

2020年12月四级考试阅读长篇阅读（贫穷和我们每个人都有关）

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Poverty is a Story About Us, Not Them

[A] Too often still, we think we know what poverty looks like. It's the way we've been taught, the images we've been force-fed for decades. The chronically homeless. The undocumented immigrant. The urban poor, usually personified as a woman of color, the "welfare queen" politicians still too often reference.

[B] But as income inequality rises to record levels in the United States, even in the midst of a record economic expansion, those familiar images are outdated, hurtful, and counterproductive to focusing attention on solutions and building ladders of opportunity.

[C] Today's faces of income inequality and lack of opportunity look like all of us. It's Anna Landre, a disabled Georgetown University student fighting to keep health benefits that allow her the freedom to live her life. It's Tiffanie Standard, a mentor for young women of color in Philadelphia who want to be tech entrepreneurs — but who must work multiple jobs to stay afloat. It's Sharon Penner, an artisan in rural Georgia, who worries about retirement security and health care options for senior gay women. It's Charles Oldstein, a U.S. Air Force veteran in New Orleans who would still be on the street if the city hadn't landed a zero tolerance policy for homelessness among veterans. It's Ken Outlaw, a welder in rural North Carolina whose dream of going back to school at a local community college was dashed by Hurricane Florence — just one of the extreme weather events that have tipped the balance for struggling Americans across the nation.

[D] If these are the central characters of our story about poverty, what layers of perceptions, myths, and realities must we unearth to find meaningful solutions and support? In pursuit of revealing this complicated reality,

Mothering Justice, led by women of color, went last year to the state capital in Lansing, Michigan, to lobby on issues that affect working mothers. One of the Mothering Justice organizers went to the office of a state representative to talk about the lack of affordable childcare — the vestiges of a system that expected mothers to stay home with their children while their husbands worked.

A legislative staffer dismissed the activist's concerns, telling her "my husband took care of that — I stayed home."

[E] That comment, says Atkinson, "was meant to shame" and relied on the familiar trope that a woman of color concerned about income inequality and programs that promote mobility must by definition be a single mom, probably with multiple kids. In this case, Mothering Justice activist happened to be married. And in most cases in the America of 2019, the images that come to mind when we hear the words poverty or income inequality fail miserably in reflecting a complicated reality: poverty touches virtually all of us. The face of income inequality, for all but a very few of us, is the one we each see in the mirror.

[F] How many of us are poor in the U.S.? It depends on who you ask. According to the Census Bureau, 38 million people in the U.S. are living below the official poverty thresholds (currently \$20,231 for a family of three with two children). Taking into account economic need beyond that absolute measure, the Institute for Policy Studies found that 140 million people are poor or low-income, living

below 200 percent of the Census' s supplemental measure of poverty. That' s almost half the U. S. population.

[G] No matter the measure, within that massive group, poverty is extremely diverse. We know that some people are more affected than others, like children, the elderly, people with disabilities, and people of color.

[H] But the fact that 4 in 10 Americans can' t come up with \$400 in an emergency is a commonly cited statistic for good reason: economic instability stretches across race, gender, and geography. It even reaches into the middle classes, as real wages have stagnated for all but the very wealthy and temporary spells of financial instability are not uncommon.

[I] Negative caricatures remain of who is living in poverty as well as what is needed to move out of it. The iconic American myth is that you can pull yourself up by your bootstraps and change a bad situation into a good one. The reality is that finding opportunity without help from families, friends, schools, and community is virtually impossible. And the playing field is nothing close to level.

[J] The FrameWorks Institute, a research group that focuses on public framing of issues, has studied what props up stereotypes and narratives of poverty in

the United Kingdom. “People view economic success and wellbeing in life as ... a product of choice, willpower, drive, grit, and gumption,” says Nat Kendall-Taylor, CEO of FrameWorks. “When we see people who are struggling,” he says, those assumptions “lead us to the perception that people in poverty are lazy, they don’t care, and they haven’t made the right decisions.”

[K] Does this sound familiar? Similar ideas surround poverty in the U.S. And these assumptions wreak havoc on reality. “When people enter into that pattern of thinking,” says Kendall-Taylor, “it’s cognitively comfortable to make sense of issues of poverty in that way. It creates a kind of cognitive blindness — all of the factors external to a person’s drive and choices that they’ve made become invisible and fade from view.”

[L] Those external factors include the difficulties concomitant with low-wage work or structural discrimination based on race, gender, or ability. Assumptions get worse when people who are poor use government benefits to help them survive. There is a great tension between “the poor” and those who are receiving what has become a dirty word: “welfare.”

[M] According to the General Social Survey, 71 percent of respondents believe the country is spending too little on “assistance to the poor.” On the other hand, 22 percent think we are spending too little on “welfare” : 37 percent

believe we are spending too much.

[N] “Poverty has been interchangeable with people of color — but specifically black women and black mothers,” says Atkinson of Mothering Justice. It’s true that black mothers are more affected by poverty than many other groups, yet they are disproportionately the face of poverty. For example, Americans routinely overestimate the share of black recipients of public assistance programs.

[O] In reality, most people will experience some form of financial hardship at some point in their lives. Indeed, people tend to dip in and out of poverty, perhaps due to unexpected obstacles like losing a job, or when hours of a low-wage job fluctuate.

[P] Something each of us can do is to treat each other with the dignity and compassion that is deserved and to understand deeply that the issue of poverty touches all of us.

【E】 36. One legislative staffer assumed that a woman of color who advocated affordable childcare must be a single mother. **【E 段的 That comment relied on the familiar trope that a woman of color concerned about income inequality and**

programs that promote mobility must by definition be a single mom, probably with multiple kids. 其中 that comment (that 代词往上指代, 指的是上一段 One legislative staffer 的言论) 替换 One legislative staffer】

【H】37. People from different races, genders, and regions all suffer from a lack of financial security. 【H段的 But the fact that 4 in 10 Americans can't come up with \$400 in an emergency is a commonly cited statistic for good reason: economic instability stretches across race, gender, and geography. 其中, economic instability 替换 a lack of financial security, geography 替换 regions】

【M】38. According to a survey, while the majority believe too little assistance is given to the poor, more than a third believe too much is spent on welfare.

【M段的 according to a survey, 71 percent of respondents believe the country is spending too little on “assistance to the poor.” On the other hand, 22 percent think we are spending too little on “welfare”; 37 percent believe we are spending too much. 其中 71 percent 对应 the majority, 37 percent 对应 more than a third】

【J】39. A research group has found that Americans who are struggling are thought to be lazy as they have made the wrong decisions. 【J段的 “When we see people who are struggling,” he says, those assumptions “lead us to the perception that people in poverty are lazy, they don't care, and they haven't made the

right decisions.”】

【D】40. Under the old system in American, a mother was supposed to stay home and take care of her children. 【D段的 the vestiges of a system that system that expected mothers to stay home with their children while their husbands worked. 其中 old system 对应 the vestiges of a system, expected mothers to …对应 a mother was supposed to,】

【F】41. … found that nearly 50% of Americans are poor or receive low pay. 【F段的 the Institute for Policy Studies found that 140 million people are poor or low-income, living below 200 percent of the Census’ s supplemental measure of poverty. That’ s almost half the U.S. population. 其中, half the U.S. population 替换 50% of Americans, low pay 替换 low-income】

【N】42. Americans usually overestimate the number of blacks receiving welfare benefits. 【N段的 For example, Americans routinely overestimate the share of black recipients of public assistance programs. 其中, routinely 替换 usually, the number of blacks 替换 the share of black recipients, public assistance programs 替换 welfare benefits.】

【I】43. It is impossible for Americans to lift themselves out of poverty entirely on their own. 【I段的 The iconic American myth is that you can pull

yourself up by your bootstraps and change a bad situation into a good one. The reality is that finding opportunity without help from families, friends, schools, and community is virtually impossible. 其中 impossible 是原词, lift themselves out of poverty on their own 替换 pull yourself up,】

【C】44. Nowadays, it seems none of us can get away from income inequality.

【C段的段落首句, Today's faces of income inequality and lack of opportunity look like all of us. 其中 today 对应 nowadays, none of us can get away 对应 all of us】

【L】45. Assumptions about poor people become even more negative when they live on welfare. 【L段的 Assumptions get worse when people who are poor use government benefits to help them survive. 其中 get worse 替换 become more negative, use government benefits 替换 welfare】