##### Reading exercise

**Direction: read the following passage and then translate the underlined sentences into Chinese**

**Is Creativity Endangered?**

Critics have lamented the “creativity crisis” in recent years, faulting an [education system](http://www.thedailybeast.com/newsweek/2010/07/10/the-creativity-crisis.html) focused on standardized tests and a [reliance on technology](http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2008/07/is-google-making-us-stupid/306868/) that atrophies the mind. But The Times recently reported that in the summer, many schools nationwide become [incubators for creativity](http://www.nytimes.com/2013/07/01/education/at-retooled-summer-schools-creativity-not-just-catch-up.html?pagewanted=all). And every September, the “[genius grants](http://www.macfound.org/programs/fellows/)” from the MacArthur Foundation highlight plenty of innovative individuals for whom technology has sharpened the mind, not dulled it.

Are the critics onto something? If creativity is endangered, what is suppressing it, and what would reverse the trend?

1. Our Society Discourages Innovation

Reports of the death of American creativity are an exaggeration. The [hyperloop](http://bits.blogs.nytimes.com/2013/08/12/elon-musk-unveils-plans-for-hyperloop-high-speed-train/), [Google Glass](http://pogue.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/09/13/google-glass-and-the-future-of-technology/), nano-pharmaceuticals and mind-controlled [robotic legs](http://www.nytimes.com/2008/01/15/science/15robo.html?pagewanted=all) are all examples of its continued vitality.

That said, people with innovative and cutting-edge ideas have likely spent much of their lives swimming against the tide.

1) Creativity flourishes at the intersections of traditional disciplines, but traditional means of assessment often marginalize individuals working to define new and unique fields of endeavor. From the high-stakes tests in K-12, to the academic tenure clock, to the economy’s focus on short-term return on investments, American society’s reward structures tend to discourage unconventional thinking and limit risk-taking.

And yet, creativity thrives in an environment where individuals have the freedom to devote time and effort to ideas and projects that may not have an immediate payoff – projects like [John Dabiri](http://www.macfound.org/fellows/30/)’s analysis of the aerodynamics of schools of fish, to inform the optimal placement of wind turbines. 2) Creativity requires giving self-directed original thinkers space for the missteps and dead ends that are often prerequisites for groundbreaking work. That’s the philosophy behind the [MacArthur Fellows program](http://www.macfound.org/programs/fellows/) and its “no strings attached” grants.

For over 30 years, the MacArthur Foundation has recognized and inspired creativity among the Dabiris of the world through its fellowship program. Each year the program awards 20 to 25 exceptionally talented individuals five-year, unrestricted fellowships, which the news media have dubbed “genius grants.”

The widespread adoption of a “no strings attached” rewards structure is neither practical nor advisable. However, the basic insight — that the best incubator for creativity is an environment that gives the individual autonomy and flexibility — should inform the design of incentives in both the schoolhouse and the workplace. 3) A healthy society requires that we cultivate the next generation of innovators to maintain economic competitiveness, to solve deep-rooted social problems and to create objects of beauty that inspire.

1. Marketing to Children Drowns Out Innovation

Creativity — our ability to invent, conjure, envision, think divergently, and change the status quo — is essential to a thriving democracy and is rooted in children’s creative play. Yet as a society, we seem to do just about everything we can to prevent even very young children from playing. 4) Over-scheduling, lack of access to green space and early emphasis on rote learning are a few of the barriers we’ve constructed. Another primary culprit is today’s unprecedented convergence of unfettered commercialism and ubiquitous screen media.

A commercialized, screen-saturated culture deprives children of what’s essential to creativity: time, space and silence. Children constantly bombarded with stimulation are so busy reacting that they never learn how to generate. 5) Instantaneous access to an endless array of videos, television, apps and games may stave off boredom. But those stretches of having “nothing to do” are exactly what foster the creative intersection of children’s inner world and their immediate surroundings.

The current crush of licensed toys also deters creativity, especially those that sing, dance and talk at the press of a button. Children play less creatively with media-linked toys, which arrive with predetermined names, voices, personalities and scripts. Try making Elmo or Dora into anyone but themselves. Kids also play less creatively with kits — construction sets or packaged art projects designed to achieve one specific end result. The toys that nurture creativity suggest possibilities, but don’t insist on who or what they are and how they must be used. They just lie there, waiting to be transformed.

6) The childhood experience of initiating transformation, and finding the inner resources of flexibility and stamina to bring it to fruition, is the foundation of life-long creativity. Amid the glitter and noise of screen-based commercialism, we need to actively carve out commercial-free, screen-free time and space for children.

Answers for reference:

1. 创造力涌现于传统学科的交叉地带，而传统的评估方式常常使得那些致力于开拓全新和独特领域的人们边缘化。
2. 创造力的产生需要赋予自我导向的、有独创精神的思考者们犯错和走投无路的空间，犯错和走投无路是创新工作的先决条件。
3. 健康的社会需要我们培育新一代的创新者，旨在保持经济的竞争力，解决根深蒂固的社会问题，以及创造激发灵感的美好事物。
4. 过多的事先安排、匮乏的接近自然绿地的机会、对于死记硬背的太早强调，这些都是我们人为制造的一些障碍。另一个罪魁祸首是当今没有约束的商业主义和无处不在的屏幕媒体之间的前所未有的利益交汇。
5. 大量无穷无尽的视频、电视节目、应用程序和游戏的瞬间获得也许能够赶走无聊。可是，正是那些“无所事事”的时段培育了孩子内心世界和周遭环境之间具有创造性的交集。
6. 孩童时期着手改造、并找到成就改造所需要的灵活性和耐力性的内在力量，这是毕生创新精神的基础所在。