



新一代大学英语 English

提高篇

视听说教程 1

College life: Challenges
and opportunities

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Explore 1: Listening and speaking

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After the exciting experience of a year in college – meeting new people, having new experiences and gaining independence – coming back home can be surprisingly difficult. At first, I indulged in everything I had always loved about being home, but the problem was that once the first rush of excitement declined, the feeling of being different became hard to shake off.

The idea might seem a bit extreme, especially for second-year students who have only spent a year or less away from home. But as you enter a new culture, you quickly adapt to a different way of life. Meanwhile, everyone at home changes. For me, it was just like waking up from a strange dream, where everything was almost the same as I remembered; yet a few details weren't right. Some friends had become distant while others had become closer together. On top of that, I felt as if I'd changed, too.

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When you arrive in an unknown place, it takes effort to adjust to your new surroundings. Your days are packed with new interests and busy schedules. So, it's hardly surprising that once this pace of life is changed, many students feel at a loose end.

For many of us, it takes time to solve the problem. To get over it, we need to integrate some of our new habits and hobbies into our old life. Readjusting at home has been harder than life on campus. But as I combine some of the things I loved about living in college with my home life, I'm starting to find a new normal.

Explore 1: Listening and speaking

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Miss Lee: Hello, College Career Center. How can I help?

Jack: Hi, I'm currently a sophomore majoring in Public Health. I know I have a long way to go, but I really want to work in the UN or a big NGO after graduation.

Miss Lee: That's great!

Jack: But the problem is I don't know what I should do to make this really happen. I mean, could you give me some advice to help me get prepared?

Miss Lee: Well, first of all, just try to do the best you can in your study. Since you want to work in an organization like the UN, my recommendation would be to do a double major. In addition to your current discipline, add an International Relations or International Studies program.

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Jack: That's a good idea. I'm particularly interested in the African countries. Maybe I can try to complete an extra program in African Studies.

Miss Lee: Also make sure to get involved in activities and projects outside the classroom as much as possible. The Model UN run by the Student Union would be a good start.

Jack: That's a good point. I didn't even know we have a Model UN.

Miss Lee: Languages are also very important for the UN and NGOs working internationally. Make sure you pick up at least one second language with fluency.

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Jack: I have been learning French since high school, and I'm planning to take another language this year. Can I find any language course here?

Miss Lee: Yeah, of course. Our college has more than enough language courses you can choose. Just go to the Language Center website and check out which one you like.

Jack: Great! Thanks a lot!



Explore 1: Listening and speaking

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American colleges are facing what some people call a “perfect storm” of problems – college costs are rising, and there are not enough jobs for all those completing study programs. Yet employers say they cannot find enough workers with technical skills. It seems that our expensive college education barely qualifies students for future jobs.

One solution may be found in the growing number and quality of online classes. Such classes might significantly change colleges the way the Internet has already changed music, publishing, sales, and other businesses.

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Many top universities now offer online classes. They teach everything from computer programming to the science of cooking. Many classes are at little or no cost, and they are updated more often than traditional college programs.

John Haber, a 17-year-old boy in New York, has taken enough online classes to earn a four-year college degree in just one year. Experts say the new technology will have a major effect on colleges. Some predict future classes may be a mix of online lectures and professors helping students work through difficult problems in person.



Explore 1: Listening and speaking

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Bethany Gordon from University of Virginia just took top prize for her radio program on how virtual reality could help engineers to improve people's lives.

This summer, over 150 students took part in the How to Change the World (HtCtW) challenge at the Global Grand Challenges Summit in Washington, DC.

The challenge was run by UCL based on its own How to Change the World program, which is taken by undergraduate engineers as part of the Integrated Engineering Program.

The summit is jointly organized by the UK, the US and Chinese academies of engineering. It brings together science and

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engineering professionals and students from across the three hosting countries. The aim is to seek solutions to humanity's great challenges.






To encourage communication among people taking part in the summit, the students from the UK, US and China were tasked to create radio programs explaining how to solve one of the great challenges for engineering and how that solution could impact the lives of people around the world.

A radio program made by Yun Gu from Peking University and Katie Brown from Auburn University was selected as the runner-up. Their program looks at the barriers to women entering the engineering profession and how to handle this issue.



Explore 2: Viewing and speaking

WORDS AND EXPRESSIONS

-  critically *ad.* 极其
-  inherently *ad.* (特性) 内在地, 固有地
-  dumb *a.* 愚蠢的
-  deficiency *n.* 弱点; 缺点; 不足
-  embrace *v.* 欣然接受



Explore 2: Viewing and speaking

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From the day we were born, we are told to do well in school. We are told: “Study hard! Get good grades! Go to college!” In somewhere along the way, we get the idea that our grades are critically important. We celebrate the As; we punish the Cs and Ds. And at some point, we’ve learned to see ourselves as A students or C students. We let the grades define us. We think (if) we are A students, we must be inherently intelligent; if we are C students, we must be inherently not-as-smart. This affects how we school. We stop studying to learn something new. Rather, we study to maintain a GPA. We fear tests as ways to weighed (weigh) us out, and believe teacher comments are point-by-point reasons why we are dumb. We start looking for the easy teachers and the easy classes, the ones that won’t threaten our GPAs. We learn that struggle is a sign of deficiency, that if you have to work

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hard, there must be something wrong with you. And we go to college with the belief that success, failure, (and) worth are all measured by grades

That stops today.

The point of college isn't to prove your intelligence, but to grow your intelligence. And our intelligence can only grow when we're challenged. We shouldn't fear tests, or teacher comments, or grades. None of those things define us. They are not even about us. They are all about the work. They tell us this is where you are right now, not this is where you'll always be, or this is who you inherently are. If we get As in a class but learn nothing, we are no smarter than if we didn't take the class at all, because when we struggle, that's when we learn. And struggling in college means we are doing college right.

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We have to challenge ourselves; we have to take the hard classes; we have to embrace the hard work – not as a vice, but as a virtue. We have to be open to failure. If we try, do poorly, read the comments, and learn what didn't work, our intelligence grows (will grow). And that's the point of college – to grow. The point is not to get As, but to learn from the Bs and Cs and Ds and Fs. And in the end, the grades don't tell you how successful you'll be, and they can't measure your worth. What matters is whether you're learning.

So celebrate the learning. Celebrate the growth. Take the challenging class. Read the comments. Embrace the process. Grow your intelligence.



Further listening

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About 60 percent of students believe self-study plays a very important role in their university education, but only 16 percent of 300 surveyed students have “high” self-awareness in planning self-study. Only two percent ranked “very high,” while 76 percent rated “average.”

Tony Smith, a college professor, noted that with the new university education structure, the amount of time for students’ self-study needs to be three times that spent on lectures.

He said that students need to prepare well before going to class. They also have to conduct theoretical research, carry out experiments and do extra exercises. However, about 60 percent of students cannot meet the requirements. The proportions could be even higher, 70-80 percent, in some “special classes.”

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He noted that this explains why lecturers and students cannot communicate efficiently during the lecture hours. Students cannot raise questions and do not have necessary understanding to discuss topics.



Further listening

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Final-year students at a university in England are angry after they took an economics exam. Students from the University of Sheffield have signed a petition online to say the exam questions were “impossible” to answer, and they want the university to look into this. The students say the exam contained questions on topics that were not in their course. They also say the questions included a lot of difficult math that they had not been taught. One student said a lecturer told them they would only need “simple” math. They are now worried that they will get low test scores, and that this will affect what kind of degree they get.

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The head of the Economics Department, Professor Andy Dickerson, told the BBC that the exam was fair. He said not all the questions needed math. He explained: “All questions were based on topics taught in the course and for which further reading was provided.” He added that one question in the exam used a term that students may not have seen before, but there was no problem because the question explained the meaning of the term. The university said it would look carefully at the results.



Further listening

Scripts ▼ 

Sage: Hey Brian, what's up? You look so tired.

Brian: I'm just so depressed. No matter how hard I try, I just can't seem to get anything done. I'm really tired and sometimes I even fall asleep in class.

Sage: Do you get enough sleep at night?

Brian: Not really. I probably could only get about three or four hours of sleep everyday if I'm lucky.

Sage: Poor you! Why didn't you tell us earlier? You know, it really helps to talk to your friends when you're feeling stressed or lousy. It cheers you up.

Brian: Well, I'm sort of avoiding you guys recently because I don't want to trouble you.

Sage: Don't be silly. Is there something worrying you?

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Brian: I guess I'm just worried too much about my grades because I really don't want to let my teachers and parents down. The more I think about this stuff, the worse it gets and the less I get done.

Sage: It really sounds like a vicious circle. You really need to stop being so stressed out so that you can start focusing on your work again.

Brian: But how can I get started?

Sage: Actually, you've already started. You see, you've found out that you're not getting enough sleep and you need to keep in touch with your friends who support you and keep you in a positive state of mind.

Brian: Yeah, you're right. What do you usually do when you feel stressed out?

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Sage: Well, I used to run whenever I felt stressed. And now I really like listening to music. It helps me relax and puts me to sleep.

Brian: Maybe I can try it, too!



Further listening

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There is an endless number of reasons why you might consider taking a gap year, but according to Nancy Behrman, President of Behrman Communications, the most important reason lies in the outcome.

The overwhelming majority of those who take a gap year do so for the purpose of self-discovery. You must step away from the demands of academic life in order to gain a bit of perspective regarding what truly drives you each and every day. By experiencing different people, places and cultures over the course of a gap year, you may finally find the ideal course of action to pursue.

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If you already have a plan in place and feel confident in where that plan will lead, then the gap year may not necessarily be something you need to pursue. You might be better off going right into an advanced degree program or starting out your own business right away. On the other hand, if you are unsure or lack confidence in where your academic career might be taking you, then a gap year may indeed be an ideal solution for you to consider.



Additional listening

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College students are more concerned with building esteem than salaries when it comes to seeking jobs, China's leading job recruitment services provider has said.

Guo Sheng, chief executive of Zhaopin Ltd, made the remarks at a year-end ceremony on Friday. The latest entrants into China's labor market are young people born in the 90s who have a different mindset about how to approach employment, he said.

Both employees and college students agree that "respect for employees" is the most important when evaluating employers,



Additional listening

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but the latter demand more esteem, harmony and fairness, according to a report by Zhaopin Ltd.

Students have showed a declining concern for salaries, but focus more on the management approaches by companies, the report said, adding that foreign-funded enterprises have become the first choice.

Employers should pay more attention to employees' demands, both spiritually and financially, Guo added.



Additional listening

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W: Oh, Ken, I have been trying to talk to you.

M: Hi, Denise, what's up?

W: I have this great job lined up to manage a clothing store at the mall.

M: Oh, say in detail, please.

W: Well, one of the professors in my department just told me about a summer practice program that is available. She thinks I might be able to practice in the office at the Wayfarer Hotel here in town.

M: That sounds like a great opportunity too. Why not take advantage of it?

W: I'd love to, especially since I'm studying hotel management.



Additional listening

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It would be a great way to get some practical experience in my field.

M: And you never know, it might lead to some thing with them after graduation. They're one of the biggest hotel chains in the area.

W: You're right. But the problem is that I wouldn't be making nearly as much money as I would be working in the clothing store. Not to mention the discount I'd get on clothes there.

M: How much money can you get from your practice work?

W: Very little money. But I can get a free room and board for the summer.

M: Well, if I were you, I'd take it anyway. You can always get a job during the next school year to make a few extra bucks.



Additional listening

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In America, May and June are the traditional months for graduations. The latest survey in March found that employers expected to hire 22 percent fewer graduates this year than last. Most blamed the recession.

There is no big increase in graduates who plan to stay in school and avoid the job market. About 27 percent said they plan to go to graduate school, compared to about 24 percent a year ago.

Engineering and accounting graduates were more likely to have started their job search already and to have accepted a job. These are among the best paid professions for people with just a college degree. On average, engineering majors expect to start at around



Additional listening

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62 thousand dollars a year. Accounting majors expect about 45 thousand. So how can students increase their chances of getting a job? Experts say the most effective tool is a school's career counseling center. Counselors can help students with job applications and preparing for interviews. They also let students know about job openings and events like job recruitment fairs. They can also help first-year students decide what to study.

Another way to look for a job is to do an internship. This is when a student gets experience in a position that may or may not be paid. The latest survey found that 73 percent of graduates who did get jobs had completed an internship.

