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https://www.100test.com/kao_ti2020/503/2021_2022_08_E5_B9_B4_E8_81_8C_E7_A7_c91_503792.htm 11． Fermi Problem 费米问题 On a Monday morning in July, the world\s first atom bomb exploded in New Mexico desert. Forty seconds later, the shock waves reached the base camp where the Italian-American physicist Enrico Fermi and his team stood. After a mental calculation, Fermi announced to his team that the bombs energy had equated 10,000 tons of TNT. The bomb team was impressed, but not surprised. Fermis genius was known throughout the scientific world. In 1938 he had won a Nobel Prize. Four years later he produced the first nuclear chain reaction, leading us into the nuclear age. Since Fermis death in 1954, no physicist has been at once a master experimentalist and a leading theoretician. Like all virtuosos, Fermi had a distinctive style. He preferred the most direct route to an answer. He was very good at dividing difficult problems into small, manageable bits talent we all can use in our daily lives. To develop this talent in his students, Fermi would suggest a type of question now known as a Fermi problem. Upon first hearing one of these, you haven\t the remotest notion of the answer, and you feel certain that too little information had been given to solve it. Yet when the problem is broken into sub-problems, each answerable without the help of experts or books, you can come close to the exact solution. Suppose you want to determine earth\s circumference without looking it up. Everyone knows that New York and Los Angeles are about 3,000 miles apart and that the time

difference between them is three hours. There hours is one-eighth of a day, and a day is the time it takes the planet to complete one rotation, so its circumference must be times 3,000 or 24,000 miles. This answer differs from the true value, 24,902.45 miles, by less than four percent. Ultimately the value of dealing with everyday problems the way Fermi did lies in the rewards of making independent discoveries and inventions. It doesnt matter whether the discovery is as important as determining the power of an atom or as small as measuring the distance between New York and Los Angeles. Looking up the answer, or letting someone else find it, deprives you of the pleasure and pride that accompany creativity, and deprives you of an experience that builds up self-confidence. Thus, approaching personal dilemmas as Fermi problems can become a habit that enriches your life.