

## CONTENTS

# 目录

<b>Unit 1</b> Life and logic .....	1
<b>Unit 2</b> Secrets to beauty .....	13
<b>Unit 3</b> Being entrepreneurial .....	25
<b>Unit 4</b> Nature: To worship or to conquer .....	37
<b>Unit 5</b> Why culture counts .....	49
<b>Unit 6</b> Gender difference .....	61
<b>Unit 7</b> Energy and food crises .....	73
<b>Unit 8</b> Passion guides life choices .....	85
大学英语四级考试阅读理解模拟试题 1 .....	97
大学英语四级考试阅读理解模拟试题 2 .....	107
<b>KEYS</b> .....	119





UNIT

1

# Life and logic

## Passage 1

**Directions:** In this section, there is a passage with 10 blanks. There is a word bank following the passage. Read the passage carefully and select one word for each blank from the word bank. You may NOT use any of the words more than once.

### Evolving concepts of human nature

For most thinkers since the Greek philosophers, it was self-evident that there is something called human nature, something that constitutes the essence of man. There were various views about what constitutes it, but there was 1. \_\_\_\_\_ that such an essence exists – that is to say, that there is something by virtue of which man is man. Thus man was 2. \_\_\_\_\_ as a rational being, as a social animal, an animal that can make tools, or a symbol-making animal.

More recently, this traditional view has begun to be questioned. One reason for this change was the increasing emphasis given to the historical approach to man. An examination of the history of humanity suggests that people in our epoch are so different from those in previous times that it seems untenable to 3. \_\_\_\_\_ that human beings in every age have had in common something that can be called “human nature.” The historical approach was reinforced, particularly in the United States, by studies in the field of cultural anthropology. The study of 4. \_\_\_\_\_ people has discovered such a diversity of customs, values, feelings, and thoughts that many anthropologists arrived at the concept that man is born as a blank sheet of paper on which each culture writes its text.

Another factor 5. \_\_\_\_\_ to the tendency to deny the assumption of a fixed human nature is that the concept has so often been 6. \_\_\_\_\_ as a shield behind which the most inhuman acts are committed. In the name of human nature, for example, Aristotle and most thinkers up to the 18th century defended slavery. Or in order to prove the rationality and necessity of the capitalist form of society, scholars have tried to make a case for acquisitiveness, competitiveness, and selfishness as innate

human traits. Popularly, one refers 7. \_\_\_\_\_ to “human nature” in accepting the inevitability of such undesirable human behaviors as greed, murder, cheating, and lying.

Another reason for 8. \_\_\_\_\_ about the concept of human nature probably lies in the influence of evolutionary thinking. Once man came to be seen as developing in the process of evolution, the idea of a substance which is contained in his essence seemed 9. \_\_\_\_\_. Yet I believe it is precisely from an evolutionary 10. \_\_\_\_\_ that we can expect new insight into the problem of the nature of man.

A assume

B cynically

C primitive

D standpoint

E skepticism

F unrealistic

G arriving

H agreement

I contributing

J defined

K assumption

L denied

M reasonable

N abused

O rationally

**Directions:** In this section, there is a short passage followed by some questions or incomplete statements. For each of them there are four choices marked A, B, C and D. Read the passage carefully. Then decide on the best choice.

### Self-help: Forget positive thinking; try positive action

Traditional self-help wisdom often emphasizes changing one's thoughts to enhance life quality. The prevailing belief suggests that positive thinking leads to happiness and success. However, recent research challenges this notion, indicating that merely envisioning success may not be as effective as previously thought. In contrast, a groundbreaking concept, known as the "As If" principle, offers a practical and scientifically-backed strategy for personal transformation.

Proposed by Victorian thinker William James in the late 19th century, the "As If" principle suggests a two-way relationship between behavior and emotion. James argued that behavior could influence emotion, challenging the conventional belief that emotions dictate behavior. Despite its potential, James' theory was largely overlooked for decades, as self-help literature predominantly focused on altering thought patterns.

In the 1970s, psychologist James Laird conducted experiments supporting James' theory. Volunteers, by adopting specific facial expressions, demonstrated the ability to influence their emotions. For instance, smiling made them happier, while clenching their teeth made them angrier. Subsequent research expanded the applicability of the "As If" principle to various aspects of life.

This principle also extends to willpower. Participants, when tensing their muscles as if preparing for action, experienced heightened motivation and made choices aligned with their goals. Notably, these behavioral shifts were accompanied by measurable chemical changes, such as elevated testosterone levels.

Harvard psychology professor Ellen Langer illustrated the "As If" principle's impact on aging in a 1979 study. Men in their 70s, encouraged to act as if they were 20 years

younger, witnessed improvements in physical and mental health, including dexterity, speed of movement, memory, blood pressure, eyesight, and hearing.

In challenging the traditional approach to personal development, the “As If” principle offers a practical and scientifically grounded alternative. By behaving as if one is already the person they aspire to become, individuals can achieve transformative changes in their thoughts and feelings. This approach marks a departure from conventional positive thinking, presenting a powerful tool for lasting personal change.

In conclusion, the “As If” principle, proposed by William James over a century ago, stands as a revolutionary approach to personal transformation. Embracing positive action over positive thinking, individuals can unlock the potential for significant and enduring change in various facets of their lives.

1. According to the passage, which of the following challenges the prevailing belief in self-help wisdom?
  - A The recent controversies in psychology.
  - B The groundbreaking research findings.
  - C The emergence of new self-help gurus.
  - D The contradictory statements from James Laird.
2. How does the “As If” principle differ from traditional self-help wisdom?
  - A It emphasizes the importance of positive thinking.
  - B It challenges traditional views on the role of emotions.
  - C It encourages individuals to envision their success.
  - D It advocates positive action over positive thinking.
3. According to the passage, why does the author mention the experiments conducted by psychologist James Laird?
  - A To challenge the effectiveness of positive thinking.
  - B To highlight the overlooked theories of William James.
  - C To support the application of the “As If” principle.
  - D To criticize the field of psychology.

4. According to the passage, what measurable chemical changes accompanied the participants' behavioral shifts in the willpower experiments?
- A Increased blood pressure.
  - B Elevated testosterone levels.
  - C Reduced cortisol levels.
  - D Enhanced dopamine levels.
5. What is suggested about the potential of the "As If" principle in personal development according to the passage?
- A It is only effective for specific age groups.
  - B It offers a powerful tool for lasting personal change.
  - C It contradicts the theories of William James.
  - D It focuses solely on positive thinking strategies.



**Directions:** In this section, there is a passage followed by 10 statements. 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.

### Destructive faults in our way of thinking

- A The human mind is wonderful and powerful, but it's far from perfect. There are several common judgment errors that it's prone to make. In the field of psychology these are known as cognitive biases, or fallacies in reasoning.
- B Over the past few months I've become fascinated by these biases and fallacies. They are the ones I repeatedly notice in myself and am always struggling with. My hope is that you will use the information in this article to pinpoint these destructive patterns in your own thinking, and break free from them before they send you spiraling down the wrong path.
- C **Negative self-fulfilling prophecies.** A self-fulfilling prophecy is a prediction that motivates a person to take actions that cause the prediction to come true. This kind of thinking often tears relationships apart and causes people to fail at their goals. Here are two typical examples: 1) A man believes that his relationship with his new girlfriend is "never going to last," so he stops putting effort into the relationship and pulls away emotionally. A month later the relationship fails. 2) An intelligent undergraduate in the field of health convinces himself that he "doesn't have what it takes" to become a doctor, so he never completes the prerequisites for medical school, and thus never becomes a doctor.
- D **Only taking credit for positive outcomes.** This destructive thinking pattern occurs when we take full credit for our success, but deny responsibility for our failure. A perfect example of this can be witnessed in school classrooms across the globe. When students receive a good grade, they often attribute it to their intelligence and their excellent study habits. But when they get a bad grade, they

attribute some of their failure to a bad teacher, an unfair set of test questions, or a subject matter that “isn’t needed in the real world anyway.” The bottom line is that in order for a person to grow emotionally, they must be willing to take full responsibility for all of their actions and outcomes – success and failure alike.

- E Believing we are immune to temptation.** We have far less control over our impulsive desires than we often believe. Drug addiction is an extreme example of this. Many addicts believe they can quit anytime they want, but in reality they are simply lying to themselves. But you don’t have to be an addict to be vulnerable to temptation. Lots of smart people end up impulsively giving in to temptation simply because it’s the easiest way to get rid of it. It sounds ridiculous, but it’s true. If someone wants to get rid of hunger pain, the easiest way is to eat. Restraining from impulsive behavior in the face of temptation is not easy; it takes a great deal of self-control. So be careful, because when we have an inflated sense of control over our impulses, we tend to overexpose ourselves to temptation, which in turn promotes the impulsive behavior we want to avoid.
- F Passing a broad judgment from an isolated incident.** An inaccurate first impression is a decent example of this one. It’s about our natural human tendency to evaluate a person or situation from a bird’s-eye view, and then presume to know enough to pass a reasonable judgment. This happens a lot in the corporate working world. A newer employee might show up late to work after experiencing legitimate car trouble, but their boss immediately becomes suspicious that they are not committed and responsible, and treats them as such for several weeks thereafter. The obvious solution here is to look at the big picture before you start pointing fingers or making assumptions.
- G Believing we can control the uncontrollable.** This thinking fallacy occurs when people begin to believe that they have some kind of direct influence or power over an external event that is completely random. It is especially evident in the minds of amateur gamblers, especially those who have had a recent string of good luck. For example, if you flipped a coin and asked someone to guess heads or tails, and they got it right 10 times in a row, they might begin to believe that their good luck

is confirmation that they have control over the outcome of each flip. But the truth is that there is always a 50% probability of their answer being correct, and their 10 guesses were pure luck.

- H Ignoring information that does not support a belief.** Psychologists commonly refer to this as the confirmation bias. We as human beings naturally tend to look for information that confirms and supports our beliefs, and we tend to overlook information that does not. We are selective in the evidence we choose to collect so that we don't have to challenge our way of thinking, because it's easier not to. This destructive thinking trap is very common, and it can have detrimental (有害的) effects on our productivity when we make big decisions based on false information.
- I Beginner's optimism.** Beginner's optimism is the human tendency to underestimate the time required to complete an unfamiliar task. It occurs due to a lack of planning and research on behalf of someone who is excited about doing something they have never done before. In other words, when we get assigned a new task that we are anxious to get started on, instead of delaying the start time to accurately evaluate the level of difficulty and resources required, we simply guess and begin. Thus, our expectation of the workload is based on raw optimism instead of past experience and reliable data. And it all backfires on us a little later when we find ourselves kneeling deep in work we are unprepared for.
- J Rebelling simply to prove personal freedom.** Although more common in children, this thinking fallacy can affect people of any age. It's basically a person's urge to do something they have been told not to do, for fear that their freedom of choice is being taken away from them. This person may not even want to do whatever they are doing to rebel; however, the simple fact that they are not supposed to do it motivates them to do so anyway. The tactic of reverse psychology is a commonly used method of exploiting this thinking fallacy.
- K Judging a person's capabilities based solely on the way they look.** This happens thousands of times a day worldwide when one person assumes something about another person based on their immediate appearance. For example, someone

might see a tall, well-groomed man in his early 50s, wearing a business suit, and instantly assume he is successful and reliable, even though there is zero concrete evidence to support this assumption. Bottom line: You can't judge a book by its cover.

**L Trying to diminish losses by continuing to pursue a previous failure.**

Sometimes called the sunk cost fallacy, this is a thinking fault that motivates us to continue to support a previously unsuccessful endeavor. We justify our decision to continue investing in this failed endeavor based on our cumulative prior investment, despite new evidence suggesting that the cost, starting today, of continuing to pursue it outweighs the expected benefit. The logical thing to do would be for us to cut our losses and change our course of action. However, due to the sunk costs we have already invested, we feel committed to the endeavor, so we invest even more time, money and energy into it, hoping that our additional investment will reverse the outcome. But it never will.

1. The misconception of controlling impulsive desires can lead to vulnerability and overexposure to temptation.
2. The confirmation bias leads people to selectively seek information that supports their beliefs while, overlooking conflicting evidence.
3. Cognitive biases generally stem from the imperfections of the powerful human mind.
4. Making assumptions about a person's capabilities based on appearance is a common yet inaccurate practice.
5. Individuals often take credit for success but avoid responsibility for failure, exemplified in academic settings.
6. Believing negative predictions can result in self-fulfilling actions, impacting relationships and goals.

7. The fallacy of thinking that people can control random events occurs usually in amateur gambling.
8. The urge to rebel against restrictions, even when the action may not be encouraged, is influenced by reverse psychology.
9. Underestimating the time required for unfamiliar tasks stems from a lack of planning and reliance on raw optimism.
10. Instead of making broad judgments from isolated incidents, it is advisable to examine the problem from a global perspective and avoid drawing excessive conclusions from a single inaccurate impression.

## Writing

**Directions:** Write an essay that begins with the sentence “In an era of information explosion, it is vitally important to develop the ability to think critically and make rational choices.” You should write at least 150 words but no more than 200 words.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---