

中国石油职称英语考试通用教材电子版（2007年）五十 PDF
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https://www.100test.com/kao_ti2020/293/2021_2022__E4_B8_AD_E5_9B_BD_E7_9F_B3_E6_c67_293097.htm 50. The Earth ' s

Learning Curve (人类的学习曲线) 1. Imagine a chart that begins when man first appeared on the planet and tracks the economic growth of societies from then forward. It would be a long, fiat line until the late 16th or early 17th century, when it would start trending upward. Before then the fruits of productive labor were limited to a few elitesprinces, merchants and priests. For most of humankind life was as the English philosopher Thomas Hobbes famously described it in 1651"solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short." But as Hobbes was writing those words, the world around him was changing. Put simply, human beings were getting smarter. 1、想象一下，如果从人类首次在地球上出现开始画一条曲线，追踪在此之后人类社会的经济发展轨迹，那么会发现16世纪晚期或17世纪初期之前，是一条长长的没有多少起伏的线条，之后这条线才开始上扬。在此之前，生产劳动的成果限制在少数上层人士王子、商人和神职人员手中。大多数人的生活就像英国哲学家托马斯霍布斯1651年所作的著名描述那样：“孤独、贫穷、肮脏、粗野、浅薄。”但是就在霍布斯写下这些的时候，他周围的世界正在发生改变。简而言之，人类正变得越来越聪明。 2. People have always sought knowledge, of course, but in Western Europe at that time, men like Galileo, Newton and Descartes began to search systematically for ways to understand and control their environment. The scientific revolution, followed by the

Enlightenment, marked a fundamental shift. Humans were no longer searching for ways simply to fit into a natural or divine order. They were seeking to change it. Once people found ways to harness energy using steam engines they were able to build machines that harnessed far more power than any human or horse could ever do. And people could work without ever getting tired. The rise of these machines drove the Industrial Revolution, and created a whole new system of life. Today the search for knowledge continues to produce an ongoing revolution in the health and wealth of humankind.

2、当然，人们一直都在探索知识，但是在当时的西欧，像伽利略、牛顿和笛卡尔这样的人开始系统地寻求了解和支配周围环境的方式。科学革命以及随后出现的启蒙运动标志着一次根本性的转变。人类不再只是寻求适应自然法则或神的指示，他们正想方设法改变这一切。人类在找到驾驭能源使用蒸气机的方式后，他们便得以制造出机器，而这些机器产生的力量远比任何人或马所产生的力量大。这样一来，人们工作起来就不再觉得累了。这些机器的出现带动了工业革命，创造了一种全新的生活方式。如今，对知识的探寻继续在人类的健康和财富领域带来一场持续不断的革命。

3. If the rise of science marks the first great trend in this story, the second is its diffusion. What was happening in Britain during the Industrial Revolution was not an isolated phenomenon. A succession of visitors to Britain would go back to report to their countries on the technological and commercial innovations they saw there. Sometimes societies were able to learn extremely fast, as in the United States. Others, like Germany, benefited from starting late,

leapfrogging the long-drawn-out process that Britain went through. 3

、如果科学的兴起是这一历程中第一个伟大的动向，那么第二个伟大的动向就是科学的传播。工业革命期间英国发生的一切并不是孤立的现象。接连不断的到访英国的人回国后描述了他们在那里看到的科技和商业上的创新。有时，某些社会能够以极快的速度学习，正如美国那样。另外一些社会比如德国因起步晚而受益，因为它们越过了英国所经历的漫长过程。 4. This diffusion of knowledge accelerated dramatically in

recent decades. Over the last 30 years we have watched countries like Japan, Singapore, South Korea and now China grow at a pace that is three times that of Britain or the United States at the peak of the Industrial Revolution. They have been able to do this because of their energies and exertions, of course, but also because they cleverly and perhaps luckily adopted certain ideas about development that had worked in the West reasonably free markets, open trade, a focus on science and technology, among them. 4、近几十年来，知识的传播速度大大加快。在最近30年里，我们目睹了日本、新加坡、

韩国以及当今中国取得的飞速发展，其发展速度是英国或美国在工业革命巅峰时发展速度的3倍。它们之所以能够做到这一点，当然是由于它们的能力与努力，不过也是由于它们明智地而且可能也是幸运地采纳了在西方行之有效的一些关于发展的理念其中包括相当自由的市场、开放的贸易和对科技的关注。 5. The diffusion of knowledge is the dominant trend of

our time and goes well beyond the purely scientific. Consider the cases of Turkey and Brazil. If you had asked an economist 20 years ago how to think about these two countries, he would have

explained that they were classic basket-case, Third World economies, with triple-digit inflation, soaring debt burdens, a weak private sector and snail ' s -pace growth. Today they are both remarkably well managed, with inflation in single digits and growth above 5 percent. And this shift is happening around the world. From Thailand to South Africa to Slovakia to Mexico, countries are far better managed economically than they have ever been. Even in cases where political constraints make it difficult to push far-reaching reforms, as in Brazil, Mexico or India, governments still manage their affairs sensibly, observing the Hippocratic oath not to do any harm. 5

、知识的传播是我们这个时代的主流，而且远远超越了单纯的科技领域。想想土耳其和巴西的情况。如果你在20年前问一名经济学家如何看待这两个国家，他会说它们是典型的濒临崩溃的国家，第三世界经济体，通货膨胀率达到3位数，债台高筑，经济中的私营部分薄弱，增长速度极为缓慢。如今，它们全都管理有方，通货膨胀率降至1位数，经济增长率则达到了5%以上。而且这种改变在世界各地都在发生。从泰国、南非、斯洛伐克到墨西哥，各国在经济方面的表现远比过去要好。就连像巴西、墨西哥及印度这样的因政治限制难以推行全面改革的国家，政府仍然能够明智地处理事务，恪守着不做任何有害之事的希波克拉底誓。

6. We are sometimes reluctant to believe in progress. But the evidence is unmistakable. The management of major economies has gotten markedly better in the last few years. Careful monetary policy has tempered the boom-and-bust economic cycles of the industrial world, producing milder recessions and fewer shocks. Every day one reads of a new

study comparing nations in everything from Internet penetration to inflation. All these studies and lists are symbols of a learning process that is accelerating, reinforcing the lessons of success and failure. Call it a best-practice world.

6、我们有时不愿相信取得了进步。但是证据是确凿的。一些重要的经济体在过去几年里管理水平明显提高。谨慎的货币政策缓和了工业世界经济繁荣与萧条循环交替的局面，让经济衰退显得较为和缓，造成较少的冲击。每天，人们都会读到对比各国状况的新的研究结果，对比内容涉及方方面面，从因特网的普及程度到通货膨胀率的高低。这些研究和罗列标志着一种不断加速的学习过程，强化了成功的经验和失败的教训。这是一个崇尚最佳实践方法的世界。

7. I realize that the world I am describing is the world of the winners. There are billions of people, locked outside global markets, whose lives are still accurately described by Hobbes' s cruel phrase. But even here, there is change. The recognition of global inequalities is more marked today than ever before, and this learning is forcing action. There is more money being spent on vaccines and cures for diseases in Africa and Asia today than ever before in history. Foreign-aid programs face constant scrutiny and analysis. When things don' t work, we learn that, too, and it puts a focus either on the aid program or on local governments to improve.

7、我意识到我在描述的这个世界是属于胜利者的世界。还有数以十亿计的人们被挡在全球市场的大门之外，霍布斯的那些残酷用语仍然可以准确地描述他们的生活。但是就连在这样的地方也出现了变化。如今，人们比过去更加清楚地认识到全球不平等状况，而且这种认识正在促使人们采取行动。

如今，用在非洲与亚洲注射疫苗和治愈一些疾病上的钱比以往任何时候都要多。外国援助计划经常受到仔细审查与分析。如果采取的措施没有发挥作用，我们会了解到这一点，这让援助计划和地方政府都成为关注的焦点，从而促使它们不断改进。

8. This may sound overly optimistic. There are losers in every race, but let not the worries over who is winning and losing the knowledge race obscure the more powerful underlying dynamic: knowledge is liberating. It creates the possibility for change and improvement everywhere. It can create amazing devices and techniques, save lives, improve living standards and spread information. Some will do well on one measure, others on another. But on the whole, a knowledge-based world will be a healthier and richer world.

8、这听起来可能过于乐观了。每场竞赛都有输家，但是不要让对于这场知识竞赛中谁输谁赢的担忧掩盖更为重要的根本态势：知识正在释放出来。它可以创造出令人惊叹的设备和技术，拯救生命，改善生活水准，传播信息。有些知识会在这个方面有效，另外一些知识在别的方面有效。不过总体说来，以知识为基础的世界会是一个更为兴旺和富足的世界。

9. The caveat I would make is not about one or another country 's paucity of engineers or computers. These problems can be solved. But knowledge is not the same thing as wisdom. Knowledge can produce equally powerful ways to destroy life, intentionally and unintentionally. It can produce hate and seek destruction. Knowledge does not by itself bring any answer to the ancient Greek question "What is a Good Life?" It does not produce good sense, courage, generosity and tolerance. And most crucially, it

does not produce the farsightedness that will allow us all to live together and grow together on this world without causing war, chaos and catastrophe. For that we need wisdom. 9、我想给出的告诫不是这个或那个国家缺少工程师或计算机。这样的问题能够解决。但是知识与智慧不是一回事。知识同样能够产生毁灭人类的强大手段，不管这种做法是蓄意的还是无意的。它能产生仇恨，让人们想方设法实施毁灭行为。知识本身并不能回答那个古老的希腊问题：“什么样的生活是好的生活？”它不能产生明智、勇气、慷慨和宽容。最重要的是，它不能产生可以让我们在这个世界上不引发战争、混乱和灾难而共同生活共同发展的远见。要想做到这一点，我们需要智慧。

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