**阅读练习一**

**(A)**

Today, home-ownership has reached extremely high levels. Modern generations tend to believe there is something wrong with them if they rent. However, is high home-ownership really as rosy as people imagine? Staring at data first, we realize that the most successful, stable, attractive country in the Western world is Switzerland. It has tiny unemployment; wealth; high happiness and mental-health scores. Does it have high home-ownership rates? Absolutely not. In Switzerland, about seven in ten of the population are renters. Yet, with Europe's lowest home-ownership rate, the nation thrives. Now go to the other end of the misery distribution. Spain has approximately the highest home-ownership rate in Europe (at more than 80%). But one-quarter of its population are unemployed.

A likely reason is that high levels of home-ownership mess up the labour market. In a sensibly functioning economy it is easy for people to move around to drop into the vibrant job slots thrown up by technological change. With a high degree of owner-occupation, everything slows. Folk get stuck. Renters can go to new jobs. In that way they do the economy a favour. As Friedman said, the rate of unemployment depends on the flexibility of the housing market.

Next we come to economic breakdown. Most analysts accept that at heart it was the housing market—obsessive pursuit of homes, the engendered mortgage(房贷) lending and an unavoidable house-price crash—that sank the Western world. Germany, say, with its more efficient rental market, had a far smoother ride through trouble.

As for the monetary system, in the past few decades, in the hope of getting untaxed capital gains way above their true labour earnings, many people threw their spare cash into buying larger houses or building extra bedrooms. TV programmes about how to make easy money, beautiful rising house prices, and most importantly, our faulty tax system encouraged that. When at some point market broke down, everyone suffered. Our countries ought, instead, to design tax systems that encourage people to invest in productive real activities and in innovation. Renting leaves money free for better purposes.

That also points to the role of sensible budgeting over a person's lifetime. Why should we think that when we die it is necessary to have paid off an entire house? Our children do not deserve it. Let them pay for themselves. We should rent—and enjoy our lives with the money saved.

Finally, moderation usually pays off. Our scientific understanding of how economies function is horribly limited. This suggests that the golden rule should be to avoid extremes. A 50-50 mix of home-ownership and renting, not the 70-30 split that is now observed in so many Western nations, makes sense.

74. The cases of Switzerland and Spain prove that \_\_\_\_\_\_.

A. low home-ownership rate at about 30% is most favourable for economy

B. home-ownership mainly decides a country’s citizens’ mental health.

C. home-ownership has a lot to do with a country’s technological development

D. low home-ownership increases the mobility of job market and economy.

75. The main reason to make people invest in housing market is \_\_\_\_\_\_.

A. the problematic taxing approach favouring house buying

B. people’s desire to avoid their money from devaluing

C. easy channels to obtain methods to make easy money

D. people’s wishes to live in larger and more comfortable houses

76. Which of the following statements is TRUE according to the passage?

A.Switzerland suffers the worse unemployment in Europe.

B. Renting allows more money into more creative economic activities.

C. Germany’s effective mortgage system saw it through the western economic crisis.

D. Our children have the right to enjoy the housing property we have paid off.

77. What opinion does the author agree with most?

A. People should learn the workings of housing market.

B. Laws should be set up to stop people from buying houses.

C. An adequate rate of home-ownership should be kept.

D. People should follow the good example of Europe in housing investment.

**(B)**

Big trees are incredibly important ecologically. For a start, they provide food for countless other species and shelter for many animals. With their tall branches in the sun, they capture vast amounts of energy. This allows them to produce massive crops of fruit and flowers that sustain much of the animal life in the forest.

Only a small number of tree species have the genetic ability to grow really big. The biggest are native to North America, but big trees grow all over the globe, from the tropics to the forests of the high *latitudes* (纬度). To achieve giant size, a tree needs three things: the right place to establish its seedling, good growing conditions and lots of time with low adult death rate. Lose any of these, and you will lose your biggest trees.

In some parts of the world, populations of big trees are ***dwindling*** because their seedlings cannot survive. In southern India, for instance, an aggressive non-native bush, Lantana camara, is invading the floor of many forests. Lantana grows so thickly that young trees often fail to take root. With no young trees to replace them, it is only a matter of time before most of the big trees disappear.

Without the right growing conditions, trees cannot get really big and there is some evidence to suggest tree growth could slow in a warmer world, particularly in environments that are already warm. Having worked for decades at La Selva Biological Station in Puerto Viejo de Sarapiqui, Costa Rica, David and Deborah Clark and colleagues have shown that tree growth there declines markedly in warmer years. “During the day, their growth shuts down when it gets too warm, and at night they consume more energy because their *metabolic* (新陈代谢的) rate increases,” explains David Clark. With less energy produced in warmer years and more being consumed just to survive, there is even less energy available for growth.

The Clarks’ theory, if correct, means tropical forests would shrink over time. The largest, oldest trees would progressively die off and tend not to be replaced. According to the Clarks, this might cause a destabilization of the climate; as older trees die, forests would release some of their stored carbon into the atmosphere, causing a cycle of further warming, forest shrinkage and carbon emissions.

Besides, big trees face threats from elsewhere.

73. According to the passage, big trees make great contributions to the ecosystem because \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

A. they can capture large amounts of energy

B. they determine the change of global climate

C. they provide the essentials for many creatures

D. they can avoid a new cycle of further warming

74. All the following factors are a must for making big trees **EXCEPT** \_\_\_\_\_\_.

A. no deadly damage B. genetic contribution

C. ideal environment for growth D. high-latitude location

75. The word “***dwindling***” (paragraph 3) is closest in meaning to “\_\_\_\_\_\_”.

A. exploding B. growing

C. changing D. declining

76. What is the best title of the passage?

A. Big trees in trouble.

B. Advantages of big trees.

C. Results of big trees’ disappearing.

D. Importance of big trees to humans.

77. What will the author most probably discuss after the last paragraph?

A. More threats to the existence of big tress.

B. The effect of human activities on big trees.

C. Benefits of big trees to the whole atmosphere.

D. Comparison between common trees and big ones.

**阅读练习二**

**(A)**

Energy independence. It has a nice sense to it, doesn’t it? If you think so, you’re not alone, because energy independence has been the dream of American presidents for decades, and never more so than in the past few years, when the most recent oil price shock has been partly responsible for kicking off the great recession.

“Energy independence” and its rhetorical (修辞的) companion “energy security” are, however, slippery concepts that are rarely thought through. What is it we want independence from, exactly? Most people would probably say that they want to be independent from imported oil. But there are reasons that we buy all that oil from elsewhere.

The first reason is that we need it to keep our economy running. Yes, there is a trickle (涓涓细流) of bio-fuel available, and more may become available, but most bio-fuels cause economic waste and environmental destruction.

Second, Americans have basically decided that they don’t really want to produce all their own oil. They value the environmental quality they preserve over their oil imports from abroad. Vast areas of the United States are off-limits to oil exploration and production in the name of environmental protection. To what extent are Americans really willing to endure the environmental impacts of domestic energy production in order to cut back imports?

Third, there are benefits to trade. It allows for economic efficiency, and when we buy things from places that have lower production costs than we do, we benefit. And although you don’t read about this much, the United States is also a large exporter of oil products, selling abut 2 million barrels of petroleum products per day to about 90 countries.

There is no question that the United States imports a great deal of energy and, in fact, relies on that steady flow to maintain its economy. When that flow is interrupted, we feel the pain in short supplies and higher prices. At the same time, we derive massive economic benefits when we buy the most affordable energy on the world market and when we engage in energy trade around the world.

74. According to the passage, energy independence will make America \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

A. ensure international security B. realize everyone’s dream

C. bring oil prices down D. sound very attractive

75. In the author’s view, bio-fuels \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

A. keep America’s economy running quickly

B. do not provide a sustainable energy supply

C. prove to be a good alternative to petroleum

D. can be produced in large quantity in a short time

76. Why does America depend on oil imports a lot?

A. It wants to expand its storage of crude oil.

B. It wants to keep its own environment undamaged.

C. Its own oil reserves are quickly being used up.

D. Its own oil production falls short of demand.

77. The writer’s purpose in the passage is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

A. to arouse American’s awareness of the energy crisis

B. to explain the increase of international oil trade

C. to justify American’s dependence on oil imports

D. to stress the importance of energy conservation

(B)

For ages the word has been going around that the dog is the man’s best friend. I agree. A dog can be handy as a night watchman around the house, as a pointer on a hunting trip, as a guardian and playmate for the children. But I think that having a dog for a pet is so expensive and annoying that I can do without such a friend.

Providing for the dog’s needs is so expensive that the animal should be an income tax deduction(扣除). There’s the medical bill for shots to keep the animal healthy. Unless it’s kept in the house 24 hours a day, a female must be given “**preventive maintenance**,” a ten- to twenty-dollar investment. Otherwise, before you know it, you’ll have more “income tax deductions” in your family. And dogs have to eat. Don’t think you can buy a case of Ken-L-Ration and be done with it. A dog can be as particular about food as a French expert. To feed even a Chihuahua, a very small Mexican dog, you’ll spend three to five dollars a week. If you own a big dog, you need a large dog-house. They’re expensive. A carpenter will build a luxurious model for about seventy-five dollars. For about thirty dollars’ worth of materials, a weekend’s work, and a smashed thumb, you can build a simple one yourself. And these are only the major costs.

A dog is so annoying that no one in his right mind would want to own one. Consider the dog owner blessed with a dog that fetches—slippers, rubber toys, newspapers. Have you eased your bare feet into slippers bitten by dogs, seen a living room destroyed by a toy boxer, tried to read a newspaper chewed to wet pieces by an obedient Boston bull? And dogs make noise. Some huge dogs bark all night. But you aren’t the only one to endure sleepless nights; your neighbors let you know they didn’t sleep either. Policemen are frequent visitors to dog owners’ homes. They inquire about holes reported dug in neighbors’ flower beds, prize cats injured and bleeding, and pet chickens and ducks sent to their reward. Suspect: your dog! You deny everything, of course. Rex, you assure the officers, was asleep by the door. But you secretly suspect him, because you don’t really know where Rex was all week. And you remember wondering why feathers were floating in his water bowl yesterday. Dogs are annoying. Neither a fire-breathing mother-in-law nor a talkative wife will prove more annoying to man than a dog.

Dog lovers will, of course, claim my argument one-sided, even exaggerated. They might consider me as cruel as the Russians, who possibly attempting to solve their own canine crisis— shot Fido into orbit. But the fact remains, if our best friends caused us the expense and annoyance our dog does, we’d soon encourage them to become astronauts.

74. Which statement is NOT true about the dog as man’s best friend?

A. A dog will help to watch people.

B. A dog will guard your house at night.

C. A dog will play with your children.

D. A dog will serve as a guide for the hunters.

75. In paragraph 2, “**preventive maintenance**” means a measure to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

A. keep the dog in the house the whole day

B. invest ten to twenty dollars in female dogs

C. prevent a female dog from becoming pregnant

D. provide for the food that dogs eat

76. Policemen frequently visit dog owners’ homes because \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

A. the police station was destroyed by dogs

B. neighbor’s domestic pets were killed or injured

C. they want to ask about neighbor’s flowers

D. they can’t stand sleepless nights any more

77. From the last two paragraphs, we can learn that \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

A. a dog is not as annoying as a fire-breathing mother-in-law

B. it is more difficult for man to cope with a talkative wife than with a dog

C. dog lovers prove to be as cruel as the Russians in the argument

D. a dog is a troublemaker that causes its owner the most annoyance