

1

UNIT

Good to great

Unit overview

Ambition is a strong desire to do or achieve something and usually implies determination and hard work. Personal success refers to the accomplishment of specific goals and is often the result of ambition. Fame, power, or wealth are generally considered by society to be the outward signs of success. For the average individual, however, personal success is an inner and more modest sense of satisfaction with their achievements.

The author of the first reading passage compares the unlimited ambition of young people with the limited ambition of more mature people. In both cases, ambition is seen as a positive trait. As life unfolds, one's ambition does not always bring success or satisfaction. The author suggests that we come to terms with our limitations in order not to become disorganized or overextended. While being more practical, we can still dream of big achievements.

The term “good enough” in the second reading passage does not imply laziness, mediocrity (平庸), or a lack of ambition. On the contrary, the author recommends that we focus on doing our best in the present rather than constantly striving to excel. If we are overly ambitious or attempt “to be great,” we are likely to encounter stress and failure. The author uses the example of a marathon runner who tries to run his personal best, as opposed to always trying to break records. Being consistent and having attainable goals, we can still improve.

In any case, if we want an entrée of success in life, we should include a variety of ingredients in the recipe for success: diligence, perseverance, passion, commitment, etc. This also holds true for college students, but what are the most important ingredients for success in college? Students are supposed to explore them in **Unit project**.

Reading 1

Get ready to read

Scripts

Hello, I'm Chris Navarro and I want to introduce you to my newest sculpture: *Dare to Dream Big*.

It's a bronze sculpture I designed for the young at heart. It tells the story of a cat and he's sitting on books with the title of *The Power of Belief*. The cat looking into a mirror, he sees his reflection as that of a lion. It's all about being creative and thinking big, having imagination and the power of belief, because the way to become a lion is to think and believe you are a lion. I've got a small mouse and he's peeking around the corner of this mirror. He thinks, "Just what I need — a cat who believes he's a lion."

The sculpture also has an interactive element. Next to *Dare to Dream Big* is a large chalkboard. At the top of the board, a sign reads, "I dare to dream big and I will ...". And below it there's space for you to write down your own dreams, because writing down goals and dreams forces you to clarify what you want. It motivates you to act. It opens your mind and heart to the possibilities. Trust and believe if you write it down, one day your goals and dreams will come true.

Well, I hope the sculpture will bring a smile to your face and positive emotions to your heart. People who experience positive emotions always feel better about themselves. Feeling good does matter. It's through positive emotions and the power of belief that we build our perceptions of the possible. When we believe in ourselves, we develop skills to face challenges in life and to reach our goals. Do not let negative beliefs stop you from trying and going after what you want.

I love seeing how children react to the sculpture. I've asked adults to write down their dreams and they hesitate and make excuses. But when I ask children, they rush to the chalkboard and could not wait to write their dreams down.

"You should look up to your dreams and you shouldn't ever, never, believe that they're not gonna come true."

"It shows you could dream even bigger than yourself."

"I have made my dream to be an inventor, so I could create new things for the world that people can use in their daily lives."

"It makes me feel like I can do anything whether it's within my reach or not."

"So if you have a dream, follow it."

Children still believe in the possibility of dreams. We can learn something from them. I

know what it's like to have a dream when you're the only one who can see it. I discovered the benefits and rewards of physically writing down goals and dreams in my own life. And having your dreams come true is what life is all about. So when you dare to dream big, whatever you dream of, write it down.

Teaching tips

Before watching the video clip, Ss can be asked to describe the picture on the right and discuss with each other the hidden meaning of the picture. This activity can facilitate Ss' understanding of the sculpture mentioned in the video.



Reference answers

Watch for information

- | | |
|----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1) a lion | 2) A small mouse |
| 3) goals / dreams | 4) the possibilities |
| 5) positive emotions | 6) challenges in life |
| 7) hesitate | 8) write it down |

Watch and discuss

Everybody has their dreams, but people may have different dreams at different stages of their life. Children's dreams can be hardly predictable. Some children may dream about the things they love in their life, say, a doll, a model kit, or a thrilling roller-coaster ride at a theme park. Other children may dream very big dreams, such as traveling to other planets, saving Mother Nature, or eliminating poverty from the world. However, adults' dreams tend to be more specific and rational. Their dreams may have much to do with their study, work, and life.

As for me, my dreams have really undergone tremendous changes. When I was in kindergarten, my dream was to become a soldier or a policeman. In my eyes, a soldier or a policeman was very courageous, robust, powerful, and masculine. When I was in primary school, my dream was to become a teacher. Teachers gave me an impression of being knowledgeable, kind-hearted and, most important of all, omnipotent (无所不能的). It seemed that they could solve every problem. I wanted to have that kind of ability at that time. When I entered high school, my dream was to gain admission to the university

of my choice. At that time, I worked very hard and invested virtually all my energy and time in my study. I regarded a good university as my passport to success and happiness. Now, as a university student, my dream has crystallized into something more definite and specific. I want to broaden my horizons, hone my social skills, and improve my academic performance so as to lay a solid foundation for my future job.

Additional activity

How ambitious are you?

The following activity is aimed at testing Ss' ambition quotient. The activity can be organized as follows.

Step

①

Read the following statements and choose the answers that apply to you. Check your results to find out how ambitious you are.

1. Do you sometimes feel you're not making enough progress at school?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
2. Do you have a list of things you intend to accomplish in the future?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
3. Do you make a conscious effort to learn from your failures and mistakes?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
4. Do you often read or study subjects of interest to you, even when they don't count toward a grade?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
5. Do you often create, consider, and experiment with new plans to help you reach your objectives?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
6. Do you really value time and occasionally feel guilty when you think you have wasted it?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
7. Are you presently using all or most of your abilities and resources to move ahead?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
8. Would you be willing to change direction, possibly giving up feelings of comfort or security, to achieve goals that will help you get ahead?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
9. Do you find the idea or goal of shooting for the top both exciting and challenging?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
10. Do you carry a slogan or motto to keep yourself motivated with thoughts of success?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

Score **5** points for every Yes and **0** for every No.

45-50 **Great!** Your ambition propels you to great levels of success in life.

40-44 **Good.** While high enough to take you a good distance up the success ladder, there's room to grow your ambition to a higher level.

35-39 **Fair.** It's time to focus on attaining your goals.

30-34 **Time to take charge.** Strive to increase your ambition by setting realistic future goals and developing some objectives.

Under 30 **Get started now!** Lack of direction holds you back. To become more ambitious, make an immediate commitment to identify your interests and abilities, and match them with related possibilities.

Step
2 Work in groups to brainstorm a list of characteristics that highly ambitious people have.

Reference answers

Here are six traits of highly ambitious people:

1. Never quit.
2. "Now" is the time.
3. Be willing to sacrifice.
4. Be curious and eager to learn.
5. Be self-sufficient and responsible.
6. Be passionate about personal growth.

Reading passage

Background information

The author of the passage is Perri Klass. She is an American pediatrician who writes fiction and non-fiction. She writes about children and families, about medicine, about food and travel, and about knitting. Her works include *The Mercy Rule*, *The Real Life of a Pediatrician*, and *Every Mother Is a Daughter*.

Language points

1. **It was a joke; we were all smart-ass college freshmen, pretending the world was ours for the asking. (Para. 2)**

be sb's for the asking: (*informal*) if sth. is yours for the asking, you can have it if you want it 某人只要提出要求（就可以得到）

e.g. This job was hers for the asking.

There are two variant forms of this expression: be available / free for the asking.

e.g. My brother is a lawyer, so for us his advice is free for the asking.

2. **We were smart college freshmen, and why should we limit our ambitions? (Para. 2)**
limit:

vt. stop sb. from doing what they want or from developing and improving beyond a particular point 限制，制约（某人的发展等）

e.g. You limit your ambitions and become more realistic, wiser about your potential, your abilities, and the number of things your life can hold. (Para. 5)

n. [C] the greatest or least amount, number, speed, etc. that is allowed 限度；极限

e.g. What I mean by ambition is dreaming big dreams, putting no limits on your expectations and your hopes. (Para. 4)

3. **Sometimes you get close to something you wanted to do, only to find it looks better from far away. (Para. 5)**

only to: used to say that sb. did sth., with a disappointing or surprising result 结果只是（用于表示结果令人失望或感到意外）

e.g. He's just started what he thought was his dream career, only to find that it doesn't live up to his expectations.

4. **Back when I was a freshman, to tell the truth, I wanted to be an ethologist, go into the jungle to study monkeys and learn things no one had ever dreamed of, but it turned out that wasn't enough of a basis for a life. (Para. 5)**

turn out:

1) happen in a particular way, or have a particular result, esp. one that you did not expect 最后结果是；最终成为

e.g. As it turned out, he passed the exam quite easily.

2) go somewhere in order to be present at an event or take part in an activity 去参加

e.g. Thousands of people turned out to watch London's New Year's Day Parade.

3) produce sth., esp. in large numbers（尤指大量）生产，制造

e.g. The company plans to turn out 3,000 small planes a year.

4) remove sth. from a container by turning it upside down（从容器中）倒出

e.g. She desperately turned out the drawer in search of her mother's ring.

5) force sb. to leave a place permanently, esp. their home 驱逐某人; 赶走某人

e.g. If you cannot pay the rent, they will turn you out by the end of this month.

5. **The world is full of measuring tapes, books, and articles to tell you where you should be at your age, after so many years of doing what you do. (Para. 6)**

Here, “measuring tapes, books, and articles” refers to those that can be used as “standards of comparison.” A “measuring tape” or a “tape measure” can also literally refer to a long narrow strip of plastic, cloth or flexible metal that has measurements marked on it and is used for measuring the length of something.

6. **Even so, you have to come to terms with limitations; you cannot crowd your life with occupations and then expect to do each one as well as you might if it were all you had to do. (Para. 7)**

Paraphrase: In spite of that, you have to accept your limitations; if you take a lot of jobs in your life, it's impossible for you to do each one as well as you might if you did only one job.

limitation: *n.*

1) [C, usu. pl.] qualities that stop sb. / sth. from being as good or as effective as you wish they could be (某人或某事物的) 局限性, 不足之处

e.g. This technique is useful but it has its limitations.

2) [U] the act or process of controlling or reducing sth. 限制; 制约

e.g. All the talk had been about the limitation of nuclear weapons.

come to terms with: accept an unpleasant or sad situation and no longer feel upset or angry about it 与某事妥协; 对某事让步; 接受 (令人不快或悲伤的现实)

e.g. She had come to terms with the fact that her dad would always be crippled.

“Terms” can also be used in other expressions. The following are some commonly used ones.

be on good / bad terms: have a good or bad relationship with sb. (与某人) 关系要好 / 关系不好

e.g. I didn't know you and Usha were on such bad terms.

be on equal terms: have the same advantages, rights, or abilities as anyone else 具备平等的条件

e.g. Now that she has been promoted, she is on equal terms with her ex-boss.

be on speaking terms: be able to talk to sb. and have a friendly relationship with them, esp. after an argument (尤指争吵后) 关系好, 能友好地交谈

e.g. I see him on the train every day but we're not on speaking terms.

in terms of sth.: if you explain or judge sth. in terms of a particular fact or event, you are only interested in its relation to that fact or event 在…方面; 从…方面来说; 根据…来解释

e.g. The job is great in terms of salary, but it has its disadvantages.

Here, in “you might if it were all you had to do,” the subjunctive mood is used, suggesting that if you did only one job, you might complete it perfectly.

7. I don't pretend that there is room in my life for any and every kind of ambition I can imagine. (Para. 8)

room: *n.* [U]

1) the possibility that sth. may exist or will happen (某物存在或发生的) 可能性

e.g. The evidence was clear, and there was little room for doubt.

2) the chance to do the things that you want to do or need to do 机会; 余地

e.g. Part of growing up, of course, is realizing that there is only so much room in one life. (Para. 7)

“Any and every” is used to emphasize that you are talking about every person or thing in a group. Another synonymous expression is “each and every.”

Reference answers

Read and understand

Global understanding

- 1) limit
- 2) entertaining
- 3) dreaming big dreams
- 4) more realistic
- 5) a failure
- 6) conflict
- 7) mature

Detailed understanding

1. D 2. B 3. D 4. A 5. D 6. B

Read and think

Teaching tips

Ss should be reminded that they must critically evaluate and analyze the books, journal articles, and academic papers that they read. A critical reader tries not only to think of arguments to refute what they read, but to think of extra arguments to support it. Only then do they weigh the argument carefully and come to a decision. They also try to determine in what ways the argument may be relevant and relate those ideas to their own life. Rather than merely seeking to “trash” an argument entirely, the wise reader acknowledges that some parts of an argument are more compelling than others, and tries to figure out why.

Remind Ss that the author doesn't have the last say on the subject. They themselves do. If they have been reading critically, they must have been thinking, and they will have something to express in words. If Ss aren't creating responses while reading, they aren't really thinking. They are merely falling into passive reading for information. Ask Ss to take the time to jot down their responses, even if they are only a few words, such as “What?” “Yes!” “I don't know.” “Not in the case of ...” and “I disagree here because ...” By doing so, Ss can expand on the author's ideas with their own thoughts.

Dream big dreams vs. be realistic

Step

1

I think the idea that one has to “come to terms with limitations” and “be realistic” about one's ambition is more convincing. Beth, the author's friend, was a very ambitious person in college, “dreaming big dreams, putting no limits on your expectations and hopes” not only for herself but for her friends. She wanted to become the Secretary of State and she assigned her friends Nobel Prizes (Para.1). However, the author states that one should “be mature about ambition” (Para. 8). It can also be inferred that assigning friends “Nobel Prizes or top government posts” (Para. 8) is, in the eyes of the author, a sign of immaturity. Meanwhile, she uses herself as an example to stress that one should “limit ambitions, and become more realistic, wiser about your potential, your abilities, and the number of things your life can hold” (Para. 5). She also mentions the adverse effect of having any and every kind of ambition in life — “a chaotic and crowded life in which you are always late, always overdue, always behind” (Para. 7) to remind others to “come to terms with limitations” (Para. 7) rather than “crowd your life with occupations” (Para. 7) .

Step

2

If I were the author, I would probably use famous people who have given up on their previous ambition and started over as prime examples to illustrate my viewpoint. I think it would be equally cogent and convincing. Take, for example, J. K. Rowling, the author of the best-selling *Harry Potter* books. She was once striking an uneasy balance between the ambition she had for herself and what those closest to her expected of her. Her parents hoped that she would take a vocational degree while she wanted to study English Literature. Surely, she could not crowd her life with these two occupations. She had to be decisive and so she began to channel all her energy into writing. She claimed that she had failed on an epic scale: an exceptionally short-lived marriage, as well as being jobless and a single parent. However, letting go of a goal that her parents expected of her, which was seemingly attainable for her, could free her up to find true meaning in her cherished dream — writing.

What's more, I would also use statistics to suggest that most people tend to be more realistic and mature about ambition. I could conduct a survey among my classmates as evidence revealing the tendency of dreaming different dreams at different stages.

Being ambitious: positive or negative?

Step

1

- I agree with the author. I think ambitious people are entertaining and interesting in a couple of ways. First, they are always striving toward the next accomplishment. They are so goal-oriented that even though their goal may well involve much danger and risk, they are still willing to move into uncharted territory. They are more likely to explore, experiment with, and discover novel things. When talking with them, chances are that I can always find something refreshing about their unique experience. Second, they tend to think critically and break away from conventional patterns of thinking. If I open my mind to those who have their own ways of thinking, I think I'm more likely to thrive on conversations with them.
- I don't quite agree with the author. Quite the reverse, I think ambitious people are somewhat boring. Because they want to be at the top of their games or be leaders, their tolerance of mistakes is very low. In order to fulfill their ambitious dreams, they sometimes have to abandon variety due to the pains of possible distractions. Their conversation may be more predictable, focusing on their plans to fulfill their dreams. Moreover,

many ambitious people also strike me as flamboyant (卖弄的). Personally, I don't have a liking for those who tend to show off.

Step**2**

- It all depends. If one's ambition is acceptably decent (e.g. to become a distinguished scientist or to make significant contributions to society), then being ambitious is regarded as an essential ingredient for success because it inspires people to work hard toward achievement or distinction. In Chinese, this can be understood as “雄心壮志,” quite similar to “great aspirations or high hopes.” However, if carried to extremes, it will develop into “野心勃勃,” meaning “being driven by wild ambition.” In this context, “ambition” carries a connotation of disapproval.
- I think being ambitious is in most cases a positive quality in China. In a broad sense, China is still a developing country, and people with great ambitions are needed to make our country more prosperous and powerful. For example, driven by their lofty aspirations to become pioneers in a particular field, they will try every means to equip themselves with state-of-the-art knowledge and achieve breakthroughs, thus making contributions to the country in the long run. In a narrow sense, everyone should be ambitious. They should cherish a driving ambition to strive for excellence and perfection. Trying to be the best means doing one's utmost to outperform others in study and at work. To put it in a nutshell, ambition can be the motivation for the achievement of national prosperity and the fulfillment of personal values.

Additional activity**Ambition in my eyes****Step****1**

In the passage, the author defines ambition as “dreaming big dreams, putting no limits on your expectations and your hopes.” What's your definition of ambition?

Step**2**

Describe someone who you think is ambitious.

Read and practice

Meaning in context

1. B 2. C 3. C 4. A 5. A

Word building

1. a high-speed railway 2. a part-time job 3. a long-term plan
4. up-to-date information 5. an eco-friendly / environmentally-friendly dining table
6. a newly-opened bookstore 7. a warm-hearted girl 8. a wait-and-see attitude
9. face-to-face communication 10. an open-minded scholar

Language in use

1. The ability to resolve conflict successfully
2. the future is yours for the asking
3. would rather not try
4. set a specific, attainable goal
5. don't sit back and wait
6. Once you've come to terms with your failures

Banked cloze

- 1) potential 2) adventurous 3) whole-heartedly
4) attain 5) determination 6) entertaining
7) capable 8) opportunities 9) grab
10) enthusiasm

Read and translate

1. Some parents expect their children to dream big dreams, while others want their kids to be realistic.
2. You have to admit that part of growing up is realizing some dreams are unattainable.
3. In spite of great difficulties, scientists have made remarkable achievements with their diligence and determination.
4. His success is due to his ability to work single-mindedly on his goal.
5. It turns out that opportunities always favor those who are well-prepared.
6. The Silk Road represents an adventurous spirit and a spirit of moving forward courageously.

Read and write

Step

1

1. The author defines ambition as “dreaming big dreams, putting no limits on your expectations and your hopes.” (Para. 4)
2. She points out that she doesn't like very specific, attainable ambitions. Instead, she likes big ambitions that suggest that the world could open up at any time, with work and luck and determination.
3. She offers some examples as big ambitions: The next book could hit it big; the next research project could lead to something fantastic; and the next bright idea could change history. She also uses the examples of her friend Beth and herself to explain ambition. She regards Beth as a very ambitious person as Beth planned to be the Secretary of State someday and assigned the author and another friend of hers Nobel Prizes. She also describes herself as an ambitious person. For example, when she was a freshman, she wanted to be an ethologist, go into the jungle to study monkeys and learn things no one had ever dreamed of. Even though she is mature and realistic about ambition now, she still dreams of writing a best-seller, having 10 children, and doing amazing medical research.

Step

2

1. What I mean by empathy is putting yourself in other people's shoes and feeling what they feel.
2. Happiness can be defined as the experience of joy, contentment, or well-being, combined with a sense that one's life is good, meaningful, and worthwhile.
3. Romance in its broader sense refers to a zest for life, an energetic pursuit in any relationship with others as well as with nature.
4. Friendship can be described as a flower that must be consistently watered and maintained in order to make it grow well.
5. By definition, brand loyalty means the tendency of some consumers to continue buying the same brand of goods rather than competing brands.

Step

3

Success can be defined as being able to feel content with your life and achieve what you have dreamed of. It's true that people have different expectations and hopes, but regardless of what your goal is, you can be perceived as a successful person as long as what you have achieved brings you a sense of satisfaction and makes you completely at ease with your life. It could be the acquisition of knowledge, the opportunity of a promotion, the happiness of a loving family, or the comfort of living in the here and now. Kobe Bryant, an NBA legend and a basketball superstar,

said in an interview, “I don’t want to be the next Michael Jordan. I only want to be Kobe Bryant.” For him, success means bringing out his best in basketball games. Huang Danian, a distinguished geophysicist, returned to China from Britain and made his tremendous contributions to deep earth exploration. He once said: “No matter how much you have achieved abroad, you may not label yourself as a success if the field you are studying is still in its infancy in your home country.” For him, success means serving China with his heart and making contributions to rejuvenating China. Therefore, it is crucial to define your own concept of success rather than follow in others’ footsteps in your life. When you fulfill your dream, you will achieve success and attain contentment.

Translation of the passage

雄心壮志

读大学时，我的朋友贝丝雄心勃勃。她不仅自己如此，而且还为她的朋友们树立了雄心壮志。她对国际关系、旅游和读法学院都感兴趣。她常常一本正经地说：“有朝一日，我会当国务卿的，我有这个打算。”我的专业是生物学，这下成问题了：贝丝的发小也是学生物学的，而且贝丝早就决定由她获得诺贝尔奖。好在我对写小说感兴趣，于是矛盾解决了：我得诺贝尔文学奖，而她的那个朋友则得诺贝尔科学奖。

这只是说着玩的；我们当时都是些自命不凡的大一新生，自以为整个世界如我们的囊中之物。但这又不完全是玩笑。我们都是聪明的大一新生，有什么理由不壮志凌云呢？

我一向喜欢雄心勃勃的人，并不是因为我迫不及待地想结交未来的国务卿，而是因为我发现他们能给人快乐：跟他们谈话很有趣，看着他们都会很开心。当然，喜欢他们的另一个原因是，我自己也是这样的人，而且我不会为此感到愧疚。

我所说的雄心壮志是指树立远大的理想，任期盼和希望驰骋。我其实并不喜欢非常明确、能够实现的抱负。我喜欢远大的志向，能让人感到只要勤奋、运气好、有决心，世界在任何时候都可能向我们敞开。下一本书可能会一举成功，下一个研究项目可能会取得了不起的成果，下一个奇思妙想可能会改变历史。

当然，你不会永远是大一新生。你会限制自己追求的目标，对自己的潜力和能力，对自己的生活能容纳多少东西有更为现实和明智的认识。有时候，当你接近自己的追求时，结果却发现不如远远看着它。说实话，当我在读大一时，我希望成为一名动物行为学家，到热带丛林中去研究猿猴，去了解人们做梦都没想过的事情。但是我发现仅此不足以支撑我的生活。因为我注定无法过那种充满冒险的野外生活，无法去异域他乡独自闯荡，不忍让亲人们为我痛苦伤心。

雄心可能造成的最糟糕的一件事是它会告诉你：你是个失败者。世界充斥着标尺、书籍和文章，告诉你经过多年的努力，在目前这个年龄你应该达到怎样的目标。然而，这世界充满了失意的人。他们当中有些人可能从来就没有过志向，坐等好运的降临，而又因为没有如愿而觉得上当受骗。另一些人曾有过非常明确又具体的奋斗目标，但又由于这

样或那样的原因没能实现。还有一些人得到了想要的，却发现它和自己所期望的并不完全一样。

随着你年龄的增长，你的一些抱负也许会发生冲突。当然，成长意味着要明白人一生仅有这么多时间和精力。你可以全心全意地、专心致志地做一件事，放弃其他的一些事情。或者你也可以贪心十足，既不愿放弃已经拥有的，又想去捞取别的新东西。这就会导致生活混乱、忙碌，你总是迟到、延误、落后，但很少会感到无聊。即便如此，你也不得不接受自身的局限性：你不可能给自己一下子安排很多工作，然后又期望做好所有的事情，使每样工作的质量都像你只做一件工作那样好。

当然，在雄心壮志这方面，我努力使自己心智成熟。我不会安排朋友们去获取诺贝尔奖或政府高级官员的职位。我不会自以为在我的一生中，只要是我能想象到的任何梦想，我都有可能去追求。相反，我追求的只有三件事：尽可能地写好小说，拥有一个家庭，成为一名优秀的儿科医生。当然，此时内心有个声音在悄悄地说：写一本畅销书，生十个孩子，从事了不起的医学研究……尽管我已不再是大一新生，可我欣喜地发现，那个微小的声音并没有消失，仍然如恋人絮语般在我耳畔呢喃。

Reading 2

Get ready to read

Reference answers

Listen for information

- | | |
|-----------------------|------------------|
| 1) a little girl | 2) be pretty |
| 3) grew up | 4) have rainbows |
| 5) children of my own | 6) tenderly |

Listen and discuss

This expression means that we cannot control everything, no matter how badly we want to. In this classic song, the singer plays the role of a woman who is recollecting the doubts and uncertainties present during the three different stages of her life. All the three settings about what lies ahead end with the same response: “The future’s not ours to see ... Whatever will be, will be.”

Technically, there is a grain of truth in this expression. Few of us have crystal balls and can predict what the future holds for us. However, I don’t agree with this expression.

It reveals that everything is out of our control. If we take this attitude to heart, we'll probably ask ourselves, "Why bother?" For example, when stuck in a to-be-or-not-to-be situation, we will probably refuse to take positive actions to make things better. One of the most effective ways to live a fulfilling life is to create a vision for the life we want. As life unfolds, it can be easier to adjust our priorities accordingly. Without an idea of our destination as our inner compass, how can we possibly choose all the right paths?

I think it essential to strike a balance between "putting no limits on your expectations" and "whatever will be, will be." When we set goals, we should be wise about our potential and gain better self-understanding. If we are too ambitious, we may well feel frustrated and baffled (令人困惑的) with life. In contrast, an appropriate vision of our goal can serve as a compass, guiding us to take the best actions and make the most sensible decisions that help motivate us toward our best life. Instead of adopting a "whatever-will-be-will-be" approach to life, which may leave us aimless at the mercy of fate, we should know where we're headed in our journey of life.

Reading passage

Background information

Brad Stulberg, the author of the passage, writes about health, human performance, and well-being. He is widely known for his ability to merge the latest science with inspiring stories of top performers across a range of domains — from athletic to intellectual to artistic, offering readers practical insights that they can apply in their own lives. He is the co-author of *Peak Performance: Elevate Your Game, Avoid Burnout, and Thrive with the New Science of Success*. In this passage, he illustrates the importance of a "good-enough" mindset with the example of Eliud Kipchoge, who has broken the marathon world record.

Culture notes

1. "Good is the enemy of great" is the first sentence of *Good to Great*. This book, published in 2001, shows that greatness is not primarily a function of circumstance but largely a matter of conscious choice and discipline. Jim Collins, the author, explains the findings from his team by this: "Good is the enemy of great. And that is one of the key reasons why we have so little that becomes great. We don't have great schools, principally because we have good schools. We don't have great government, principally because we have good government. Few people attain great lives, in large part because it is just so easy to settle for a good life."

2. *Good Is the Enemy of Great* is a self-help book written by Kurt Reece-Peeplez in 2017. As founder and president of the Solz Group, he inspires readers to strive for greatness in the most important areas of their life instead of settling for “good enough.” It suggests that one can achieve greatness in what they want to do with their life if they strive to get better and better and don't compare themselves with others.

Language points

1. **What if striving to be great is what's holding you back? (Para. 1)**

Paraphrase: What will happen if your strong desire to make great achievements gets in the way of your success?

What if ...?: used to ask what you should do or what the result will be if sth. happens, esp. sth. unpleasant 如果…怎么办? ; 如果…将会怎样?

e.g. What if failure isn't something to be avoided, but rather embraced?

The second “what” in this sentence is used to introduce a noun clause, meaning “something that is holding you back.”

2. **It sounds appealing and rolls off the tongue nicely, but there's a good chance it's totally wrong. (Para. 2)**

Here, “chance” means “possibility.” It can be used in the following expressions.

There is the chance (that) ... / There is a good chance (that) ...: It's very likely that ...

e.g. Whenever I'm embarking on the journey to self-improvement, there is always the chance that things won't go perfectly as planned.

What are the chances of doing sth.? / What are the chances that ...?: What is the possibility of doing sth.? / How likely is it that ...?

e.g. What are the chances of getting tickets for this concert?

stand / have a good / high / fair chance of doing sth.: be likely to do sth.

e.g. If you work very hard, you will stand a good chance of obtaining a scholarship.

stand / have a(n) little / slim / slight / faint / outside chance of doing sth.:

be unlikely to do sth.

e.g. He has a slim chance of winning against such an experienced player.

a fifty-fifty chance of ...: used to indicate that the possibility of sth. happening or not happening is equal

e.g. He had a fifty-fifty chance of surviving the operation.

a million to one chance / a one in a million chance: used to indicate sth. is extremely unlikely to happen

e.g. There's a one in a million chance that a random stranger could unlock your phone with Face ID.

Chances are that ...: It is likely that ...

e.g. Chances are that she's already heard the news.

3. **We're told that striving to be great and never being satisfied are necessary to meet the ever-increasing pressures and pace of today's world. (Para. 3)**

“Ever” can be used to form compound adjectives to show that something exists or continues all the time, for instance, the ever-increasing (不断加剧的) traffic jams, an ever-changing (日益变化的) world of medical information, an ever-blooming (四季开花的) shrub rose, a symbol of everlasting (永恒的) love, an enthusiastic teacher with an ever-ready (脸上总是挂着的) smile, an ever-present (始终存在的) threat to life, and ever-willing (总是愿意的) to experiment.

4. **It also lessens the risk of injury — emotional and physical — since there isn't a perceived need to make heroic efforts every day. (Para. 5)**

heroic: *a.*

1) extremely brave or determined, and admired by many people 英雄的; 英勇的

e.g. We watched our team's heroic struggle to win back the cup.

2) (on a ~ scale / of ~ proportions) very large or great 很大的

e.g. In 1863, an engineering feat of heroic proportions was unveiled to the world: the world's first underground railway, in London.

5. **He recently told the press that he rarely, if ever, pushes himself past 80 percent — 90 percent at most — of his maximum effort during workouts. (Para. 6)**

“Rarely / seldom, if ever” is used as a more forceful way to say “rarely” or “seldom.” It can be written either with or without commas.

e.g. • Such radical opinions have rarely, if ever, been heard here before.

• Now that we have young children, we seldom, if ever, go out in the evening.

6. **Unlike so many other runners who have tried and failed to break the marathon world record, Kipchoge has never been obsessed with the mark. (Para. 7)**

mark: *n.* [C] a particular level, number, amount, etc. 水平; 标准点; 指标

e.g. This year's sales figures have already passed the mark set last year.

Here, “the mark” refers to “the marathon world record.”

7. **A “good-enough” mindset might very well be the key to being great and happy. (Para. 8)**

might well: used to say that there is a good reason for a reaction, question, or feeling 很有理由 (作出某种反应、提出某个问题或产生某种情绪)

e.g. You might well remember that nothing can bring you success but yourself.

“Might” can be replaced with “may.”

e.g. Reflection may very well be the single greatest attribute of a powerful leader.

“Might / may well” may be confused with “may / might (just) as well.” The latter can be used in either of the two contexts: 1) used to suggest that sb. should do sth.,

because there is no good reason to do anything else; 2) used to say that the effect of an action or situation is the same as if it was another one.

- e.g.*
- *Since nobody else wants the job, we might as well let him have it.*
 - *Nothing ventured, nothing gained. We may as well take the risk.*

Reference answers

Read and understand

Global understanding

- | | | | |
|------------------------|-------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| 1) satisfied / content | 2) accepting | 3) confidence | 4) lessen |
| 5) sustainable | 6) marathon | 7) overextending | 8) expectations |
| 9) opposite | 10) perform / get | | |

Detailed understanding

1. T 2. T 3. F 4. F 5. F

Read and think

What defines a “good-enough” mindset?

Step

1

The defining features of a “good-enough” mindset include:

- feeling content with the unfolding of one’s life; (Para. 4)
- finding happiness in one’s work and life, in the here and now; (Para. 4)
- being at least OK with where one is; (Para. 4)
- not making heroic efforts every day; (Para. 5)
- not overextending oneself in training; (Para. 6)
- not pushing oneself over 80 or 90 percent of one’s maximum effort; (Para. 6)
- doing something with a relaxed mind; (Para. 6)
- not striving to meet ever-increasing expectations; (Para. 7)
- being grounded and at peace. (Para. 8)

Step

2

In accordance with what has been discussed in Step 1, “Focus on making the most of today,” “Be content with what you have or who you are,” and “Take real pleasure in the process of achieving something” are characteristic of a “good-enough” mindset. To be more specific, “Focus on making the most of today” has much to do with “finding happiness

in one's work and life, in the here and now;" "Be content with what you have or who you are" is related to both "finding happiness in one's work and life, in the here and now" and "being at least OK with where one is;" and "Take real pleasure in the process of achieving something" can be associated with "feeling content with the unfolding of one's life" and "doing something with a relaxed mind."

Step

3

I agree that there is a positive relationship between a "good-enough" mindset and happiness. Some of us may find ourselves asking, "When will what I do be enough?" or catch ourselves constantly striving for more — more money, more possessions, or more awards. But no matter how much we get, we never know if what we desire will help us become our better selves or harvest more happiness. Eventually, we might very well put a huge amount of pressure on ourselves to strive for perfection. Overwhelmed by that pressure, we will feel frustrated and depressed if we don't achieve our goals. However, it can be a totally different story when we adopt a "good-enough" mindset. Creating a "good-enough" mindset that isn't filled with unattainable expectations will help us cultivate a sense of well-being. With such a mindset, we tend to feel content with the unfolding of our life and feel satisfied with where we are, because when we lower our expectations about our life, it will appear to be more beautiful.

However, I think this mindset may, more often than not, produce an adverse impact on greatness. Walking the "good-enough" road may be relaxing, but settling for the status quo isn't always the smartest decision and may stop us from becoming the best version of ourselves. When stuck in the good-enough-is-good-enough mindset, we will most likely lose our motivation to strive for excellence. While I do agree that perfection appears far-fetched or unrealistic, we should make every endeavor to achieve consistent improvement and to promote our abilities little by little. In this case, the "not-good-enough" mindset serves as a driving force pushing us forward.

Paradoxes in your eyes

Step

1

On the surface, a "good-enough" mindset isn't about striving to be great but about being at least OK with where one is and about accepting being "good enough." According to the author, however, this mindset may produce different results. Instead of being "good enough," people may become greater and happier than they expect. This appears to be rather paradoxical.

Step

2

- The more choices we have, the harder it is to choose.
When we are presented with more options, we may find ourselves crippled by indecision. We may weigh the opportunity costs associated with each particular item, which makes us less satisfied with what we choose and less able to make a decision. That's why sometimes another paradox that less is more may also hold water.
- The more you learn, the more you realize how little you know.
This is a very famous adage from Socrates. Learning will lead to more knowledge, but it may also create even more questions. That's why we feel that knowledge knows no bounds and what we learn is very finite.
- The more something scares you, the more you should probably do it.
Our fight-or-flight response tends to kick in during genuinely life-threatening or physically harmful activities, and in critical moments in our life. For instance, we should probably strike up a conversation with the one we have a crush on, cold-call somebody to land a new job, speak in the presence of a large audience, or be painfully honest with somebody. These are all things that make us scared because they are things that we're not sure we can do well. In that case, it's better to get down to doing them and conquer our fear.
- The more connected we get, the more isolated we feel.
In this information era, we have a wider spectrum of social media apps on the smartphone or the computer. Even though we live far from each other, we can still keep in contact and communicate more frequently than ever. However, research reveals a lack of face-to-face communication has led to an increase in loneliness and depression in the developed world over the past few decades.
- The more you're afraid to fail, the more likely you are to fail.
Fear of failure is something like a self-fulfilling prophecy (自我应验的预言). For example, if you are afraid of failure in your final exam, you may be dominated by negative emotions, say, anxiety, nervousness, and tension. This kind of negative emotions may produce an adverse impact on you when you are preparing for or sitting for the exam. As a result, the more anxious or scared you feel, the more likely you are to fail. Moreover, some students may put in less effort, thinking that no matter how hard they work, they will fail. This also contributes to the higher risk of failure.

Read and practice

Word building

- | | | |
|----------------|-----------------|---------------|
| 1. decorations | 2. oppression | 3. innovation |
| 4. confession | 5. contribution | 6. impression |

Expressions

- | | | |
|--------------------|------------------------|------------------|
| 1. run counter to | 2. roll off the tongue | 3. hold ... back |
| 4. string together | 5. chase after | 6. come up short |
| 7. add up | 8. was obsessed with | |

Language in use

1. should strive to live in the here and now
2. technology grows at an ever-increasing pace
3. the ability to map out the best route to success
4. feel content / satisfied with where you are
5. to make sustainable progress
6. prior to finding their direction in life

Read and translate

1. 不管你如何定义成功，它几乎是每个人都在追求的东西。
2. 当现实与你的期待和规划相背时，不要轻易放弃你的远大志向。
3. 远大志向不是永不失败，而是当你跌倒时，你依然能站起来。
4. 设定目标时，我们应该争取在现实性和挑战性之间取得平衡。
5. 发挥你真正的潜力很可能取决于一个因素：坚持。
6. 你越相信自己，你就越可能取得成功。

Translation of the passage

人生只要“差不多”，不必强求“了不起”

如果追求卓越成了你成功路上的拦路虎，那该怎么办？

“优秀是卓越的敌人”是最受欢迎的自我提升的表达方式之一。这是一本全球商业畅销书的第一句话，是另一本自我励志书的书名，也是许多成功的运动员秉持的信念。这话听起来很吸引人，而且朗朗上口，但它很可能是完全错误的。

有人告诉我们，为了应对当今世界日益增长的压力和不断加快的节奏，我们必须追求卓越、永不满足。这是通往成功的唯一途径。但这到底是为了什么？成功到底意味着什

么？焦虑和抑郁的发生率比以往任何时候都高。一些专家认为孤独和社会孤立已经普遍存在。三分之二的员工表示在工作中感到精疲力竭。当然，这肯定不是大家追求的那种成功。

一位东方哲学家曾提出，真正的成功意味着对人生历程感到心满意足。它意味着“在当下的工作和生活中找到快乐”。他所倡导的成功并不是一直努力追求卓越，而是至少要对自己的现状感到满意，接受自己足够好。有趣的是，不总是那么努力去追求卓越不仅是获得更多快乐的途径，而且是取得不断进步的途径。

因为你并不总觉得自己不够优秀，所以这种心态会提高自信并释放压力。由于你不觉得需要每天都付出艰苦卓绝的努力，所以这么做还能降低情绪和身体受伤的风险。随着时间的推移，你的表现会更加稳定。研究表明，从饮食到健身乃至创造力的各个方面的可持续进步并不是源于持续不断地保持卓越，而是源于一次又一次地表现得足够好。

刚刚打破马拉松世界纪录的埃利乌德·基普乔盖是一个极好的例子。他确实可以称得上是全世界最好的马拉松选手。然而，基普乔盖说他成功的关键并不是源于超负荷训练。他并不总是一心想着追求卓越。相反，他一直尽力做到足够好。最近他告诉媒体，在训练中，他几乎从不勉强自己使用超过体能极限的百分之八十，使用体能的百分之九十是他训练的上限。这使得基普乔盖能够连续数周持续训练。“我想带着放松心情跑步。”他说。

与许多努力却又未能打破马拉松世界纪录的其他运动员不同，基普乔盖从未迷恋过这个成绩。在他创纪录的比赛之前，当被问及他的心态时，他说：“确切地说，我只是想尽力跑出个人最好成绩。如果这一成绩是世界纪录，我将不胜荣幸。但我会视它为个人最好成绩。”基普乔盖把跑步放在它自身应有的位置。对他而言，跑步就在当下，而不是为了满足不断增长的期望。“当我跑步的时候，”他说，“我感觉很好，我头脑清醒。我想睡就睡，我很享受生活。”

这是一个悖论。“差不多”的心态很有可能成为卓越和快乐的关键。你对快乐的欲求越少，你就会越快乐。你越不需要表现得越好，你就表现得越好。试想你自己的生活，在你最快乐和表现最好的时候，你在努力吗？你在追求什么吗？还是你更像基普乔盖一样——脚踏实地，心平气和，满足于眼前事物？这并不意味着你不该向往有益的改变或进步，事实上恰恰相反。尽管这可能与当前的主要思潮背道而驰，但采用“差不多”的核心原则可能是让自己更加快乐、表现更加出色的最佳途径。

Unit project

Reference answers

Thank you for inviting us to give a presentation on how to make the best of college life. Our presentation is based on our interviews with three successful fourth-year college students. They are Li Lei, majoring in computer sciences, Wang Hong, majoring in Chinese literature, and Zhang Rui, majoring in civil engineering. All of the three students have won first-class scholarships; all of them are very active participants in social activities; and most important of all, all of them consider their college life rewarding and meaningful.

In our interviews, we asked each of them a series of questions, namely:

- What was your ambition in your freshman year?
- Have you realized your ambition in college?
- What was your biggest challenge in college and how did you deal with it?
- How did you map out the path to your successful college life?
- How did you balance your study and social life?
- How did you ensure your remarkable academic performance?
- How important is networking in college?
- How did you stay motivated in college?

Based on the information we have gathered from our interviews, we sum up a set of useful tips on how to achieve success in college in two major dimensions: studying and socializing.

In terms of studying, the following tips may be very useful to us.

1) Give priority to our academic work.

Courses in the first term will be particularly tough because they have a lot to do with materials that you have never seen before. Unlike high school, college expects us to build our education from the bottom up, rather than absorb whatever a teacher instills us with. This means much more work than we are used to. We should always prioritize our academic work over other activities. We should hang out with friends only after we are done with our assignments, term papers, or preparations for the finals. Remember procrastination (拖延) is always a thief of time. The more we procrastinate, the less likely we are to get things done. Therefore, we should manage our time effectively and efficiently in college; otherwise, we'll end up buried in a mountain of assignments due in the same week, which may lead to stress and burnout.

2) Set an academic goal.

If we don't set any academic goal, we might leave college wondering whether we've tried hard enough. Our academic goal doesn't necessarily have to be identical to that of our peers. We should try to be realistic when we set it, and balance it with other personal goals

we may have. Remember that getting through college isn't always about getting straight As or graduating *summa cum laude* (以优异的成绩毕业). It's about doing our best.

3) Develop great passion for something.

We need to take a moment to reflect on what we enjoy doing and studying, and what we're genuinely interested in. College is another step on the ladder of our life. We should prepare for our next step by discovering our passion for at least one particular thing, be it a field of academic research or a new hobby.

4) Turn self-doubt into positive charge.

Getting bad grades isn't the end of the world. Having a few negative thoughts isn't so bad, either. The truth is that an obsession with self-esteem can work against us. It's more helpful to embrace the fact that we are not perfect. Experiencing a little self-doubt can help us stay focused on more of the details and avoid mistakes. Self-doubt can also motivate us to work harder. It exists to remind us that we're learning and still have plenty of room for growth. That's fabulous.

In terms of socializing, the following tips may benefit us a lot.

1) Get involved in student activities.

This is obvious, but many students never explore these kinds of opportunities. Clubs are tailor-made for developing new friendships and getting access to information that might not be easily obtained elsewhere. Plus, they don't necessarily require much of our time. We can generally choose how often — and to what extent — we wish to participate in club or association activities.

2) Participate in volunteer work.

Contributing our time to good causes (公益事业) can reward us with positive memories and help improve our social skills. Moreover, according to a scientific study, doing good things and being generous can help release pressure and increase life expectancy.

At the end of our presentation, we would like to wish you all success in college.