

Discovering yourself

PASSAGE 1

Directions:

Read the following passage with 10 statements attached to it. Each statement contains information given in one of the paragraphs. Identify the paragraph from which the information is derived. You may choose a paragraph more than once. Each paragraph is marked with a letter.

阅读和练习实际用时 _____

正确答题数 _____

Maintain a healthy relationship with your parents

- A** Of course you love your parents – that’s a given (基本事实). But at times, maintaining the bond between parent and adult child can be as challenging as that between parent and teenager. These days, both of you are confronting new challenges – retirement or career changes, health issues, concerns about the future. It’s to be expected these issues will affect your relationship. Part of that evolution requires forging a new relationship, one between mature adults rather than “parent” and “child”. You already have the basic foundation – love and shared memories. Add mutual respect and common interests and you may find a more fulfilling relationship with your mother and your father than any you’ve had since childhood.
- B** Surely, some things never change – Mom might still offer her unnecessary opinions on your weight and wardrobe, and Dad might still only start a conversation if it has to do with your car. The key is to love the best parts of them and learn to accept the rest. Here are 12 ways to forge an adult relationship with your parents and enhance what might not always have been the strongest of bonds.
- C** If your parents still treat you like a kid, despite the fact that you have kids of your own, you may have to help them let you “grow up”. “Feeling and acting like an adult around your parents is the key to having an adult relationship with them,” says Tina

B. Tessina, PhD, a licensed psychotherapist (心理治疗师) in Long Beach, California. “If you treat them as fellow adults, they’re more likely to treat you like one.” A simple way to do this is to ask yourself a question before each interaction with them: “How would I act in this situation if Mom or Dad was a friend or an acquaintance?” Then behave accordingly.

- D** If your parents still treat you like you’re 6 or 16, it may feel funny to give up your role as the child. A good start is to model your conversations with Mom and Dad on those you have with friends, says Dr Tessina. “Don’t limit your conversations strictly to family memories, or gossip about family members, or your personal life,” she advises. There’s a whole wide world out there – why not explore it with Mom and Dad as you would with a friend? Current events, sports, work, local neighbourhood issues, or national politics are all fair game.
- E** When you’re dealing with your parents, laughter can be a lifesaver – both to help you handle the stress of dealing with sometimes bad-tempered individuals and to help you bond together. Tell a few jokes you know they’ll enjoy, share some comics from the paper or email with them, watch the Letterman show together. If you can laugh together, you’re doing OK.
- F** If you love your mom and dad but they drive you crazy, your resentment can eat away at your relationship. So don’t get angry silently. Communicate, with gentleness and respect. For instance, if your mom keeps calling you at work, tell her that your boss is starting to notice and, while you love talking to her during the day, it’s beginning to affect your job performance. Arrange a call you can both count on at a mutually convenient time.
- G** It is not wise to ask your parents’ advice or opinion unless you really want it. Sometimes, asking for a parent’s advice is really a way of asking for Mom or Dad’s approval. If that’s the case, remember that you’re an adult now, perfectly capable of choosing a living room carpet or a car on your own. If your parents are bent on offering you advice whether asked or not, smile, nod, and take it in. Focus on the fact that they have your best interest at heart. Then make your own choice – without guilt.
- H** Never ask your parents to help straighten out your latest personal or financial crisis. While you may depend on their emotional support, relying too much upon their resources, rather than your own, can lead to mutual resentment, says Dr Tessina. So get used to solving your problems, big or small, on your own. You’ll be amazed how good doing it all by yourself can make you feel – and what a positive effect it can have on your relationship with your parents.
- I** If your parents are older, look through old albums with them, asking them for stories about the people in the photos. “We help our parents discover the meaning in their lives by encouraging them to talk about their accomplishments, the high points in their lives, and the joys and sorrows they have experienced,” says Tom Swanson, PhD.

- J** It is likely that Mom is a busybody, but she always makes your favourite Christmas cookies. Dad is a bit of a stuffed shirt (妄自尊大的人), but just the other day, he came to your rescue when your car died at the mall. The point is, your parents still do things for you that deserve your notice – and gratitude.
- K** When you were a kid, did you and your dad share a passion for a particular football team? Did you and your mother spend time each summer preserving tomatoes? Make these happy memories the foundation for new, shared activities.
- L** Be honest about who you are and what you want. Maybe there are things about your growing up that your parents regret. But as long as you don't regret it, they have to adjust. Be clear about who you want to be and help your parents accept you on your terms.
- M** If your parents are the type to complain about you never calling, never visiting, forgetting an uncle's birthday, not sending enough pictures, or whatever annoys them that day, don't mind too much and feel guilty – unless you honestly regret the negligence. In which case, apologize immediately and seek a way to make compensation. Otherwise, let it roll off your back. You have no obligation to play parent-child guilt games. You are a mature, independent adult, and act on your own preference.
- N** Sometimes it's the grown-up kid who doesn't want to cut the rearing relationship off. If you are past 25 and still find it necessary to talk to Mom every night, or immediately turn to your dad for a house repair rather than your spouse, or automatically assume your parents will babysit the children whenever you need to be out, then you may be the problem, not your folks. They deserve freedom too.

(1,062 words)

- 1 Solving your personal and financial problems independently will have a positive effect on your relationship with your parents.
- 2 Your honesty to who you are and what you want helps your parents adjust to your growing up.
- 3 You should talk with your parents as you do with your friends on various topics in life.
- 4 Your overdependence on your parents about taking care of the kids means the deprivation of their freedom.
- 5 Properly handle the relationship between you and your parents with words instead of silence.
- 6 Try to make your own decisions even if your parents enjoy offering their advice.
- 7 New challenges to the parent-child relationship have come with changes of life on both sides.
- 8 Tell your parents you have noticed and are grateful for all their help.
- 9 Your adult-like behaviour may prevent your parents from treating you as a kid.
- 10 Sharing humour helps when dealing with ill-tempered parents.

PASSAGE 2

Directions:

Read the following passage with 10 statements attached to it. Each statement contains information given in one of the paragraphs. Identify the paragraph from which the information is derived. You may choose a paragraph more than once. Each paragraph is marked with a letter.

阅读和练习实际用时 _____

正确答题数 _____

Red dad, blue son

- A** The relationship between my conservative dad and me was going great. On the last night of our family reunion two years ago, my 62-year-old father and I walked along a beach in South Carolina, glasses of wine in our hands, soaked in the warm air and the full moon. I'm my dad's first child and only son, now married with three kids, a career, and a mortgage. From the surf, we could both see his grandchildren in the windows of the rented beach house. The moment for a toast had arrived.
- B** Somewhere along the way, my dad had come to believe that trying to sell me on his conservative politics was the equivalent of bonding. His opining, however, has always had the same effect on me: My jaw clenches, my back stiffens, and the charge of political discord transforms the most beautiful moon on the East Coast into a naked light bulb hanging in an interrogation room. Suddenly, I'm trapped with a right-wing authority who happens to be my dad.
- C** Our father-son differences date back to high school, when my dad, an officer in the US Coast Guard, personally wrote the essay for my application to a military academy, which I passionately opposed with a declaration that I was a "nonconformist" meant for unconventional pursuits. But the arguments we'd had about politics in recent years had been of a different intensity altogether.
- D** During phone calls and visits home, the day's news headlines were like a background hum growing louder and louder, overwhelming us. It would start innocently enough: My dad would shyly ask what I thought of the latest combat over gay marriage. "It's certainly a complicated issue," I'd say, as if trying to tiptoe (用脚尖走) past a sleeping dragon.
- E** Global warming, immigration, Iraq – it didn't matter the subject: Before long, we were both on our soapboxes (临时演讲台), red-faced and yelling. Hang ups were frequent. During weekend get-togethers, the simple act of rustling (发出沙沙声) a newspaper to

the special column or clicking my tongue at Fox News was enough to send my dad out of the room like a wounded animal. I'd sit on the couch, depressed and confused. My mom was left to mediate, trying to cool everybody down so we could at least have dinner together.

- F** In 2004, I had the bright idea of writing a book about the divisions between my father and me, how they related to the larger national political dialog. I typed up a sample chapter for publishers, full of scenes from our lives. I made some indirect references about the book to my father, but he somehow came to believe that I was showing respect to him. Far from it: I was painting him as a modern-day Archie Bunker, spewing (喷出) harsh opinions.
- G** Not long after, while babysitting my nephew, Dad found a copy of my proposal on my sister's computer while checking his email. My sister called me the next day, apologizing for having left it open on her desktop but also warning me that things were about to blow up.
- H** I didn't hear from Dad for several days, and every hour that passed loaded with more dread. For a couple of days, I thought we'd never speak again. When we finally did, it was a tense, emotional conversation. His voice was shaking. *How could you think these things about me? You think I'm stubborn and self-assertive?* I apologized sincerely, nearly in tears.
- I** Given the emotional opera of the election in which George W. Bush beat Al Gore in 2000, the consequences of our differences felt more significant than ever. It pained me to hear him say that he thought the war in Iraq was justified, for instance, or that women didn't have the right to choose. In my isolated New York world, friends whose parents shared their liberal political views talked about my father the Republican like he had an unfortunate medical condition.
- J** Something had to change in our relationship. I decided it was me.
- K** I forced myself to pay closer attention to my father's life. While he was occasionally aggressive in his rhetoric, in everyday life, he was a different person. Actually, he was probably the most open and tolerant person I knew, my supposedly tolerant friends included. He had a warm, southern hello for total strangers in my Brooklyn neighborhood, socialized with liberal retirees in his own North Carolina neighborhood, had a gay photographer friend in town with whom he traded camera tips, and spent every Wednesday delivering food to the housebound. It reminded me of the old saying: Liberals love humanity but dislike people; conservatives dislike humanity but love people.
- L** Over time, my dad's tolerance went from a puzzling outlier (局外人), to a more complex reality – and a personal challenge to my own biases. My dad forgave me for the things I wrote in the book proposal. It was a quiet and, to my mind, major act of love. If I

couldn't look past my own politics and extend a hand to my father now, who was less tolerant, he or I? And how important to the future of the United States of America was my winning an argument over taxes and deficits (赤字) with my dad anyway? It was the man I wanted to have a relationship with, not his political agenda.

M Bridging the divide required time and patience from both of us. We slowly began to migrate our conversations to new subjects, carefully finding topics that didn't naturally lead us down the warpath: his interest in photography, the successes and trials of my sisters, home repair, and raising children. It was awkward at first, but after a while, I began to look forward to talking about real estate values or the price of heating fuel. And when politics did crop up, as time went by, I noticed we both came to agree on something: That polarization (两极分化), so corrosive to our own relationship, was corroding everything else as well. "I can't stand to watch the constant unreasonable partisan (党派) arguing anymore," he told me recently.

N So when that night on a South Carolina beach was threatened with a sudden burst of Rush Limbaugh, I took a deep breath and decided only to listen, not to fight. It's not that I agreed with him. Mid-sentence, my dad caught himself too. He took a deep breath, sighed. We both just listened to the surf, falling into a temporary spell. When we came to, we were standing in this glorious place, that moon overhead, the whole country at our backs. A father, a son, a real family – a better union.

(1,097 words)

- 1 In his book about the father-son divisions, the writer portrayed his father as an opinionated person.
- 2 The writer felt uncomfortable with his father's conservative politics all the time.
- 3 The father reacted fiercely over the comments on him by the writer in the book proposal.
- 4 Both the father and the son gradually picked new topics in their conversations.
- 5 The father-son relationship improved on the last night of their family reunion.
- 6 The writer learned that it was insignificant to win his father in an argument.
- 7 The weekend get-togethers always ended in a heated discussion between the writer and his father.
- 8 The writer found his father was on the whole open, tolerant and warm-hearted.
- 9 The writer was cautious when dealing with his father's questions on current events.
- 10 Both the father and the son managed to hold back their intense feeling on the night on a South Carolina beach.

PASSAGE 3

Directions:

Read the following passage with 10 statements attached to it. Each statement contains information given in one of the paragraphs. Identify the paragraph from which the information is derived. You may choose a paragraph more than once. Each paragraph is marked with a letter.

阅读和练习实际用时 _____

正确答题数 _____

Figuring out one's personal identity

- A** Personal identity is an often misunderstood concept. It's not just a matter of name, rank, and serial number. Each individual has an idea of who they are and who they are supposed to be. Often these two are in complete disagreement. They may have one or two areas of their lives they could tell you all about, their job, their families, where they went to college, but when it comes to who they really are they are completely clueless. It isn't their fault, of course. Our identities are not something we consciously set out to shape.
- B** Figuring out one's identity is not as easy as it sounds. It takes removing the images of what should be that society has placed on a person. It takes looking at what we want out of life and why. It also takes patience. The first step to figuring out your identity is to stop being so hard on yourself. Make the promise right now that no matter what you find out about yourself along the way you'll accept it and not try to change it just because it doesn't fit. Not everything about your identity will fit in perfectly with the life you have. That's OK.
- C** First grab a pen; the journey to self-discovery rarely starts any other way than taking into account what you already know. Now write down what you imagine a perfect day in your perfect life would be like. If you don't have a favourite type of house you want to live in, that's OK; if you don't have a specific kind of car you want to own, that's OK as well. This isn't about finding the gaps in your dreams, not yet. For now it's about the ideas themselves. Suppose all you want is to wake up to a spotless house. Well that's a good thing to want. If you know you'd like that house to be an old Victorian-style three-storey house with a fireplace and candles on the coffee table, that's also great. Just more about who you are, one more piece of your identity to track down.

- D** Once you have your ideal day written out, spend a little time reflecting on it. The things that are missing aren't quite as important as the things that are there. Suppose you go out for coffee and get it exactly the way you want. Well, when did you start liking your coffee that way? What events in your life had an effect on it? For example, if at one point in your life your best friend took you out and got this brand of coffee for you, even though you didn't drink coffee, and you loved it. That is a part of your identity. That is one of the things that made you who you are. It is showing itself in irrelevant details, but it is still a part of the overall picture. Go through what you have written and pick out the little details that make it specific to your perfect day, the things that speak to who you really are. These are your past, these are how you got where you are; they are important parts of you that you might not have given conscious thought to in years.
- E** Now that you have spent some time figuring out what your likes are, look at the life you are living. If you are a full-time mom who feels guilty that your house isn't spotless when guests come over, maybe it's time to figure out why that matters so much to you. Did your mother, or perhaps, mother-in-law keep a spotless house? Are you comparing your cleaning style to theirs and finding that it just doesn't measure up? Stop letting that bother you. If the person who walked through your front door has a problem with how you keep house, just let them go back home and not worry about it. On the other hand, try to describe exactly what causes your feelings. If it is because you have been trying to live up to someone else's standards instead of your own, maybe it's time you reconsider the standards. Forget what your mom's house looks like. What are you comfortable with? This is what your standard really is. This is part of who you truly are.
- F** Go through each of the areas of your life, family, career, hobbies and interests. Look at what you think you should be and what you are. If you find that the roles that you think you have to meet and the ones you actually care about aren't the same, it's time to change the standards.
- G** To find who you really are you are going to have to be honest with yourself. Recognize the parts of your personality that you have been trying to change and learn to be OK with them the way they are. If you find you always do something a certain way even though you really think that it would be better if you tried something else, try it anyway. If it doesn't work you can always go back to the way it was tomorrow. Your life isn't in the past. It isn't in the future. It's happening right now. You can choose to be true to yourself today, or you can wait for 30 years to figure out what would have made you happy now. The choice is really yours. Spend a little time getting to know yourself. Try the things you've told yourself not to because you think you wouldn't be good enough.
- H** To figure out your personal identity really isn't that hard. You just have to be honest enough to accept the parts of you that you wish were different simply because someone else thinks they should be different. You're not a piece of a puzzle pre-cut to fit into the

perfect image. You are an individual. Spend a little time getting to know what makes you one.

(983 words)

- 1 Self-discovery is concerned with the ideas rather than the gaps in your dream.
- 2 Your identity is partly demonstrated in the way you are living a life.
- 3 To figure out your identity, you have to accept whatever you find out about yourself.
- 4 You don't have to change yourself sometimes as you are supposed to.
- 5 To find out one's true identity, one should remove all the imposed images.
- 6 Some details in your life can reveal your identity though they seem irrelevant.
- 7 When someone doesn't agree with the way you keep your house, you shouldn't mind so much.
- 8 Misconceptions on an individual emerge over who they are and who they are supposed to be.
- 9 You have to modify your criteria, if you think what you have to achieve and what you really care about don't match.
- 10 The discovery of yourself usually starts with what you already know about yourself.

PASSAGE 4

Directions:

Read the following passage, and then answer the questions. For questions 1-7, choose the best answer from the four choices marked A, B, C and D. For questions 8-10, complete the sentences with the information given in the passage.

阅读和练习实际用时 _____

正确答题数 _____

Discover yourself in 20 minutes

Popular culture has got hold of this idea that you need to travel around Europe and possibly even experiment with crazy substances to “find yourself”. Although all this travelling might expand you, I think it is actually a lot easier to discover your identity. In fact, I think it should only take about 20 minutes.

Critical for growth

In order to improve you must first ascertain where you are and then how you want to be. If you aren't sure where you are, it is impossible to start making movements towards where you want to be. A lot of pop psychology tells you to emphasize the positive and push aside the negative, but unfortunately without first recognizing the potentially negative you can't fix it.

I had an interesting conversation with a friend recently about this idea of your own identity. I likened (将……比作) relationships to selling a product, where the product is you. I pointed out that, unfortunately, no matter how fancy your ad campaign is, if people are unsure what the product is they will be hesitant to buy it.

By determining exactly what product you are selling, along with its features and weaknesses, you will unknowingly market this product to whoever you meet. Because most people aren't quite sure what product they are selling they can't possibly market it effectively.

But when you know exactly what you are selling then you can start to present yourself in a way that will attract people who are interested in buying this product. Of course this is true of all types of human relationships, be they friendship, business or intimate.

Have 20 minutes to spare?

Start the exercise by simply creating a list of all the attributes and ways you define yourself on a piece of paper. Now it is easy to make a fairly short list describing pretty obvious attributes, but I think you need to get a little more depth. Keep writing on your

list until it has at least 100 to 200 points about yourself. I did this exercise a few days ago and I found that the first 50 points or so were relatively easy, but the last 25 caused me to really think deep and hard.

Write down items that describe anything that you would associate with your identity. This means achievements, failures, strengths, weaknesses, personality traits, interests, hopes, past, future etc. I'm fairly young so I would argue that my list would probably be short compared to people who have lived longer. Keep writing until you can't think of anything more. Then write another 25 points.

Write the good and the bad

This list is not a résumé or a way of perceiving yourself in a positive light. This is a method of determining exactly what your current identity is, the good, the bad and the ugly. If there are parts of you that you dislike, write them down too. You will be the only person reading this piece of paper, so get everything out there.

You might feel uncomfortable writing down negative aspects of yourself. You may have wanted to push some of them away or avoid them. But part of discovering yourself is also finding the parts that maybe you dislike, are afraid of or even hate.

When you write these things down, realize that they are a part of you too. Accept the truth that these are components of your identity. Uncovering these parts can be the most difficult, but it is absolutely necessary if you want a clear identity that can be improved upon.

Look at your list

When you look at your list, which will likely be several pages long, you may be shocked at just how large and complex your identity is. Your current identity has hundreds of interrelated factors that create your life. Some of them you might not like, others you might feel incredibly proud of.

The next step is to get complete acceptance of this list. If you don't feel the list is complete, go back and add more to it, but ultimately you must look at your immense list of qualities and accept that this is who you are right now, in this very moment.

Improve it

Now that you have a comprehensive list of your identity, everything is out in the open. No longer are parts of yourself veiled, hidden from view. With your current identity precise and clear, the true work begins. This is the work of crafting exactly what you want from your identity. Make it the way you want it to be and determine how to express it in the best way possible.

When I was discussing this idea with a friend, I compared all this to the case of a product. You were nothing, I pointed out, but a blender (搅拌机), responsible for making a mixture. Up until this point you might have realized you had just a few basic elements or

materials, but you weren't sure exactly what you were. Upon realizing you are a blender as such, you can now go about starting with what might be an ordinary blender and making the best out of it.

You need to do the same thing with your identity. Find the parts of yourself that you didn't like and begin the process of changing them. Find the parts of yourself that you did like and emphasize them even more throughout your identity. One of the things I discovered was how open I was to trying new things. I feel that this aspect needs to be emphasized more in my own identity.

Don't become a toaster!

Back on to my silly household appliance (家用器具) metaphor of human identity, I think there can sometimes be the temptation to turn your identity into a universal product that everyone wants. So instead of just being a great blender, you also want to be a great toaster and possibly a microwave. Aside from the difficulty in adding all these features, you end up being a neutral product nobody really wants to buy.

Part of discovering your identity is in determining the best way to market that identity. Of course not everyone wants a blender, but coming up with a message that best illustrates the benefits of being a blender will not only improve your relationships, but make you more secure within your own identity.

By finding your identity, improving it to where you want to be and discovering the best way to project that identity to yourself and others, I think you are on your first steps to creating a life you really want.

(1,103 words)

- 1 To improve yourself, you should first recognize _____.
 - A your past
 - B your dream
 - C your positive aspects
 - D your negative aspects
- 2 People should know well the product they are selling in order to _____.
 - A produce a fancy advertisement
 - B market it effectively
 - C present its major features
 - D drive a hard bargain
- 3 What is a simple way to have a clear picture of your identity?
 - A Presenting your ideas.
 - B Listing your attributes.
 - C Uncovering your weak points.
 - D Comparing yourself with others.

- 4 All of the following items are associated with your identity EXCEPT _____.
- A your relation with the people around
 - B your personality traits and interests
 - C your strengths and weaknesses
 - D your successes and failures
- 5 You can write everything down on the list because _____.
- A others will get to know you better
 - B you will know what you want to be
 - C that is the way to make yourself known
 - D nobody else has the chance to read it
- 6 If you want to have a clear idea of your identity it is absolutely necessary for you to _____.
- A overcome the negative aspects
 - B evaluate the positive points
 - C find out your own defects
 - D sort out your major merits
- 7 With a clear image of your identity, you will first start by working out _____ from it.
- A where you are
 - B what you can do
 - C what you want
 - D who you want to be
- 8 You should place great emphasis on the attributes you like _____.
- 9 You should resist the temptation to be both a blender and a toaster, as nobody wants to buy _____.
- 10 You are beginning to make a desirable life if you know your identity and know how to _____ to yourself and others.