

Unit Four



Get Started

- Read the following background notes before class and be prepared for classroom activities.

👁 **Bio-sketch of the author:** Anne Roiphe is an American feminist author. Born in New York City on December 25, 1935, Roiphe grew up in an affluent (富裕的) Jewish family. Her father was an alcoholic and womanizer (沉溺于女色的人) and her mother was an abused wife who had difficulty coping with daily life. Consequently much of Roiphe's upbringing was left to her nanny (保姆), who was dismissed after she was deemed no longer necessary. In 1957, Anne Roiphe graduated from Sarah Lawrence College in southern Westchester County, New York. Although she dreamed of becoming a writer, she followed the cultural norm at the time of marriage and children. Her husband was a writer and increasingly an alcoholic as well. By 1963 she could no longer put up with the unhappy marriage and the horrors of her parents' relationship, she divorced her husband, and then got remarried in 1967.

Her life experience must have contributed a lot to the shaping of her feminist ideas. Her principal contribution to feminism lies in her argument about a woman's right to enjoy motherhood. In her non-fiction book *Fruitful: A Memoir of Modern Motherhood* (1996), Roiphe argues that for married women, although daycare may seem to be a solution to balancing the desire for family and that for career, it robs them of many of the joys and satisfactions of spending time with their children.

Anne Roiphe published her first novel, *Digging Out*, in 1967. Her second novel, *Up the Sandbox* (1970), became a national best-seller. She has since published seven novels and two memoirs, while contributing essays and reviews to a number of journals and newspapers. From 1997 to 2002, she served as a columnist for *The New York Observer*. Her daughter, Katie Roiphe, is also a well-known cultural critic and feminist author.

- 👁 **About the text:** In the essay “Why Marriages Fail,” Anne Roiphe poses a question to the reader: “What has happened to us that close to one-half of all marriages are destined for the divorce courts?” She then presents a series of interconnected reasons for the current high divorce rate. Some of the reasons that she lists for divorce include unrealistic expectations, different “habits and attitudes that developed in childhood,” “concern and tension about money,” “the cultural changes” that “brought on in recent years by the women’s movement and sexual revolution,” “realities of life” that “erode the visions of marital bliss,” and lack of communication. She also makes clear some of the essential requirements for a happy and lasting marriage. Indeed, Anne Roiphe seems to have a remarkable insight into what affects the relationship between a man and a woman. After reading the essay, one might think of what the Irish playwright Oscar Wilde once humorously said about marriage: “Marriage is the triumph of imagination over intelligence. Second marriage is the triumph of hope over experience.”
- 👁 **Wedding vows:** Wedding vows are a very important part of the wedding ceremony. They serve as a promise of the wedded couple’s devotion to each other. If the bride (新娘) and bridegroom (新郎) decide to get married in a more traditional setting such as a church, a priest normally presides over the ceremony and helps with the wording of the vows. Then the priest pronounces them to be husband and wife. Here are

some samples of traditional vows (not necessarily religious):

- 1) I, (name), take you (Bride / Groom), to be my (wife / husband), to have and to hold from this day forward, for better or for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health to love and to cherish, from this day forward until death do us part.
- 2) I, (name), take you (name), to be my lawfully wedded (husband / wife), my faithful partner, my friend and my love from this day onwards.
- 3) I, (name), choose you (name) to be my (husband / wife), to respect you in your successes and in your failures, to care for you in sickness and in health, to nurture you, and to grow with you throughout the seasons of life.

👁 **Sigmund Freud** /'zi:kmont frɔɪd/: Sigmund Freud (1856–1939) was an Austrian doctor who developed a new system for understanding the way that people's minds work, and a new way of treating mental illness called psychoanalysis (精神分析). He discovered the unconscious (= the part of your mind where there are thoughts and feelings that you do not realize you have). He believed that bad experiences that people have as children can affect their mental health as adults, and that by talking to a mentally ill person about their past life and feelings, the hidden causes of their illness can be found. He wrote *The Interpretation of Dreams* (《梦的解析》) and *The Ego and the Id* (《自我与本我》). His ideas, especially those about the importance of sex, have had a very great influence on the way that people think.



Read and Explore

TEXT

Why Marriages Fail

Anne Roiphe

1 **no ... truth** does not sound true any more

2 **“Happily ever after”**

This is a stock phrase signifying “a happy ending.” It is often used in fairy tales as an ending and occasionally as the title of a work in literature, film, music, and television.

3 **“Till ... apart”** This is an allusion to wedding vows.

1 These days so many marriages end in divorce that our most sacred vows *no longer ring with truth*¹. “*Happily ever after*”² and “*Till death do us apart*”³ are expressions that seem on the way to becoming obsolete. Why has it become so hard for couples to stay together? What goes wrong? What has happened to us that close to one-half of all marriages are destined for the divorce courts? How could we have created a society in which 42 percent of our children will grow up in single-parent homes? If statistics could only measure loneliness, regret, pain, loss of self-confidence and fear of

(黑正体表示“一般要求”的词汇；★表示“较高要求”的词汇；▲表示“更高要求”的词汇；白正体表示超纲词汇)

end in [no pass.] have as a result at the end [无被动语态] 结果为…，以…结束(告终)

vow ★ /vaʊ/ n. [(of)] a solemn promise or declaration of intention [常与 of 连用] 誓约，誓言；许愿

ring /rɪŋ/ vi. [(with, to)] be filled with a continuous high sound [常与 with 或 to 连用]

回响；响彻

obsolete /'ɒbsəli:t/ a. no longer used; completely out of date 已废弃的；已完全过时的

destined ★ /'destɪnd/ a. [(for)] intended, esp. by fate, for some special purpose [常与 for 连用] 预定的；注定的，命定的

future, *the numbers would be beyond quantifying*⁴.

② Even though each broken marriage is unique, we can still find the common perils, the common causes for marital despair. Each marriage has crisis points and each marriage tests endurance, the capacity for both intimacy and change. Outside pressures such as job loss, illness, infertility, trouble with a child, care of aging parents and all the other plagues of life hit marriage the way hurricanes blast our shores. Some marriages survive these storms and others don't. Marriages fail, however, not simply because of the outside weather but because the inner climate becomes too hot or too cold, too turbulent or too stupefying.

③ When we look at how we choose our partners and what expectations exist at the tender beginnings of romance, some of the reasons for disaster become quite clear. We all select with unconscious accuracy a mate who will recreate with

4 the ... quantifying the numbers would be too big to be calculated

quantify ★ /'kwɒntɪfaɪ/ *vt.* *fml* measure (an amount or quantity) 〔正式〕确定…的数量；用数量表示；测量

peril ▲ /'perɪl/ *n.* sth. that causes danger 招致危险的事物

marital ▲ /'mæɪtəl/ *a.* of marriage (有关)婚姻的

infertility /ɪnfə'tɪləti/ *n.* inability to produce young 不生育

plague /pleɪɡ/ *n.* a person or thing causing trouble or irritation 令人痛苦(或烦恼、厌烦等)的人(或事物)；烦恼，苦恼，烦扰

hurricane ★ /'hʌrɪkən/ *n.* a violent storm with a strong fast circular wind in the western Atlantic ocean (尤指大西洋西部的)飓风

blast /'blɑːst/ *vt.* *lit* cause to dry up and die, esp. by great heat or cold, or by lightning 〔文〕(以高热、严寒或闪电)使枯萎；摧毁

turbulent ★ /'tɜːbjʊlənt/ *a.* violent and disorderly; having a restless or uncontrolled quality 狂暴的；动乱的，骚动的；猛烈而不稳定的

stupefying /'stjuːpɪfaɪɪŋ/ *a.* making unable to think or feel 使无知觉的；使无感觉的

unconscious /ˌʌn'kɒnʃəs/ *a.* not intentional 无意识的；不知不觉的

mate /meɪt/ *n.* one of a male-female pair, usu. of animals 配偶，伴侣(通常指动物)

recreate /rɪˈkriːeɪt/ *vt.* make a copy of 重新创造

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us the emotional patterns of our first homes. Dr. Carl A. Whitaker, a marital therapist and emeritus professor of psychiatry at the University of Wisconsin explains, "From early childhood on, each of us carried models for marriage, femininity, masculinity, motherhood, fatherhood and all the other family roles." Each of us falls in love with

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a mate who has qualities of our parents, who will help us rediscover both the psychological happiness and miseries of our past lives. We may think we have found a man unlike Dad, but then he turns to drink or drugs, or loses his job over and over again or sits silently in front of the T.V. just the way Dad did. A man may choose a woman who doesn't like kids just like his mother or who gambles away the family savings just like his mother. Or he may choose a slender wife who seems unlike his obese mother but then turns out to have other addictions that destroy their mutual happiness.

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④ A man and a woman bring to their marriage bed a blended

therapist /'θerəpɪst/ *n.* a specialist in a particular branch of therapy (医学上某一科的) 治疗专家

emeritus /i'merɪtəs/ *a.* (*often cap.*) (of a professor or other university teacher) no longer holding office but keeping one's title (常用大写) (教授、大学教师) 退职后仍保留头衔的; 荣誉退休的

psychiatry ★ /saɪ'kaɪətri/ *n.* [U] the study and treatment of diseases of the mind, esp. when considered as a branch of medicine 精神病 (治疗) 学

femininity ▲ /femɪ'nɪnəti/ *n.* [U] *usu. apprec* features and qualities considered to be typical of

women, esp. qualities that are gentle, delicate, and pretty [一般褒] 女子气(质); 阴柔, 娇柔

masculinity /mæskju'lnəti/ *n.* [U] features and qualities considered to be typical of men 男性, 阳性; 男子气

gamble away lose the whole of an amount of money by gambling 赌光

obese ★ /əʊ'bi:s/ *a.* *fml* very fat; unhealthily fat [正式] 非常(过度)肥胖的; 臃肿的

blend /blend/ *vt.* mix together thoroughly, esp. so that the different parts can no longer be separated 使混在一起, 使混合, 使混杂; 使交融

concoction of conscious and unconscious memories of their parents' lives together. The human way is to compulsively repeat and recreate the patterns of the past. Sigmund Freud so well described the unhappy design that many of us get trapped in: the unmet needs of childhood, the angry feelings left over from frustrations of long ago, the limits of trust and the reoccurrence of old fears. Once an individual senses this entrapment, there may follow a yearning to escape, and the result could be a broken, splintered marriage.

5 Of course people can overcome the habits and attitudes that developed in childhood. We all have hidden strengths and amazing capacities for growth and creative change. Change, however, requires work — observing your part in a rotten pattern, bringing difficulties out into the open — and work runs counter to the basic myth of marriage: “When I wed this person all my problems will be over. I will have achieved success and I will become the center of life of this

concoction /kən'kɒksən/ *n.* sth. made by mixing or combining parts 调制物; 调配物

compulsively /kəm'pʌlsɪvli/ *ad.* in a way that is very difficult to stop or control 难以抑制地

trap /træp/ *vt.* place or hold firmly with no possibility of escape 困住; 关住; 使陷于绝境

unmet /ʌn'met/ *a.* (of a requirement) not achieved or fulfilled (要求)未满足的; 未实现的

leave over allow to remain untaken, unused, unchanged, uneaten, etc. 剩下, 剩余; 留下来(不用、不拿、不吃等)

reoccurrence /ri:ə'kɒrəns, -'kɜ: / *n.* 再发生; 复发

entrapment /ɪn'træpmənt/ *n.* the state of being stuck in a difficult situation 陷入困境

yearning ▲ /'jɜ:nɪŋ/ *n.* [(for/to-v)] *esp. lit* (a) strong usu. sad desire [常与 for 或动词不定式连用] 〔尤文〕盼望, 向往, 渴望; 思念, 怀念

splinter /'splɪntə(r)/ *v.* (cause to) break into small sharp-pointed pieces (使)裂成碎片; 使分裂

run counter to come into conflict with, go against 与...发生冲突; 违反; 与...背道而驰

wed /wed/ *v.* [not in progressive forms] *old use or lit* (also used in newspapers) marry [不用进行式] 〔旧或文〕(又用于报纸)(与...)结婚; 嫁, 娶

5 **the ... time** the children's constant needs for love and care as well as for company

6 **These ... dunes.** All these problems in real life exert a slow but irresistible destructive force on the dreams of marital joy and happiness, just like sandstorms destroying rock slowly and the ocean taking away sand dunes bit by bit.

other person and this person will be my center, and we will mean everything to each other forever." This myth, which every marriage relies on, is soon exposed. The coming of children, *the pulls and tugs of their demands on affection and time*⁵, place a considerable strain on that basic myth of meaning everything to each other, of merging together and solving all of life's problems.

6 Concern and tension about money take each partner away from the other. Obligations to demanding parents or still-dependended-upon parents create further strain. Couples today must also deal with all the cultural changes brought on in recent years by the women's movement and sexual revolution. The altering of roles and the shifting of responsibilities have been extremely trying for marriages.

7 *These and other realities of life erode the visions of marital bliss the way sandstorms eat at rock and the ocean nibbles away at the dunes.*⁶ Those euphoric, grand feelings that accompany

tug ^{*} /tʌg/ *n.* a sudden strong pull 猛拉; 拖; 拽
strain /streɪn/ *n.* a state in which one is greatly troubled by anxieties and difficulties 过度劳累, 极度紧张

bring on cause to result in (a usu. undesirable condition or situation) 引起, 导致; 惹来

trying /'traɪɪŋ/ *a.* difficult, worrying, or annoying 困难的; 令人难受的; 磨练人的

erode /'rəʊd/ *v.* gradually destroy or be gradually destroyed 逐步毁坏; 削弱; 损害; 受到破坏

bliss [^] /blɪs/ *n.* [U] complete happiness 无上幸福; 福佑; 至福

nibble /'nɪbl/ *vi.* [(away, at, on)] eat with small repeated bites [常与 away, at 或 on 连用] 啃; 一点一点地咬(吃)

nibble away at take away small amounts of sth. so that the total amount is gradually reduced 一点一点地消耗...; 慢慢侵蚀...

dune /dju:n/ *n.* a sandhill, often long and low, piled up by the wind on the seashore or in a desert (海边或沙漠中由风吹积成的) 沙丘

euphoric /ju:'fɒrɪk/ *a.* feeling extremely happy, proud, and excited 心情愉快的; 心满意足的; 情绪高涨的

romantic love are really self-delusions, self-hypnotic dreams that enable us to forge a relationship. Real life, failure at work, disappointment, exhaustion, bad smells, bad colds and hard times all puncture the dream and leave us stranded with our mate, with our childhood patterns pushing us this way and that, with our unfulfilled expectations.

8 The struggle to survive in marriage requires adaptability, flexibility, genuine love and kindness and an imagination strong enough to feel what the other is feeling. Many marriages fall apart because either partner cannot imagine what the other wants or cannot communicate what he or she needs or feels. Anger builds until it erupts into a volcanic burst that buries the marriage in ash.

9 It is not hard to see, therefore, how essential communication is for a good marriage. A man and a woman must be able to tell each other how they feel and why they feel the way they do; otherwise they will impose on each other roles and actions that lead to further unhappiness. In some cases, the communication patterns of childhood — of not talking, of talking too much, of not listening, of

self-delusion [▲] /ˌselfdɪˈluːʒən/ *n.* 自我欺骗

self-hypnotic /ˌselfhɪpˈnɒtɪk/ *a.* 自我催眠的

puncture /ˈpʌŋktʃə(r)/ *vt.* destroy as if by bursting
突然摧毁; 使泄气

stranded [★] /ˈstrændɪd/ *a.* in a very unfavourable position or situation, esp. alone among dangers and unable to get away (尤指孤独无援、面临危险而无法逃离的状况) 处于困境的; 一筹莫展的

adaptability /əˌdæptəˈbɪləti/ *n.* ability to change

so as to be suitable for new needs, different conditions, etc. 适应性; 适应能力

erupt [★] /ɪˈrʌpt/ *vi.* break out and burst forth suddenly and dramatically 爆发; 突然发生

volcanic /vɒlˈkæɪnɪk/ *a.* violently forceful 暴烈的, 猛烈的

impose /ɪmˈpəʊz/ *vt.* force the acceptance of (usu. sth. difficult or unwanted) 强迫接受(困难的或不想做的事情), 把…强加于

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distrust and anger, of withdrawal — spill into the marriage and prevent a healthy exchange of thoughts and feelings. The answer is to set up new patterns of communication and intimacy.

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⑩ At the same time, however, we must see each other as individuals.

“To achieve a balance between separateness and closeness is one of the major psychological tasks of all human beings at every stage of life,” says Dr. Stuart Bartle, a psychiatrist at the New York University Medical Center.

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⑪ If we sense from our mate a need for too much intimacy, we tend to push him or her away, fearing that we may lose our identities in the merging of marriage. One partner may suffocate the other partner in a childlike dependency.

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⑫ A good marriage means growing as a couple but also growing as individuals. This isn't easy. Richard gives up his interest in carpentry because his wife, Helen, is jealous of the time he spends away from her. Karen quits her choir group because her husband dislikes the

withdrawal ▲ /wɪð'drɔːəl/ *n.* the act of no longer taking part in an activity, indifference to or remoteness from social or emotional involvement 退缩; (社交场合或情绪方面的) 冷漠

psychiatrist ★ /saɪ'kɪətrɪst/ *n.* a doctor trained in psychiatry 精神科医生

suffocate /'sʌfəkeɪt/ *v.* (cause to) die because of lack of air; (cause to) feel trapped and oppressed (使)窒息而死, (把...)闷死; (使)感到被压抑(或遏制)

dependency ▲ /dɪ'pendənsɪ/ *n.* the state of being

dependent; inability to exist or operate without the help or support of sb. or sth. else 依赖, 依靠

carpentry /'kɑ:pəntri/ *n.* [U] the art or work of a carpenter 木工手艺, 木匠活; 木匠业

jealous /'dʒeləs/ *a.* [(of)] often derog unhappy and angry because (you think) someone who should like you, likes someone else better [常与 of 连用] [常贬]嫉妒的, 妒忌的

choir ▲ /'kwaɪə/ *n.* a group of people who sing together, esp. during religious services (尤指教堂的)唱诗班; 合唱队

friends she makes there. *Each pair clings to each other and are angry with each other as life closes in on them.*⁷ This kind of marital balance is easily thrown as one or the other pulls away and divorce follows.

13 Sometimes people pretend that a new partner will solve the old problems. Most often extramarital sex destroys a marriage *because it allows an artificial split between the good and the bad — the good is projected on the new partner and the bad is dumped on the head of the old*⁸. Dishonesty, hiding and cheating create walls between men and women. *Infidelity is just a symptom of trouble.*⁹ It is a symbolic complaint, a weapon of revenge, as well as *an unraveler of closeness*¹⁰. *Infidelity is often that proverbial last straw that sinks the camel to the ground.*¹¹

14 All right — marriage has always been difficult. Why then are we seeing so many divorces at this time? Yes, our *modern*

7 **Each ... them.** The husband and wife are intimately close to each other and at the same time they grow angry with each other as the realities of life force pressures upon them in an all-round way.

8 **because ... old** because it creates an unrealistic divide between the good and the bad — seeing nothing but good in the new partner while seeing nothing but bad in the old partner

9 **Infidelity ... trouble.** Infidelity is just a sign of the existing marital problem.

10 **an ... closeness** a destroyer of an intimate relationship

11 **Infidelity ... ground.** As the proverb goes, “it’s the last straw that breaks the camel’s back.” So, infidelity often proves to be the final decisive factor that causes the break-up of a marriage.

close in on surround gradually and usu. from all sides, esp. in a threatening way 逐渐包围

pull away move away from 脱身; 离开

extramarital ▲ /ˌekstrəˈmæritəl/ *a.* (esp. of sexual relations) occurring outside marriage (尤指性关系) 婚外的

artificial /ˌɑːtɪˈfɪʃəl/ *a.* happening as a result of human action, not through a natural process 人为的

split /splɪt/ *n.* an instance or act of splitting or being split; a division 分裂; 分歧

dump /dʌmp/ *v.* get rid of (rubbish, etc.) irresponsibly; abandon 丢弃; 扔掉; 倒(垃圾); 抛弃

圾); 抛弃

infidelity /ˌɪnfɪˈdeləti/ *n.* (an act of) sex with sb. other than one’s marriage partner (夫妇间的) 不忠实; 不贞行为

symbolic /sɪmˈbɒlɪk/ *a.* [(of)] of, being, or using a symbol [常与 of 连用] 象征(性)的; 使用象征物的

unraveler /ˌʌnˈrævələ(r)/ *n.* sth. that causes to become separated 使分散的事物

proverbial ▲ /prəʊˈvɜːbiəl/ *a.* *informal* spoken of in a popular saying or comparison 〔非正式〕 俗语所说的

12 **modern social fabric**

the basic structure of modern society, referring to all the things that hold a modern society together, such as tradition, relationships, social mores, and way of life

13 **the ... chaos**

the fact that society allows people too much freedom, especially in sexual matters, has brought about unrealistic expectations and plunged the family into a mess. Cf. permissive society: a society such as in Britain and the US in the 1960's and 1970's, in which there is a lot of freedom, especially in sexual behavior, and many different kinds of relationships and lifestyles are accepted

14 **"While ... bonds"**

"Although married couples sometimes feel that they cannot behave as freely as they want, it is in fact they who decide whether to make their relationship a source of either restriction or support"

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*social fabric*¹² is thin, and yes, *the permissiveness of society has created unrealistic expectations and thrown the family into chaos*¹³.

But divorce is so common because people today are unwilling to exercise the self-discipline that marriage requires. They expect easy joy, like the entertainment on TV, the thrill of a good party.

15 Marriage takes some kind of sacrifice, not dreadful self-sacrifice of the soul, but some level of compromise. Some of one's fantasies, some of one's legitimate desires have to be given up for the value of the marriage itself. *"While all marital partners feel shackled at times, it is they who really choose to make the marital ties into confining chains or supporting bonds,"*¹⁴ says Dr. Whitaker. Marriage requires sexual, financial and emotional discipline. A man and a woman cannot follow every impulse, cannot allow themselves to stop growing and changing.

16 Divorce is not an evil act. Sometimes it provides

fabric /'fæbrɪk/ *n.* the basic structure of a society, way of life, or other product of the interaction of different elements (社会、生活方式等的) 基本结构

permissiveness /pə'mɪsɪvnis/ *n.* often derog allowance of a great deal of freedom (perhaps too much freedom), esp. in sexual matters 〔常贬〕(尤指两性关系) 放纵; 宽容; 性自由

chaos /'keɪs/ *n.* [U] a state of complete and thorough disorder and confusion 大混乱; 无

秩序状态

dreadful ★ /'dredfʊl/ *a.* causing great fear or anxiety; terrible 令人畏惧的; 令人忧虑的; 可怕的

legitimate ★ /lɪ'dʒɪtɪmət/ *a.* correct or allowable according to generally accepted standards of behaviour 正常的; 合情理的

shackle ▲ /'ʃækl/ *vt.* [usu. pass.] esp. lit tie up (as if) with shackles [一般用被动语态] 〔尤文〕(似) 给...戴上镣铐

salvation for people who have grown hopelessly apart or were frozen in patterns of pain or mutual unhappiness. *Divorce can be, despite its initial devastation, like the first cut of the surgeon's knife, a step toward new health and a good life.*¹⁵ On the other hand, if the partners can stay past the breaking up of the romantic myths into development of real love and intimacy, they have achieved a work as amazing as the greatest cathedrals of the world. Marriages that do not fail but improve, that persist despite imperfections, are not only rare these days but offer a wondrous shelter in which the face of our mutual humanity can safely show itself.

- 15 **Divorce ... life.** Although a person may feel hurt at the beginning of a divorce, once it is effected, divorce can help him or her move on to a fresh and healthy start to a new life.

PROPER NAMES

Anne Roiphe /æn 'rɔɪf/ 安妮·罗伊夫 (人名)
Carl A. Whitaker /kɑ:l ei 'hwɪtəkə(r)/ 卡尔·A·惠特克 (人名)
Wisconsin /wɪs'kɒnsɪn/ 威斯康星州 (美国州名)
Stuart Bartle /'stjuət 'bɑ:tl/ 斯图尔特·巴特尔 (人名)
Karen /'kærən, 'kæərən/ 卡伦 (人名)



cathedral ▲ /kə'ti:drəl/ *n.* the main church of a particular area under the control of a bishop, usu. a very large, beautifully decorated stone structure
 大教堂；重要（或堂皇宏伟）的教堂
wondrous /'wʌndrəs/ *a. poet* wonderful; good or

impressive in a surprising way 〔诗〕出色的；完美的

show itself (of sth.) appear or take place 呈现；显露出来



Focus on the Content

TASK ONE

Understanding the Text

Answer the following questions based on the information contained in the text.

1. In this essay “Why Marriages Fail” Anne Roiphe presents quite a few reasons to account for why marriages fail in today’s society. The reasons she gives can be roughly classified into two broad categories: 1) “external causes” which include pressures of “realities of life” and social influence; and 2) “internal causes” which are associated with the married couples’ emotional and psychological problems. List all the reasons that Anne Roiphe gives in the essay and put them under the corresponding category in the following table.

Why Marriages Fail	
External Causes	Internal Causes

2. How many questions does Roiphe raise in the opening paragraph? Why does she raise so many questions all at one time?
3. What can outside pressures do to marriages according to Roiphe?
4. How do we choose our mates and why do we choose our mates that way according to the essay?
5. Roiphe lists a few examples at the end of Para. 3. What’s her purpose of doing so?
6. What are the possible causes that lead to a broken marriage according to Sigmund Freud?
Can we overcome the habits and attitudes that developed in childhood?
7. What does the survival of a marriage require?
8. What does Roiphe say about infidelity and what is her opinion about divorce?

TASK TWO

Reading Between the Lines

Read the following sentences carefully and discuss in pairs their implications, paying special attention to the italicised parts.

1. If statistics could only measure loneliness, regret, pain, loss of self-confidence and fear of future, *the numbers would be beyond quantifying*. (Para. 1)
2. *Each marriage has crisis points and each marriage tests endurance, the capacity for both intimacy and change*. (Para. 2)
3. Marriages fail, however, not simply because of the outside weather but *because the inner climate becomes too hot or too cold, too turbulent or too stupefying*. (Para. 2)
4. Each of us falls in love with a mate who has qualities of our parents, who will *help us rediscover both the psychological happiness and miseries of our past lives*. (Para. 3)
5. *This myth, which every marriage relies on, is soon exposed*. (Para. 5)
6. *These and other realities of life erode the visions of marital bliss the way sandstorms eat at rock and the ocean nibbles away at the dunes*. (Para. 7)
7. Anger builds until *it erupts into a volcanic burst that buries the marriage in ash*. (Para. 8)
8. Most often extramarital sex destroys a marriage because it allows an artificial split between the good and the bad — *the good is projected on the new partner and the bad is dumped on the head of the old*. (Para. 13)
9. *Infidelity is often that proverbial last straw that sinks the camel to the ground*. (Para. 13)
10. *They expect easy joy, like the entertainment on TV, the thrill of a good party*. (Para. 14)

TASK THREE

Reflecting on the Text

In this cause-and-effect essay, Anne Roiphe analyzes for her readers some causes for the prevalent phenomenon of divorce. Do you think her analysis is convincing? Can you give additional causes for the failure in marriage besides the ones already presented by Roiphe? What, in your view, are the important ingredients to sustain a successful and happy marriage? If you are in a romantic relationship, how did you choose your partner and what qualities do you expect in a mate and why? Now work in pairs or in groups and talk about all the issues related to marriage and then put your answers in the space provided.

Why Marriages Fail	
1)	
2)	
3)	
4)	
5)	

Ingredients of a Happy Marriage	
1)	
2)	
3)	
4)	
5)	

Qualities I Expect in a Mate	
1)	
2)	
3)	
4)	
5)	

Why I Expect These Qualities in a Mate	
1)	
2)	
3)	
4)	
5)	



Focus on the Strategy and Style

1. Anne Roiphe’s essay “Why Marriages Fail” is written in the rhetorical mode of cause and effect. The essay can be divided into four parts as is suggested in the following table.

Now work in pairs or in groups and reflect on the essay structure, and then write down the main ideas of each part in the space provided.

Parts	Paragraph(s)	Main Idea
One	1	
Two	2-7	
Three	8-15	
Four	16	

2. The title of the essay is “Why Marriages Fail.” Can you find a sentence in the essay that may serve as a short direct answer to the question implied in the title? Can it be taken as the thesis statement of the essay? Give your reasons.
3. Reflect on Anne Roiphe’s purpose of writing this cause-and-effect essay. Is it mainly a) to inform, i.e. to help her readers understand some identifiable facts; b) to speculate, i.e. to consider what might be or what might have been the relationships between the cause and the effect; and c) to argue, i.e. to provide a sound basis from which to argue for a given position or point of view? Does she achieve her purpose successfully? How?
4. To make her causal analysis vivid and convincing, Anne Roiphe makes use of figurative language in the essay. The use of analogy (类比) is a case in point. Analogy is a form of figurative comparison that uses a clear illustration to explain a difficult idea or function. Unlike simile or metaphor, which usually uses comparison on one point of resemblance,

analogy draws a parallel comparison between two unlike things that have several common qualities or points of resemblance. Analogy is not just a figure of speech. It is more of a logical argument. When we use an analogy, we not only wish to demonstrate how two things are alike by pointing out their shared characteristics, but also want to show that if the two things are similar in some ways, they are similar in other ways as well. Now reflect on the following sentences and discuss how the use of analogy has helped the author present her argument effectively. Write down your views and comments in the space provided.

- 1) Outside pressures such as job loss, illness, infertility, trouble with a child, care of aging parents and all the other plagues of life hit marriage the way hurricanes blast our shores. Some marriages survive these storms and others don't. (Para. 2)

Your views or comments:

- 2) Marriages fail, however, not simply because of the outside weather but because the inner climate becomes too hot or too cold, too turbulent or too stupefying. (Para. 2)

Your views or comments:

- 3) These and other realities of life erode the visions of marital bliss the way sandstorms eat at rock and the ocean nibbles away at the dunes. (Para. 7)

Your views or comments:

5. Apart from analogy, Anne Roiphe uses extended metaphor (扩展性隐喻) and simile as well. An extended metaphor is a metaphor that continues into the sentences that follow. If we say "All the world is but a stage," we use a metaphor; but if we say "All the world is but a stage, and men and women are merely players," then we have an extended metaphor. Likewise, we see an extended metaphor in the sentences: "The seeds of discontent have

already been sown. It remains to be seen whether weeds or flowers will spring forth.” Reflect on the following sentences from the text and discuss how the use of extended metaphor and simile helps the writer convey her argument effectively and expressively. Write down your views and comments in the space provided.

- 1) Anger builds until it erupts into a volcanic burst that buries the marriage in ash. (Para. 8)

Your views or comments:

- 2) “While all marital partners feel shackled at times, it is they who really choose to make the marital ties into confining chains or supporting bonds,” says Dr. Whitaker. (Para. 15)

Your views or comments:

- 3) Divorce can be, despite its initial devastation, like the first cut of the surgeon’s knife, a step toward new health and a good life. (Para. 16)

Your views or comments:

- 4) On the other hand, if the partners can stay past the breaking up of the romantic myths into development of real love and intimacy, they have achieved a work as amazing as the greatest cathedrals of the world. (Para. 16)

Your views or comments:



Increase Your Language Proficiency



Working with Words and Expressions

1. Listed in the box below are some of the words you have learned in the text. Complete the following sentences with them. Change the form where necessary.

blast	blend	chaos	destined	erode
erupt	impose	jealous	trap	yearning

- 1) Smart and hardworking, Carmen seemed _____ for a successful career ahead.
- 2) At 31, Peggy feels _____ in the boring job of an office secretary and she has a yearning to escape.
- 3) Yesterday a storm _____ the Florida coast with 75 m.p.h. winds and left two tourists missing.
- 4) The couple hardly ever reach an agreement — their conversations often _____ into quarrels and shouting.
- 5) The ballet company's new performance successfully _____ tradition and creative innovation, which won great admiration from critics.
- 6) Repeated exam failures had _____ her confidence and exerted an influence on her — she started to skip classes more often.
- 7) Ever since our secretary resigned, our office has been in a state of total _____.
- 8) Parents are usually inclined to _____ their own moral values on their children, which might bring on rebellion from teenagers.
- 9) Some fathers are _____ of the attention a newborn baby receives from its mother, even if they won't admit it.
- 10) I have this strong _____ for open spaces from having lived in a crowded city for too many years.

2. Listed in the box below are some expressions that you have learned in the text. Complete the sentences with each of them. Change the form where necessary.

bring on	close in on	end in	gamble away
leave over	nibble away at	pull away	show itself

- 1) The result of the survey is quite alarming — half the marriages in this country _____ divorce.

- 2) Being addicted to betting on horses, he had _____ most of his inheritance (遗产) by the time he was thirty.
- 3) We cooked too much for lunch and had to take what was _____ for supper.
- 4) Many companies are now suffering from a chronic shortage of funds _____ in recent years by the financial crisis.
- 5) She didn't quarrel with her husband when she found out about his infidelity, but her annoyance _____ in her looks.
- 6) Inflation _____ people's savings and reduces their value considerably.
- 7) To show my affection for the little girl, I bent down and tried to kiss her on the forehead, but she _____ in time, which made me rather embarrassed.
- 8) As the advancing soldiers _____ the town, people started running into the underground shelters for safety.

Increasing Your Word Power

1. Word Clusters

Study the following sentences, and make a sentence of your own using the word cluster in the italicised type. You may change the form where necessary. The first one has been done for you.

- 1) These days so many marriages end in divorce that our most sacred vows *no longer ring with truth*. (Para. 1)

Your sentence: He explained his absence repeatedly to me, but his old story no longer rang with truth.

- 2) When we look at how we choose our partners and what expectations exist *at the tender beginnings of romance*, ... (Para. 3)

Your sentence: _____

- 3) The coming of children, the pulls and tugs of their demands on affection and time, *place a considerable strain on* that basic myth of meaning everything to each other, ... (Para. 5)

Your sentence: _____

- 4) These and other realities of life *erode the visions of* marital bliss the way sandstorms eat at rock and the ocean nibbles away at the dunes. (Para. 7)

Your sentence: _____

- 5) Anger builds until it erupts into a volcanic burst that *buries* the marriage *in ash*. (Para. 8)

Your sentence: _____

- 6) Yes, our modern social fabric is thin, and yes, the permissiveness of society has created unrealistic expectations and *thrown* the family *into chaos*. (Para. 14)

Your sentence: _____

7) Some of one's fantasies, some of one's legitimate desires *have to be given up for the value of* the marriage itself. (Para. 15)

Your sentence: _____

8) Sometimes it provides salvation for people who have grown hopelessly apart or *were frozen in patterns of* pain or mutual unhappiness. (Para. 16)

Your sentence: _____

2. Phrasal Verb Bank

Study the phrasal verb *SET UP*, paying special attention to its different uses as shown in the following table. Then write your own sentence according to the explanations given. The first one has been done for you.

SET UP

Syntactic Patterns	Explanations	Usage Examples	Your Sentences
V+ADV	If you set up something such as a structure, monument, or piece of equipment, you place it or build it somewhere.	<i>A fund was launched to set up a monument in memory of the dead soldiers.</i>	1. <u>They took the tent down and set it up again at each new camping site.</u>
V+ADV	If you set something up , you make the arrangements and preparations that are necessary for it to start. (A particular set-up is a particular system or way of organizing something.)	<i>The government has agreed to set up a public enquiry to deal with the citizens' complaints.</i>	2. _____ _____ _____ _____
V+ADV	If you set up somewhere or set yourself up doing something, you start a firm, business, or company.	<i>The firm is run by a former IBM designer who set up on his own two years ago.</i>	3. _____ _____ _____ _____

V+ADV	If something sets up , it puts you in a satisfactory condition or position, for example by providing you with money or by making you feel healthy and energetic.	<i>You need to make sure that you eat well to set yourself up after your illness.</i>	4. _____ _____ _____ _____ _____
V+ADV	If something sets up a process or series of events, it causes the events to begin and continue.	<i>It may become possible to set up a nuclear chain reaction.</i>	5. _____ _____ _____ _____ _____
V+ADV	If someone sets you up , they make people think that you have done something wrong when you have not, or they deceive you into a situation in which you might be harmed; an informal use. (Frame means almost the same as set up.) (A set-up is a situation in which someone makes it seem as if an innocent person has committed a crime; an informal word.)	<i>They claimed that they weren't selling drugs, but that they'd been set up by the police.</i>	6. _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____

CLOZE

Complete the following passage with words chosen from this unit. The initial letter of each is given.

The causes for marital despair are varied. Some marriages fail because of the o _____ (1) weather: pressures such as job loss, illness, care of a _____ (2) parents and all the other p _____ (3) of life may harshly hit marriage. Some

other marriages fail because of a changed inner c _____ (4). At the tender beginnings of r _____ (5), each of us selects with unconscious accuracy a mate who will r _____ (6) with us the emotional p _____ (7) of our first homes, a mate who will help us rediscover both the p _____ (8) happiness and miseries of our p _____ (9) lives. And all marriages rely on the basic m _____ (10) of meaning everything to each other, of m _____ (11) together and solving all of life's problems. Yet, realities of life e _____ (12) the visions of marital b _____ (13). Now many marriages fall apart because those in the commitment are unwilling to e _____ (14) the self-discipline that marriage requires. Besides, an e _____ (15) element for a good marriage, i.e., communication between partners, is often missing.



TRANSLATION

Translate the following passage into English.

婚姻从来就不是件容易的事。为什么在今天的社会里夫妻二人相守会变得这么难呢？

一方面，现代社会的结构很脆弱，社会的放任使人们产生了很多不现实的期待，使家庭陷入混乱；另一方面，婚姻要求在性爱、经济与情感方面的约束，而今天的人们不愿做到婚姻所需的自律。此外，如今的夫妻还要应付近年来因妇女运动和性革命所带来的一切文化方面的变化。所有这些以及生活中的其他现实问题会慢慢腐蚀对于婚姻幸福的憧憬。如果我们缺乏适应性、灵活性、真挚的爱情与仁慈之心以及能感对方之所感的想像力，或无法把困难开诚布公地说出来，婚姻就走到了尽头。

当然，离婚并不是邪恶的行为，对有些人来说，它是一种解脱，是迈向美好生活的一步。但那些没有失败反而改善的婚姻，那些不完美却仍然坚守的婚姻，为我们共同的人性提供了一个奇妙的庇护所。



WRITING

As you would probably agree, we all fail at something for one reason or another and we learn wisdom from failure much more than from success. Recall your past experience of failure and write a cause-and-effect essay in about 400 words on the topic “Why I Failed.” The following questions may help organize your ideas:

- 1) What incident or event do you intend to narrate in order to show the cause-and-effect relationship?
- 2) What is the purpose of narrating the chosen incident or event?
- 3) What thesis do you want to present in the essay?
- 4) What specific details do you intend to select in order to flesh out your argument?
- 5) What conclusion can you draw from your causal analysis?



Read the following short pieces for fun.

Once Is Enough

Tom and Jill recently celebrated their 20th wedding anniversary on the beaches of Montego Bay, Jamaica. They never argued, and their domestic tranquility had long been legendary. People would say: "What a peaceful and loving couple!"

A local newspaper reporter heard about them and interviewed the husband to ascertain the secret of their long and happy marriage. The husband said:

Well, it dates back to our honeymoon in America. We visited the Grand Canyon in Arizona and took a trip down to the bottom of the canyon by horse. We hadn't gone very far when my wife's horse stumbled, and she almost fell off. My dear wife looked down at the horse and quietly said to it, "That's once."

We proceeded a little further and the same horse stumbled again. Once more my wife quietly said to it, "That's twice."

We hadn't gone another half-mile when the horse stumbled for the third time.

This time, my wife quietly removed a revolver from her purse, aimed at the horse's head and shot the horse dead on the spot.

Naturally, I shouted at her: "What's wrong with you, woman? Why did you shoot the poor animal like that? Are you crazy?"

My wife then looked at me and calmly said: "That's once."

And you know, from that moment onwards, we have lived happily ever after.

◎ ◎ ◎

Young son: Is it true, Dad, that in some parts of Africa a man doesn't know his wife until he marries her?

Dad: That happens in every country, son.

◎ ◎ ◎

Girl: When we get married, I want to share all your worries, troubles and lighten your burden.

Boy: It's very kind of you, darling, but I don't have any worries or troubles.

Girl: Well, that's because we aren't married yet.

◎ ◎ ◎

Wife: "You always carry my photo in your wallet. Why?"

Hubby: "When there is a problem, no matter how impossible, I look at your picture

and the problem disappears.”

Wife: “You see, how miraculous and powerful I am for you!”

Hubby: “Yes! I see your picture and ask myself: what other problem can be greater than this one?”



Mrs. Trenton appeared before the judge in a divorce action.

“How old are you?” asked the judge.

“Thirty-five,” said Mrs. Trenton.

The judge noticed her greying hair and wrinkled cheeks and said, “May I see your birth certificate?”

She handed the judge her birth certificate.

“Madam,” he said severely, “according to this certificate you are not 35 but 50.”

“Your honor,” replied Mrs. Trenton, “I’m not counting the last 15 years I spent with my husband. You call that a life?”



A woman went to an attorney to ask about a divorce.

“What grounds do you have, ma’am?”

“About six acres.”

“No, I don’t think you quite understand. Let me rephrase the question: do you have a grudge?”

“No, just a parking space.”

“Well, I’ll try again. Does your husband beat you?”

“No, I always get up at least an hour before he does.”

The attorney could see he was fighting a losing battle. “Madam, are you sure you want a divorce?”

“I’m not the one who wants a divorce,” she said. “My husband does. He claims we don’t communicate.”



A little boy was attending a wedding ceremony for the first time. After the service, his little cousin asked him, “How many women can a man marry?”

“Sixteen,” the boy responded. His cousin was amazed that he knew the answer so quickly. “How did you know that?”

“Easy,” the little boy said. “All you have to do is add it up, like the preacher said: *‘Four better, four worse, four richer, four poorer.’*”