____ ③ According to the article, which invention shows how nature inspires us?
- The smartphone
 - The shopping cart
 - Velcro
 - Blue jeans
- _____ ④ The author would most likely disagree with which of the following statements?
- The future does not promise many useful inventions.
 - There are many interesting inventions in the world today.
 - Entrepreneurs often invent things.
 - Nature inspires creativity.
- _____ ⑤ Copper rivets were invented to solve which of the following problems?
- Burrs constantly sticking to clothing
 - Weak pant pockets
 - Too many tailors in California
 - Expensive patent fees