Unit 1

Language

**Section Ⅰ READING SKILLS: Developing Your Reading Efficiency**

As a graduate student, you are pressed for time. Your course work, which includes

reading textbook chapters, completing assignments, studying for exams, and writing

papers, competes with part-time jobs and social, recreational, and housekeeping tasks.

Each demands your valuable time. At times, university life may seem like a balancing or juggling act in which you are trying to do many things all at once and do all of them well. You are probably wondering if you will be able to keep up and how to get everything done. One of the best ways to handle the demands and pressures of university life is to become more efficient—to get more done in less time.

Many students think that the only way to become more efficient is to read faster. They believe that slow reading is poor reading. This is, however, not the case. Reading efficiency means more than saving time by reading rapidly. Reading effectively includes understanding the ideas the writer is trying to send and organizing those ideas logically to remember them. Your reading efficiency will increase as you develop techniques that improve your comprehension and retention. These in turn will enable you to use your time most economically.

**Analyzing Your Reading Efficiency**

Are you an efficient reader? Here are some questions that will help you assess your

reading efficiency. Answer "Yes" or "No" to the questions provided.

1. Do you set goals and time limits for yourself at the beginning of each reading-study

session?

2. Do you have any particular questions in mind when you begin to read an assignment?

3. Do you try to understand the author's ideas instead of comprehending the literal

meaning of each word?

4. Do you pay attention to the paragraphs and how they are organized?

5. While reading, do you try to predict or anticipate what the writer will say next?

6. Are you on the alert to words and phrases that signal change or continuation in

thought?

7. Do you sort out more and less important details as you read?

8. When you meet a new word, do you try to figure out its meaning from the way it is used in the sentence?

9. Do you regularly use underlining, summary notes, and marginal notations to identify

important information?

10. When you finish reading an assignment, do you take a few minutes to review what you have read and the writer's purpose of writing?

11. Do you find reading an easy and enjoyable task?

If you answer "Yes" to all or most of the above questions, you are on your way to

becoming an efficient reader.

**Practice of Reading Techniques**

**Answer the following questions before or during reading Text A.**

1. Do you think words have the power to change our lives?

2. What kind of words do you usually search on an e-commerce website about the

commodities, and why?

3. By reading the title of this selection, what do you expect the author to argue in this article?

**Section Ⅱ TEXT A**

**Words Have the Power to Change Our Lives**

**Steve Parker, Jr.**

*A word has the power to change your life. Think about that for a moment because it is literally an Earth-moving statement—to change your life. For more than a decade, technology has brought words into our lives more than ever before. No longer are words just what we hear, write or read—they have become what we create and how we interact with the world around us.*

1 We all grew up believing the children's rhyme, "Sticks and stones may break my

bones, but words can never hurt me. " Yet, at a certain point, you realized that was

completely untrue and that words could hurt, just as you learned Pluto was a planet but

many years later find out it is just a ball of ice no longer classified as a planet. Words, my friends, change everything! Words have a dramatic effect on what we know, how

we interact with people and the decisions we ultimately make. Words can influence us,

inspire us or just as easily bring us to tears.

2 Words change our relationships, our demeanor, our entire system of beliefs, and even our businesses. Being a planet or not being a planet makes a major difference, just as the words "I love you" or "I hate you" have majorly different meanings behind them.

Words have a powerful and undeniably overwhelming influence on us—for good and, at times, for bad. Think for a moment how words have changed your life:

3 *Marry me! It's a girl! You have cancer. We lost him. You're hired! You're fired. We*

*won! We lost. Guilty. Not guilty.*

4 It may not seem intentional, but it has been. At the core, a large "organization of

words" shift has taken place right in front of us. As a result, words have forever changed

our lives and will continue to change our lives as never before. For the majority of us, not a single day goes by when we fail to interact and create relationships with words.

Take Google, for example. Google is a company with a focus on classifying and

organizing words. It is a very simple focus, really: to be better than any other entity at

organizing words. Now, they may say they organize information, including documents,

videos, photos, maps and more. But at the core, they are all words. A document may have many words, but they are always organized in a theme, and a theme can generally be focused to a sentence or title, and a title to a primary subject or word. The same goes for videos, photos, maps and more.

5 Imagine you are in a doctor's office and you are told, "you have cancer. "

6 A single word "cancer" just changed your life and the lives of everyone close to you. Clearly, you listen to what your doctor says, but then you go to a place you know you can get a lot of answers—a search. You may do this when you get home to your computer or tablet or immediately on your mobile phone. But nonetheless, you begin to create and interact with the words by typing a few into the search box: "what is cancer" "cancer treatments" "cancer cures" "cancer survival. " Cancer comes in many forms, so perhaps your search is more specific: "what is triple negative breast cancer" "triple negative breast cancer treatments. " As you type, the words interact with you, providing answers to your questions. As a result, you learn of clinical trials as a treatment option, so you again leverage the interaction with words: "clinical trials for triple negative breast cancer, " and you find a powerful option that gives you another word— hope. Then and there, words and our relationship to them cross over into something that changes our life once again— twice in the same day, perhaps.

7 The meaning and value of words have become largely dependent on real-time

demand, and therefore, the perceived value is determined solely by the epicenter of time

and need. In other words, it's determined when a moment in time crosses paths with a

particular individual's needs and the two interact. In the new economy, words also have an economic value. Therefore, a search for "cancer" is infinitely important and invaluable for the person that was just diagnosed, while the words "free shipping" may be most important and valuable for someone about to buy a "42inch 3D TV, " and both words have monetary value to some third party (i. e. a research institute or Sony ) as well as the provider (i. e. Google or Amazon Amazon).

8 Services like Twitter have also focused on words (very few, in fact, given the 140-

character limit), defining trends via hashtags (a word following a #—i. e. #cancer). That

said, words transcend both search and Twitter. Words have become the key to everyday

life. In our vehicles, many of us use words to get assistance, either via a service such

as OnStar (I need help, my car won't start) or via GPS (and don't turn left when told to turn right, or the next word to leave your mouth may well be S%\*T).

9. On e-commerce websites, such as Amazon. com, FatCork. com, BestBuy. com or even ColonialCandle.com, words change our experience: Free Shipping, We Recommend, One Click Checkout, Out of Stock, Pre Order, etc. The way we interpret the end result of each of those seemingly simple words changes our present and future behaviors in real time. In fact, free shipping is still considered one of the top triggers to purchase.

10 In the media industry, search—both paid search and organic ( SEO )—is a

huge segment of the industry developed around and focused on the use of words. Words

have implications in both paid search and SEO. One of the biggest factors includes relevancy: how relevant are the words searched—to the text ad copy—to the words on the landing page—to the words on the website? They are all interconnected. Words have interconnected us with technology.

11 Consider the new iPhone 4S. A new feature is Siri, a tool that uses words to assist

the user (and with amazing accuracy). By speaking out loud to the phone, users can send messages, schedule meetings, find nearby restaurants, make phone calls and more. If you haven't tried it, you should. You will want to buy the new iPhone 4S just for this feature. In fact, Siri might even save your life, given you no longer have to look at the phone to select a number to dial, thus keeping your eyes on the road.

12 Words also have great impact in the social media context. If a company truly

manages social activity correctly and mines the data for trends via social intelligence analysis, what they would find are great differences in their customer mindset, purchase

strategy, message associations and ultimately needs. This learning can translate into

applied strategies in Customer Service, TV, Print, Outdoor, Event and Digital Media

channels to further connect with customers in a way—and in words—the customer wants and expects from the business, instead of what the business thinks the customer wants.

13 Finally, words also have powerful meaning in religion. Great debates and even wars occur over the use and meaning of certain words in religious context. Consider the great differences in thought that occur simply with the mention of the words God, Allah and Buddha. The same can be said for politics. You will get strikingly different responses from everyday ordinary folks with just the simple mention of Republican, Democrat or Tea Party.

14 Words have forever changed our lives. They change our perspective, buying habits, moods and even how we use technology. Perhaps they help you find a friend, a product, a service, a job, a spouse, get a recommendation or even save your life.

**vocabulary**

rhyme /raɪm/ n. correspondence in the sounds of two or more lines 韵；押韵

interact /ˌɪntə'rækt/ v. to act together or towards others or with others 互相作用；互相影响

ultimately /'ʌltɪmətli/ adv. as the end; result of a succession or process 最后；最终

demeanor /dɪ'miːnə/ n. the way a person behaves toward other people 行为；举止

undeniably /ˌʌndɪ'naɪəbli/ adv. to an undeniable degree 不可否认地

overwhelming /ˌəʊvə'welmɪŋ/ adj. so strong as to be irresistible; very large or greater,

more important etc. than any other 势不可挡的；无法抗拒的；巨大的，压倒性的

guilty /'ɡɪlti/ adj. chargeable with a reprehensible act; showing a sense of guilt 有罪的；内疚的

intentional /ɪn'tenʃənl/ adj. done or made or performed with purpose and intent 存心的；故意的

classify /'klæsɪfaɪ/ v. to arrange or order by classes or categories 分类；归类

entity /'entəti/ n. that which is perceived to have its own distinct existence 实体；存在

triple /'trɪpl/ adj. three times as great or many 三倍的

clinical /'klɪnɪkl/ adj. relating to a clinic or conducted in or as if in a clinic 临床的

leverage /'lev(ə)rɪdʒ/ v. to spread or use resources, ideas etc. in different ways 充分利用（资源、观点等）

perceived /pə'siːvd/ adj. detected by means of the senses 感知到的；感观的

epicenter /'epɪsentə/ n. the point on the Earth's surface directly above the focus of an

earthquake 震中；中心

infinitely /'ɪnfɪnətli/ adv. without bounds 无限地；无穷地

diagnose /'daɪəɡnəʊz/ v. to determine or distinguish the nature of a problem or an illness

判断；诊断

monetary /'mʌnɪtri/ adj. relating to or involving money 货币的；金 融的

hashtag /'hæʃtæɡ/ n. a label that is attached to something to indicate its owner, nature or price 标签

transcend /træn'send/ v. to be greater in scope or size than some standard 超越；胜过

interpret /ɪn'tɜːprɪt/ v. to explain the meaning of sth. 说明；解释

trigger /'trɪɡə(r)/ n. the cause of a sudden reaction 引发突然反应的原因，诱因

segment /'seɡmənt/ n. one of the parts into which something naturally divides 部分

implication /ˌɪmplɪ'keɪʃən/ n. a possible effect or result of an action or a decision 可能的影响，后果

relevancy /'reləvənsi/ n. the relation of something to the matter at hand 相关物；切题

interconnected /ˌɪntəkə'nektɪd/ adj. things that are connected and have an effect on each

other 相互关联的；相互影响的

mindset /'maɪndset/ n. a habitual or characteristic mental attitude that determines how

you will interpret and respond to situations 精神状态；心态

strikingly /'straɪkɪŋli/ adv. in a way that is very easy to notice 惹人注目地；醒目地

response /rɪ'spɒns/ n. a spoken or written answer（口头的或书面的）回答，答复

spouse /spaʊs/ n. a husband or wife 配偶

**About the Author**

**Steve Parker, Jr.** is the CEO and Co-Founder of Levelwing, an American digital marketing firm offering media, social and analytics services to help businesses market and operate with greater clarity and profitability. Today, Parker works from the Charleston headquarters and speaks across the country at business and marketing industry events and conferences, as well as leads the company's overall directional activities.

**EXERCISES**

**Ⅰ Reading comprehension**

**A. Answer the following questions or complete the following statements.**

1. Why did the author mention a children's rhyme at the beginning of the article? D

A. Because its description about "words" is meaningful.

B. Because its description about "words" is educational.

C. Because its description about "words" is funny.

D. Because its description about "words" is untrue.

2. According to the text, words can change the following things EXCEPT \_\_\_B\_\_\_\_\_.

A. our behaviors

B. our demands

C. our beliefs

D. our trades

3. According to the text, which of the following statements is TRUE about Google? A

A. Google is a company that concentrates on categorizing and organizing words.

B. Google is better than any other entity.

C. Google is not good at organizing information.

D. Google can change documents to words.

4. The example "cancer" in Paragraph 6 tells us that \_\_\_\_C\_\_\_\_.

A. words have no interactions with us

B. words can fool us

C. words can change our lives

D. words are powerless

5. According to the text, words have the following values EXCEPT \_\_\_C\_\_\_\_\_.

A. a perceived value

B. an economic value

C. a momentary value

D. a monetary value

6. It can be inferred from the text that customers may buy a product online with a higher possibility if they see the words \_\_\_\_A\_\_\_\_.

A. Free Shipping

B. We Recommend

C. One Click Checkout

D. Pre Order

**B. Fill in the following blanks with information in Text A.**

**Main Idea:**

A word has the power to change our lives. The words that we hear, write or read have become what we \_\_\_\_create\_\_\_\_ and how we \_\_\_\_interact\_\_\_\_ the world around us.

Introduction: Paragraphs 1— 3

By doubting the truth of a children's rhyme, the author introduced the topic of this article: words have the power to change our lives. Words have a \_\_\_\_\_dramatic\_ effect on\_\_ what we know, how we interact with people and the decisions we finally make. Words change our \_\_\_\_ relationships \_\_\_\_, our \_\_\_\_ demeanor \_\_\_\_, our \_\_\_\_ entire system of beliefs \_\_\_\_, and even our \_\_\_\_ businesses \_\_\_\_. Then several examples of daily used words in our life are listed to enhance readers interests in

this topic.

Body: Paragraphs 4—13: the power of words

Paragraphs 4—6

The author gives two detailed examples to show that words can change one's life.

Firstly, for most of us, every day we need to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ with words. Take Google, a company with a focus on \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ words, for example, they may say they organize information, including documents, videos, photos, maps and more. But \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, they are all words.

Secondly, when you heard the word "cancer" from the doctor, it may depress you and ruin your life. Then you begin to create and interact with the words by typing a few into the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. It will give you \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to fight against it. In the end, a word that has a negative meaning may change to something positive.

Paragraphs 7—13

The author explains the different meaning and value of words in our lives.

First of all, the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ is determined only by the epicenter of time and need. That is to say, it's determined when a moment in time \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ a particular individual's needs and the two interact.

Secondly, in the new economy, words also have an \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. For instance, the words "free shipping" may be most \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ for someone about to buy a "42-inch 3D TV, " and both words have \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to some third party.

Thirdly, words have \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ technology. Consider the new iPhone 4S. A new feature is Siri, a tool that uses words to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ the user. By speaking out loud to the phone, users can send messages, schedule meetings, find nearby restaurants, make phone calls and more.

Fourthly, words also have great impact in the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. Through social intelligence analysis, a company can find the great differences in their customer \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, message associations and ultimate \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

Finally, words also have powerful meaning in \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

Conclusion: Paragraph 14

The author concludes in the last paragraph that words have forever changed our lives by restating the points that words can change our perspective, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and even how we use technology.