武 汉 大 学

2008 年攻读硕士学位研究生入学考试试题

科目名称：基础英语（A 卷）　　科目代码：601

注意：所有的答题内容必须写在答题纸上，凡写在试题或草稿纸上的一律无效。

I. Cloze (15 points)

Fill in the numbered blanks with proper words. Among the 20 words given, only 15 should be used. Make sure the words come in correct forms in terms of spelling, grammar and meaning.

as; polite; distort; distract; other; humour; simple; extract; indeed; recognise; whereas; in; year; sin; since; understand; at; resign; week; alone

Observe a child; any one will do. You will see that not a day passes in which he does not find something or __1__ to make him happy, though he may be __2__ tears the next moment. Then look at a man; any one of us will do. You will notice that __3__ and months can pass in which every day is greeted with nothing more than __4__, and endured with __5__ indifference. __6__, most men are as miserable as __7__, though they are too bored to sin—perhaps their sin is their indifference. But it is true that they so seldom smile that when they do we do not __8__ their face, so __9__ is it from the fixed mask we take for granted. And even then a man can not smile like a child, for a child smiles with his eyes, __10__ a man smiles with his lips __11__. It is not a smile; but a grin; something to do with __12__, but little to do with happiness. And then, __13__ anyone can see, there is a point (but who can define that point?) when a man becomes an old man, and then he will smile again. It would seem that happiness is something to do with __14__, and that it is the ability to __15__ pleasure from the

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simplest things—such as a peach stone, for instance.

II. Explain the Idiomatic Expressions (10 points):

1. Keep up with the Joneses:
2. Rub shoulders with the guy:
3. Turn one's nose up:
4. Keep a civil tongue in one's head:
5. Read the writing on the wall:

III. Paraphrase the Sentences (10 points):

1. We are ripping matter from its place in the earth in such volume as to upset the blance between daylight and darkness.

2. For the mighty army of consumers, the ultimate applications of the computer revolution are still around the bend of a silicon circuit.

3. I suspect that there is quite a lot of lore stored away in the Colonel's otherwise not very interesting mind.

4. They rise out of the earth, they sweat and starve for a few years, and then they sink back into the nameless mounds of the graveyard.

5. The war acted merely as a catalytic agent in this breakdown of the Victorian social structure.

IV. Reading Comprehension (30 points):

Read the following passages and choose the best answer to each of the following questions.

Passage One

Questions 1 to 3 are based upon the following:

The decline of traditional religion in the West has not removed the need for men and women to find a deeper meaning behind existence. Why is the world the way it is and how do we, as conscious individuals, fit into the great scheme?

There is a growing feeling that science, especially what is known as the new physics, can provide answers where religion remains vague and faltering. Many people in search of a meaning to their lives are finding enlightenment in the revolutionary developments at the frontiers of science. Much to the bewilderment of professional scientists, quasi-religious cults are being formed around such unlikely topics as quantum physics, space-time relativity, black holes and the big bang.

How can physics, with its reputation for cold precision and objective materialism, provide such fertile soil for the mystical? The truth is that the spirit of scientific inquiry has undergone a remarkable transformation over the past 50 years. The twin revolutions of the theory of relativity, with its space-warps and time-warps, and the quantum theory, which reveals the shadowy and unsubstantial nature of atoms, have demolished the classical image of a clockwork universe slavishly unfolding along a predetermined pathway. Replacing this sterile mechanism is a world full of shifting indeterminism and subtle interactions which have no counterpart in daily experience.

To study the new physics is to embark on a journey of wonderment and paradox, to glimpse the universe in a novel perspective, in which subject and object, mind and matter, force and field, become intertwined. Even the creation of the universe itself has fallen within the province of scientific inquiry.

The new cosmology provides, for the first time, a consistent picture of how physical structures, including space and time, came to exist out of nothing. We are moving towards an understanding in which matter, force, order and creation are unified into a single descriptive theme.

Many of us who work in fundamental physics are deeply impressed by the harmony and order which pervades the physical world. To me the laws of the universe, from quarks to quasars, dovetail together so felicitously that the impression there is

something behind it all seems overwhelming. The laws of physics are so remarkably clever that they can surely only be a manifestation of genius.

1. The writer says people nowadays find that traditional religion is_____.
   A. a form of reassurance
   B. inadequate to their needs
   C. responding to scientific progress
   D. developing in strange ways
2. What does the writer probably have in mind when he in paragraph 3 refers to the classical image of a clockwork universe?
   A. Darwin's theory of evolution.
   B. Calvinistic interpretation of the universe.
   C. Newton's discovery about the gravity.
   D. The First Industrial Revolution.
3. The writer of the passage is most likely _____.
   A. a minister of religion
   B. a science fiction writer
   C. a research scientist
   D. a journalist

Passage Two

Questions 4 to 7 are based upon the following:

Once upon a time there was a prince who unwisely confided to the media that while tending his beloved garden, he often talked to his plants. He also warned his future subjects about losing touch with their natural surroundings and their rich cultural heritage. But the people scoffed and said it was the fuddy-duddy Prince who was out of touch. And as for talking to his plants — well, they shook their heads and remembered the madness of the Prince's forebear, King George III, who famously struck up a conversation with a tree that he had mistaken for the King of Prussia.

These days Britain's Prince of Wales is still considered a tad eccentric: after all, who in his right mind would have lost the love of the fairy-tale Princess Diana? But increasingly, Charles Philip Arthur George Windsor (who is not only Prince of Wales but also, *inter alia*,

Duke of Cornwall, Lord of the Isles and Great Steward of Scotland) is winning applause for his not-so-crazy campaign to combat what he calls "the wanton destruction that has taken place ... in the name of progress." For 30 years the Prince has been in the forefront of efforts to promote kinder, gentler farming methods; protect Britain's countryside from urban sprawl; improve city landscapes; and safeguard the nation's architectural heritage. And whereas his was once a lonely if plumy voice crying in the wilderness, the Prince has seen many of his once maverick opinions become mainstream.

Charles is not the first royal concerned about nature. Mad King George dabbled in botany when he wasn't losing his mind or the American colonies, and Charles' father, the Duke of Edinburgh, has long supported wildlife causes. But it is Charles who has become the crusader, with a vision of Britain that may border on the romantic but is in synch with Britons alarmed by what is happening to their green and pleasant land. He has the energy and dedication to get things done. "My problem," he has said, "is that I become carried away by enthusiasm to try to improve things, and also feel very strongly that the only way to progress is by setting examples and then hoping others will eventually follow."

An example people are following is organic farming, which Charles has adopted wholeheartedly on his own farmlands in the Duchy of Cornwall and surrounding his country home at Highgrove in western England. Charles once noted that when he decided to go organic, which means forswearing artificial fertilizers and pesticides, the experts were very polite, "but what they were saying about this latest demonstration of insanity once they were out of earshot can only be surmised." Today the experts have been confounded. The Duchy's Home Farm near Highgrove is 100% organic and highly profitable and serves as a model for farmers around the country at a time when farm incomes are falling and organic produce is in high demand, fetching premium prices in shops and supermarkets.

"Seeing is believing" is one of Charles' favorite sayings, no doubt repeated when the U. S. Secretary of Agriculture recently paid Highgrove a visit. And it's a safe bet that the American visitor received an earful on Charles' other farming concern: genetically modified crops. Once again the Prince has shown himself to be ahead

of the curve. Back in December 1995 he pronounced himself "profoundly apprehensive" about the brave new world of genetically modified organisms and complained of the "confidence bordering on arrogance" with which they are promoted. The Prince practices what he preaches, and a sign by the lane leading up to his Home Farm announces that "you are entering a gmofree zone." Charles' philosophy is simply expressed. "We should," he says, be adopting a "gentler, more considered approach, seeking always to work with the grain of nature in making better, more sustainable use of what we have."

4. According to the last sentence in the second paragraph, Charles's view on the saving of nature was once regarded as _____.
   A. sentimental
   B. idealistic
   C. independent
   D. peculiar
5. *"in synch with"* in the second paragraph may probably be closest in meaning to _____.
   A. correspondingly
   B. synonymously
   C. similarly
   D. simultaneously
6. When he first decided to go organic, Charles said that the experts _____.
   A. politely showed their worries
   B. thought that his view was mad
   C. were uncertain about his decision
   D. insisted on their own opinions
7. In the writer's opinion, the most important difference between Charles and his forbear in their concern about nature is that the former is _____.
   A. action-driven
   B. less eccentric
   C. more romantic
   D. more energetic

Passage Three

Questions 8 to 15 are based upon the following:

Everyone must have had at least one personal experience with a computer error by this time. Bank balances are suddenly reported to have jumped from $379 into the millions, appeals for charitable

contributions are mailed over and over to people with crazy-sounding names at your address, department stores send the wrong bills, utility companies write that they're turning everything off, that sort of thing. If you manage to get in touch with someone and complain, you then get instantaneously typed, guilty letters from the same computer, saying, "Our computer was in error, and adjustment is being made in your account."

I wonder whether this can be true. After all, the whole point of computers is that they represent an extension of the human brain, vastly improved upon but nonetheless human, superhuman maybe. A good computer can think clearly and quickly enough to beat you at chess, and some of them have even been programmed to write obscure verse. They can do anything we can do, and more besides.

It is not yet known whether a computer has its own consciousness, and it would be hard to find out about this. When you walk into one of those great halls now built for the huge machines, and stand listening, it is easy to imagine that the faint, distant noises are the sound of thinking, and the turning of the spools gives them the look of wild creatures rolling their eyes in the effort to concentrate, choking with information. But real thinking, and dreaming, are other matters.

On the other hand, the evidences of something like an *unconscious,* equivalent to ours, are all around, in every mail. As extensions of the human brain, they have been constructed with the same property of error, spontaneous, uncontrolled, and rich in possibilities.

Mistakes are at very base of human thought, embedded there, feeding the structure like root nodules. If we were not provided with the knack of being wrong, we could never get anything useful done. We think our way along by choosing between right and wrong alternatives, and the wrong choices have to be made as frequently as the right ones. We get along in life this way. We are built to make mistakes, coded for error.

A good laboratory, like a good bank or a corporation or government, has to run like a computer. Almost everything is done flawlessly, by the book, and all the numbers add up to the predicted sums. The days go by. And then, if it is a lucky day, and a lucky laboratory, somebody makes a mistake: the wrong buffer,

something in one of the blanks, a decimal misplaced in reading counts, the warm room off by a degree and a half, a mouse out of his box, or just a misreading of the day's protocol. Whatever, when the results come in, something is obviously screwed up, and then the action can begin.

The misreading is not the important error; it opens the way. The next step is the crucial one. If the investigator can bring himself to say, "But even so, look at that!" then the new finding, whatever it is, is ready for snatching. What is needed, for progress to be made, is the move based on the error.

Whenever new kinds of thinking are about to be accomplished, or new varieties of music, there has to be an argument beforehand. With two sides debating in the same mind, haranguing, there is an amiable understanding that one is right and the other wrong. Sooner or later the thing is settled, but there can be no action at all if there are not the two sides, and the argument. The hope is in the faculty of wrongness, the tendency toward error. The capacity to leap across mountains of information to land lightly on the wrong side represents the highest of human endowments.

It may be that this is a uniquely human gift, perhaps even stipulated in our genetic instructions. Other creatures do not seem to have DNA sequences for making mistakes as a routine part of daily living, certainly not for programmed error as a guide for action.

We are at our human finest, dancing with our minds, when there are more choices than two. Sometimes there are ten, even twenty different ways to go, all but one bound to be wrong, and the richness of selection in such situations can lift us onto totally new ground. This process is called exploration and is based on human fallibility. If we had only a single center in our brains, capable of responding only when a correct decision was to be made, instead of the jumble of different, credulous, easily conned clusters of neurones that provide for being flung off into blind alleys, up trees, down dead ends, out into blue sky, along wrong turnings, around bends, we could only stay the way we are today, stuck fast.

The lower animals do not have this splendid freedom. They are limited, most of them, to absolute infallibility. Cats, for all their good side, never make mistakes. I have never seen a maladroit,

clumsy, or blundering cat. Dogs are sometimes fallible, occasionally able to make charming minor mistakes, but they get this way by trying to mimic their masters. Fish are flawless in everything they do. Individual cells in a tissue are mindless machines, perfect in their performance, as absolutely inhuman as bees.

We should have this in mind as we become dependent on more complex computers for the arrangement of our affairs. Give the computers their heads, I say; let them go their way. If we can learn to do this, turning our heads to one side and wincing while the work proceeds, the possibilities for the future of mankind, and computer kind, are limitless. Your average good computer can make calculations in an instant, which would take a lifetime of slide rules for any of us. Think of what we could gain from the near infinity of precise, machine-made miscomputation which is now so easily within our grasp. We could begin the solving of some of our hardest problems. How, for instance, should we go about organizing ourselves for social living on a planetary scale, now that we have become, as a plain fact of life, a single community? We can assume, as a working hypothesis, that all the right ways of doing this are unworkable. What we need, then, for moving ahead, is a set of wrong alternatives much longer and more interesting than the short list of mistaken courses that any of us can think up right now. We need, in fact, an infinite list, and when it is printed out we need the computer to turn on itself and select at random the next way to go. If it is a big enough mistake, we could find ourselves on a new level, stunned, out in the clear, ready to move again.

8. The writer intends to suggest in the first paragraph that _____.
   A. you may receive letters appealing for charitable contributions
   B. you can hardly avoid unpleasant experiences with a computer in error
   C. the utilities may be shut off before you realize what has happened
   D. your complaint can be reponded to immediately, problems solved.

9. The thrid and fourth paragraphs mainly tell us that _____.

A. the computer is designed and constructed with liability to mistakes
B. human brain has the unconscious part that the computer doesn't
C. the computer has both the conscious and the unconscious as humans do
D. the computer cannot do the job of thinking and dreaming

10. When the writer says that human beings are "provided with the knack of being wrong," he suggests that human beings are _____.

A. sensible enough to keep away from wrongdoings
B. liable to commit errors
C. vulnerable to their wrongdoing
D. ignorant of their wrongdoing

11. The writer sounds _____ when he mentions the day on which the error occurs as "a lucky day."

A. ironic
B. disappointed
C. indignant
D. paradoxical

12. The writer seems to suggest in a conclusive way that _____.

A. dogs, different from some other lower animals, are born to do something wrong
B. the computer is designed and intended for error-making
C. some insects are comparatively perfect in terms of their infallibility.
D. some advanced animals make mistakes as a routine part of daily living

13. The writer will deny all the following ideas EXCEPT that _____.

A. if we stay the way we are and keep to the right course, we move ahead
B. human beings do not have to be dependent on computers to solve the problems
C. unlike human beings, computers may have the faculty of doing something wrong
D. errors are not necessarily crucial to human beings if they want to move forward

14. The writer's purpose in writing this article is to emphasize _____.

A. some impact of computer errors on us humans
B. the fact that computers are fallible
C. the capacity of human endowments
D. an alternative perception of error-making.

15. Which group of the following literary and rhetoric devices the writer uses most to make his points?

A. irony, parallelism, hyperbole, analogy
B. hyperbole, metaphor, metonymy, parody
C. metaphor, irony, personification, pun
D. parallelism, analogy, euphemism, onomatopoeia

V. Translation (50 points)

Put the following sentences into Chinese.

1. Here hundreds of pedestrians jostle each other on the streets, camels carry merchandise in from the Silk Road, and teahouses and restaurants do a thriving business.

2. If we can simply pen our life in a world which we like and is beneficial both to others and to ourselves, that will be our fortune and happiness.

3. He shares the same rotten tastes with some dubious characters. This is clearly shown in the report.

4. Now that the war of the early 1990's has long gone, tourists are pouring back into the Eastern European nation and enjoying its long history, beautiful scenery, rich culture and wonderful food and drink.

5. She's so hot that cameramen let the camera linger over areas where they shouldn't, movie producers find excuses to put her in a bikini. Her piercing eyes, strawberry-like lips and flawless skin definitely make her top our beauty list.

6. Five scores is like a day that has just gone by flight, and one thousand years the passing clouds in your sight.

7. Her woebegone expression, her hangdog manner, her over-anxiousness to please, or perhaps her unconscious hostility towards those she anticipated will affront her --- all act to drive away those whom she would attract.

8. There are miserable days when you feel lousy, grumpy, lonely, and utterly exhausted.

9. He set about rebuilding Paris, and changed it from a picturesque, unsanitary, seventeenth-century city into the spacious, latinized city of marble it is today.

10. Accordingly the more intelligent rich men work nearly as hard as if they were poor, while rich women for the most part keep themselves busy with innumerable trifles of whose earth-shaking importance they are firmly persuaded.

VI. Writing (35 points):

At present, there is heated discussion on whether we should be encouraged in having a golden week holiday for May Day.

You are to write a composition of approximately 300 words on this issue. In the first part of your composition, you should present your thesis statement, and in the second part you should support the thesis statement with details. In the last part you should bring what you have written to a natural conclusion.

Marks will be awarded for content, organization, grammar and appropriacy. Write your response on the answer sheet.