

1. 阅读理解

Reading may be fundamental, but how the brain gives meaning to letters on a page has been a mystery. Two new studies fill in some details on how the brains of efficient readers handle words. One of the studies, published in the April 30 *Neuron*, suggests that a visual-processing area of the brain recognizes common words as whole units. Another study, published online April 27 in *PLOS ONE*, makes it known that the brain operates two fast parallel systems for reading, linking visual recognition of words to speech.

Maximilian Riesenhuber, a neuroscientist at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C., wanted to know whether the brain reads words letter by letter or recognizes words as whole objects. He and his colleagues showed sets of real words or nonsense(无意义的词语) words to volunteers undergoing fMRI scans. The words differed in only one letter, such as “farm” and “form” or “soat” and “poat”, or were completely different, such as “farm” and “coat” or “poat” and “hime”. The researchers were particularly interested in what happens in the visual word form area, or VWFA, an area on the left side of the brain just behind the ear that is involved in recognizing words.

Riesenhuber and his colleagues found that neurons(神经元) in the VWFA respond strongly to changes in real words. Changing “farm” to “form”, for example, produced as great a change in activity as changing “farm” to “coat”, the team reports in *Neuron*. The area responded slowly to single-letter changes in made-up words.

The data suggests that readers grasp real words as whole objects, rather than focusing on letters or letter combinations. And as a reader’s exposure to a word increases, the brain comes to recognize the shape of the word. Meaning is passed on after recognition in the brain, Riesenhuber says.

The researchers don’t yet know how longer and less familiar words are recognized, or if the brain can be trained to recognize nonsense words as a unit.

【1】Riesenhuber’s research probably focuses on whether the brain _____.

- A. recognizes words as a unit or reads them letter by letter.
- B. operates two fast parallel systems for reading
- C. takes longer to read less familiar words or not
- D. handles nonsense words as a unit

【2】Riesenhuber and his colleagues carried out their research by _____.

- A. giving pairs of real words totally different
- B. arranging the words in different order
- C. showing pairs of different words
- D. making volunteers read some longer words

【3】Riesenhuber’s research is significant in that it shows how the brain _____.

- A. responds to familiar words
- B. relates meaning to letters
- C. recognizes the form of a word
- D. reacts to made-up words

2. 阅读理解

Over the past couple of days, on our local Freecycle page there have been a lot of wanted posts, all from the same person, basically asking for everything you’d need to set up a house from scratch.

One of the things they asked for was a queen-sized bed. At that time we just happened to have an extra one, so I messaged them. They immediately came in the afternoon. The people who came, two ladies and a man, are actually friends of another woman named Jenny who owned a young boy. This woman has escaped from a dangerous, violent relationship and these friends of hers are helping her and her son start over again, with everything from furniture to toothbrushes on their list of needs.

While they were here, I also gave them one of our spare bookcase and some coffee cups. I even asked them to keep in touch in case they needed anything else—I have a way of connecting people with things. I offered the woman a cupboard we had as well; her friends just needed to see if there was a place and/or a need for it in their friend’s new home.

I was so excited to meet those loving people, who were obviously willing to help their friend. It was clear how protective they felt of this woman and her boy, how much they love her and wanted her to have a happy and safe life, and to spend even a few minutes with people like that is an experience I’ll remember for a long, long time.

A quick thank-you to all who have sent more donations over the last couple of days, as well as lovely messages of thanks and blessings. Sometimes it’s hard to keep up with it all, but it’s a problem I’m happy to have.

【1】What were the people who arrived at the author’s in the afternoon going to do?

- A. Promote some products customers needed.
- B. Fetch the bed the author would give away.
- C. Recycle second-hand furniture.
- D. Help repair the author’s furniture.

【2】Which of the following words can best describe the author?

- A. Warm-hearted.
- B. Mean.
- C. Narrow-minded.
- D. Intelligent.

【3】From the last two paragraphs, we can infer that _____.

- A. the author doesn’t like to spend too much time with those people like Jenny’s friends
- B. Jenny and her boy will hardly get help from the author’s friends
- C. the author was disappointed with those only sending messages of thanks and blessings
- D. Jenny and her boy will have a new start with the help of people

【4】The suitable title for the text should be “_____”.

- A. No pains, no gains
- B. God helps those who help themselves
- C. Many hands make light work
- D. Where there is will, there is a way

3. 阅读理解

When you start working on something but don’t finish it, thoughts of the unfinished work continue to jump into your mind even when you’ve moved on to other things. Psychologists refer to this psychological phenomenon as the Zeigarnik effect. The effect was first observed by a Russian psychologist named Bluma Zeigarnik. While sitting in a busy restaurant in Vienna, she noted the waiters had better memories of unpaid orders. Once the bill was paid, however, the waiters had difficulty remembering the exact details of the orders.

In one of her studies, participants were asked to complete simple tasks such as putting together puzzles, or solving math problems. Half of the participants were interrupted halfway through these tasks. After an hour-long delay, Zeigarnik asked the participants to give an account of what they’d been working on. She discovered that those who had their work interrupted were twice as likely to remember what they had been doing as those who had actually completed the tasks.

We can use this effect to our advantage. For example, if you’re struggling to memorize something important, momentary interruptions might actually work to your advantage. Rather than simply remember the information over and over again, review it several times and then take a break. While you’re focusing on other things, you’ll find yourself mentally returning to the information you were studying.

We often put off tasks until the last moment, only completing them in a rush at the last possible moment. Unfortunately, this tendency can lead to heavy stress and even poor performance. One way to overcome this is to put the Zeigarnik effect to work. Start by taking the first step, no matter how small. Once you’ve begun, but not finished your work, you’ll find yourself thinking of the task until, at last, you finish it. You might not finish it all at once, but each small step you take puts you closer to