

# Research on Test Item Design for the Gaokao Reading Section Based on the Double Reduction Policy and Core Competencies

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**Abstract:** This paper systematically examines the distribution data, proposition cases, and common issues in senior high school English test design over the past four years, based on the Academic Quality Levels in the General Senior High School English Curriculum Standards (2017 Edition, 2020 Revision)<sup>[2]</sup> and the educational requirements of “reducing quantity and improving quality” under the “Double Reduction” policy. It provides an in-depth analysis of the proposition characteristics of various question types, including Reading A/B/C/D passages, Seven-Select-Five, Cloze Test, Grammar Gap-filling, and Writing (including Continuation Writing), and proposes targeted test design strategies. The research indicates that high school English test design must achieve a four-dimensional integration: policy empowerment—competency orientation—question-type adaptation—problem avoidance. Guided by the “Double Reduction”, benchmarked against Academic Quality Level II (the core criterion for the Gaokao), and utilizing the differentiated assessment objectives of each question type, teachers should design tests that avoid common pitfalls such as out-of-syllabus vocabulary, loose logic, and lack of educational value, ultimately achieving the goals of assessment-driven instruction, precise burden reduction, and competency enhancement.

**Keywords:** High school English; Test design; “Double Reduction” policy; Academic quality levels; Core competencies; Question type characteristics

## 1. Introduction

Against the backdrop of deepening implementation of the “Double Reduction” policy and core competency-oriented educational reform, high school English test design has evolved beyond being a mere “knowledge assessment tool” into a vehicle with three functions: “precise burden reduction, instructional guidance, and moral education.” The General Senior High School English Curriculum Standards (2017 Edition, 2020 Revision) explicitly states that the English Academic Quality Level is the core basis for daily teaching, academic proficiency tests, and Gaokao question design, with Level II serving as the primary standard for Gaokao questions. It requires students to comprehensively apply linguistic knowledge and learning strategies in “less familiar contexts” to understand and express complex texts.

A review of existing research reveals that academia has conducted two key types of exploration around “Double Reduction” and core competencies: one focuses on the macro guidance of “Double Reduction” on question design, such as Zhang Min (2024) proposed that “reducing quantity and improving quality” requires eliminating out-of-syllabus content and optimizing test point distribution<sup>[6]</sup>, yet the study fails to delve into differentiated design strategies for each question type; the other emphasizes the integration of core competencies with test questions, such as Wang Qiang and Cheng Xiaotang (2022) clarifying assessment principles oriented by competencies<sup>[4]</sup>, and Li Lijuan (2025) analyzed the characteristics of reading comprehension competency assessment, but mostly limited to single question types, lack systematic integration of all question types (such as continuation writing and seven-select-five). Meanwhile, although existing research mentions the Gaokao’s “One Core, Four Layers, Four Wings,” few have systematically applied the conceptual consistency of “Double Reduction — Core Competencies — Evaluation System” throughout the entire test design process, nor have they proposed practical “problem avoidance” pathways targeting common issues like out - of - syllabus vocabulary, loose logic, and lack of educational value. Based on this, this research focuses on

three core questions: Firstly, we ask how can a four-dimensional design framework for high school English tests be constructed, based on the conceptual consistency of “Double Reduction” and core competencies, and responding to the Gaokao’s “One Core, Four Layers, Four Wings” system? Secondly, we ask what specific strategies can be design for the eight major question types including Reading A/B/C/D passages, Seven-Select-Five, etc., to achieve synergy between “reducing quantity and improving quality” and core competency cultivation while avoiding typical proposition problems? Finally, we ask whether this design strategy can effectively meet the requirements of Academic Quality Level II and ultimately achieve the instructional assessment goals of “assessment-driven teaching, precise burden reduction, and competency enhancement?”

## 2. Core Foundations and Policy Orientation of High School English Test Design

The “Double Reduction” policy and core competencies share a high degree of conceptual consistency<sup>[1]</sup>: “reducing quantity and improving quality” does not simply mean cutting assessment content, but rather eliminating mechanical, repetitive, and decontextualized knowledge testing to create space for cultivating core competencies (language ability, cultural awareness, thinking quality, and learning capacity). The core competency-oriented reform emphasizes abandoning the score-only examination orientation and focusing on comprehensive skills needed for students’ long-term development. Both essentially center on “student-based, returning to the essence of education,” jointly aiming to “eliminate ineffective burdens and cultivate well-rounded individuals.” This conceptual consistency deeply resonates with the Gaokao’s “One Core, Four Layers, Four Wings” evaluation system: “One Core” (fostering virtue through education) is the common ultimate goal of both, with “Double Reduction” avoiding the phrase “sea of questions” that deviates from educational objectives through precise assessment, while core competencies directly implement moral education through comprehensive ability cultivation. Among the “Four Layers” (essential knowledge, key abilities, disciplinary competencies, and core values), “Double Reduction” focuses on strengthening key abilities and disciplinary competencies through “quality improvement,” while core competencies directly encompass disciplinary competencies and core values. Within the “Four Wings” (fundamental, comprehensive, applicable, and innovative), “Double Reduction” ensures the “fundamental” nature of assessment by eliminating out-of-syllabus and overly difficult content, while core competencies emphasize cross-context comprehensive application, reflecting “comprehensiveness and applicability.” Together, they construct a logical loop of “policy requirements—competency cultivation—evaluation orientation,” laying a theoretical foundation of “policy adaptation, competency alignment, and evaluation responsiveness” for high school English test design. Accordingly, the principles governing proposition design, content development, and assessment approaches have undergone corresponding transformation, optimization, and innovation.

### 2.1 Transformation of Proposition Principles: From “Knowledge-Based” to “Integration of Competency Orientation”

Traditional principles focusing on “knowledge coverage” easily lead to accumulation of out-of-syllabus test points and mechanical repetitive questions, violating both the “quantity reduction” requirement of “Double Reduction” and the “comprehensive ability cultivation” goal of core competencies<sup>[4]</sup>. The new principle, centered on “consistency,” achieves two major shifts: Firstly, from “comprehensive and difficult” to “precise focus”; Secondly, from “single detection” to “three-dimensional empowerment”.

### 2.2 The Optimization and Innovation of Proposition Content: From “Generalized Coverage” to “Unified Core Test Points and Authentic Contexts” and From “Fixed Patterns” to “Unified Functional Adaptation and Competency Stratification”

Teachers should ensure that content selection strictly follows the consistency of “Double Reduction’s” “quantity reduction” and core competencies’ “textual education”. In terms of Vocabulary and Grammar test designers should focus on “Core Essentials”; Regarding Text Selection, they should highlights “Authenticity and Educational Value”. The optimization of each question type closely aligns with the consistency of “Double Reduction’s” “efficient assessment” and core competencies’ “ability stratification” to avoid ineffective propositions. For Basic Question Types, teachers should focus on “rapid achievement and foundational ability” while for Integrated Question Types they should focus on “logical analysis and higher-order thinking”. The innovation of question types is achieved by cultural

infiltration and thinking stimulation<sup>[1]</sup>. Therefore, Gaokao has increased the cultural content in written expression and emphasized critical thinking and imagination as demonstrated in continuation writing.

### ***2.3 Evaluation Method Reform: From “Score-Only” to “Unified Precise Diagnosis and Competency Development”***

Instead of focusing solely on “accuracy rate,” Gaokao emphasizes students’ “ability performance” in texts which shows the transformation from “Single Result Evaluation” to “Multiple Ability Evaluation”<sup>[7]</sup>. Evaluation results are no longer just used for “ranking” but are fed back to instruction, achieving unity between “assessment-driven instruction” and “competency advancement”. Based on the gradient of Academic Quality Levels I, II, and II, the evaluation system has shifted from “Unified Standards” to “Stratified Adaptation”.

## **3. In-Depth Analysis of Gaokao English Question Type Distribution and Proposition Characteristics Over the Past Four Years**

### ***3.1 Core Insights from Question Type Distribution Data***

Over the past four years, Gaokao English question types have remained stable (Reading A/B/C/D, Seven-Select-Five, Cloze Test, Grammar Gap-filling, Continuation Writing). Vocabulary proportion and long-complex sentence data reveal proposition trends:

Vocabulary Density: Cloze tests (0.029-0.061) and Reading C (0.021-0.060) have the highest vocabulary ratios, focusing on “vocabulary discrimination in context.” Continuation Writing (0.009-0.019) and Seven-Select-Five (0.003-0.050) have the lowest vocabulary ratios, focusing on “textual cohesion and logical expression”.

Long-Complex Sentence Proportion: Grammar gap-filling shows significant fluctuation in long-complex sentence proportions, reflecting a balance between “fundamentals and difficulty”. The high proportion in 2023 (62.5%) emphasized complex linguistic structures, while the low proportion in 2024 (27.3%) emphasized basic grammar application, suggesting that daily proposition should adjust difficulty according to teaching stages.

### ***3.2 Proposition Characteristics and Case Analysis of Each Question Type***

#### ***3.2.1 Reading A: Structured Texts and Detail Location***

Proposition Characteristics:

The Text Type includes: Practical writing/expository texts (course syllabi, activity announcements, product introductions) with “information-dense, clearly structured” features. For example, the 2022 A passage “Grading Policies” used subheadings “Essays (60%), Group Assignments (30%), Daily Work (10%)”; the 2024 A passage “Habitat Restoration Team” used modules “GROUPS, AGE, SKILLS,” making information points clear at a glance.

The Assessment Core is: Precise location and detail comprehension without complex reasoning. For example, in the “smart homes” text, questions were designed around keywords such as “doors (automatic locking), TVs (automatic shutdown), beds (health monitoring)” to test students’ ability to quickly extract information.

Regarding Stems and Options: The question order highly matches the text order (first question corresponds to beginning, last question to ending). Options are concise and symmetrical (e.g., all “a + noun” or numbers). Correct options are mostly direct information (e.g., “Dam Square” directly from “departs from Dam Square”) or mild paraphrasing (e.g., “protect the local ecosystem” summarizing “restore natural areas, protect endangered species”).

#### ***3.2.2 Reading B: Inferential Analysis and Value Guidance***

Proposition Characteristics:

The Text Type includes: Narrative/argumentative texts (personal experiences, social phenomena, character stories) combining “narrative quality” with “ideological depth”. For example, the “arugula waste” story conveys environmental concepts through personal kitchen experiences; John Todd’s “eco-machine” story illustrates “unity of knowledge and action”; Dr. William Farber’s case on

integrated Chinese and Western medicine advocates “openness and inclusiveness”.

The Assessment Core includes: Author’s purpose, cause-effect inference, word meaning guessing, and paragraph main ideas. Stems must integrate paragraph or whole-text logic, such as “What does the author want to show by telling the arugula story?” (testing writing purpose) and “Why did the students perform poorly in writing?” (testing deep causes).

Regarding Option Design: Test designers should use Paraphrasing as the primary method (e.g., “unthinkingly” → “unintentionally”). Distractors are more misleading, such as overgeneralization (replacing “environmental harm” with “moral judgment” as the core consequence of food waste).

### **3.2.3 Reading C/D: Complex Texts and Higher-Order Thinking**

Proposition Characteristics:

The Text Type includes: Formal expository/argumentative texts covering social sciences (e.g., digital minimalism), cutting-edge technology (e.g., powdered silk medical applications), and academic research, with significant differences.

The Assessment Core is: Deep grasp of article structure, argument logic, and complex concepts. Texts extensively use definition structures (is defined as, that is to say), “present viewpoint + provide method” sentence clusters, and complex clauses (subject clause + predicative clause, conditional adverbial clause), testing higher-order thinking abilities of analysis, synthesis, and evaluation.

### **3.2.4 Seven-Select-Five: Cohesion Logic and Textual Coherence**

Proposition Characteristics:

The Core Principle is: Each correct option must have clear “anchors” (vocabulary, grammar, logic) locking with context. For example, this principle is demonstrated by the matching of raw materials and answers in real questions.

The Cohesion Methods includes: Vocabulary anchors (synonym/antonym repetition, lexical chains), grammatical anchors (pronoun reference, parallel structure), logical anchors (connectors like however/therefore, explanatory relationships). Distractors mostly feature “vague anchors” (e.g., pronouns without referents) or “logical breaks” (no vocabulary/logic connection with context).

### **3.2.5 Cloze Test: Contextual Logic and Theme Sublimation**

Proposition Characteristics:

The Text Structure follows: The “background—conflict—resolution—reflection” framework. For example, a school monthly test used “mixed-identity self-recognition” as its theme: the opening explains “father didn’t inform the family of her existence” (background), the development describes “anxiety upon first meeting relatives” (conflict), the climax uses aunt’s words “father always longed for a daughter” (resolution), and the ending sublimates “understanding uniqueness, accepting authentic self” (reflection).

The Assessment Core is: Contextual logic and textual coherence. The vast majority of questions require context for answers. For example, in the 2023 real question, both “finished” and “followed” were grammatically correct, but “finished” was optimal when combined with “reasons for delay.” The first sentence has no blank, and the last blank often involves theme sublimation.

Regarding Option Design: The test designers should ensure at least two options appear “reasonable” in isolation, and they should select the optimal answer through context, avoiding simple questions with “only one correct meaning.”

### **3.2.6 Grammar Gap-filling: Linguistic Structure and Balanced Test Points**

Proposition Characteristics:

The Selection Requirements are: Tests must satisfy four conditions: “rich verbs (testing tenses/voice/non-finite forms), diverse sentence patterns (testing complex sentences), space for word-class conversion (testing cognates), and clear logic (testing conjunctions).” Data on long-complex sentence proportions over four years shows that question design must balance fundamentals and difficulty. For example, the high 2023 proportion (62.5%) emphasized complex structures, while the low 2024 proportion (27.3%) emphasized basic grammar, suggesting daily proposition should adjust difficulty according to teaching phases.

The Test Point Distribution covers: Articles, prepositions, pronouns, tenses, non-finite verbs, word conversion, and conjunctions, avoiding odd and obscure questions. For example, the 2024 grammar gap-filling tested word conversion through “care→careful→carefully,” causal logic through “because” and non-finite passive through “being done.”

#### **4. Core Competency-Based High School English Test Design Strategies**

##### **4.1 Reading A: Focus on “Structuring and Precision”**

Teachers should select “Authentic and Compact” Materials: They should prioritize authentic practical writings (club recruitment notices, library regulations, simple recipes), controlling text length (300-400 words), retaining structures like subheadings and lists, such as a “Campus Singing Competition Notice with subheadings “TIME, VENUE, REQUIREMENTS, AWARDS”.

Teachers should ensure proposition “Sequential Consistency”: They should strictly follow text information order in question design, with the first question testing the beginning (e.g., “activity purpose”) and the last question testing the ending (e.g., “registration method”), helping students establish an answering rhythm.

Regarding options “Concise and Symmetrical”: Test designers should ensure uniform option formats (e.g., all numbers or “a + noun”). they should design distractors based on text with “relevant but incorrect” information, such as distorting “registration deadline May 10” to “May 15”.

##### **4.2 Reading B: Emphasize “Inference and Education”**

Teachers should select materials “With Stories and Viewpoints”: They should Choose texts containing personal insights and social phenomena, such as “student experiences in community environmental activities” or “cross-cultural misunderstandings and understanding,” ensuring depth for exploration.

Teachers should focus on proposition “Focus on Inference Chains”: They should design questions around cause-effect (Why), exemplification (What does the example show), and attitude (What does the author think), such as “What does the author want to convey through the community environmental experience?”<sup>[5]</sup>.

Regarding options “Paraphrase”: Test designers should Convert original answer sentences through vocabulary/sentence structure transformation, such as “unintentionally waste” → “waste without awareness,” cultivating students’ ability to “grasp essence through expression”.

##### **4.3 Reading C/D: Highlight “Depth and Logic”**

Teachers should select “Professional and Rigorous” materials: For Passage C they should select social science concepts (e.g., “causes and solutions of school bullying”), and Passage D select scientific research texts (e.g., “plant drought resistance research”). Texts must include structures like definition, argumentation, and conclusion.

Teachers should ensure proposition “Closely Follow Argumentation”: They should design questions on “paragraph main ideas,” “argumentation methods,” and “author’s attitude,” such as “How does the author support the argument about plant drought resistance?” (through experimental data/cases)<sup>[7]</sup>.

Regarding vocabulary “Contextualized”: Test designers should use abstract nouns within the curriculum (e.g., “resistance, phenomenon”), helping students understand through context and avoiding out-of-syllabus words<sup>[2]</sup>.

##### **4.4 Seven-Select-Five: Strengthen “Anchors and Cohesion”**

Teachers should design “Multiple Anchors”: Each option must contain at least one anchor, such as “synonym repetition + pronoun reference.” For example, if the previous text mentions “smart home’s security,” the option uses “it can lock the door automatically” (it refers to security).

Regarding distractors “Vague Anchors”: Test designers should design distractors with pronouns lacking referents or logical breaks, such as an option “they are convenient” where “they” doesn’t clearly reference “smart devices.”

Teacher should ensure the text “Clear Logic”: They should ensure paragraphs have clear internal cohesion (e.g., “first—second—finally”) and transitional sentences between paragraphs (e.g., “Another advantage of smart homes is...”).

#### ***4.5 Cloze Test: Master “Context and Theme”***

Teachers should select “Structurally Complete” Materials: They should follow “background — conflict — resolution — reflection,” with endings that subliminate themes, such as “overcoming speech anxiety and realizing ‘courage comes from practice.’”

Regarding blanks “Balance Logic and Theme”: Test designers should ensure that middle blanks focus on contextual logic (e.g., “contrast, cause-effect”), and the last blank focuses on theme (e.g., “courage, confidence”). The first sentence has no blank.

Regarding options “Contextual Interference”: Ensure at least two options are “reasonable” in isolation, such as “continue” vs. “insist,” selecting “insist” based on the reason for persistence in the following text.

#### ***4.6 Grammar Gap-filling: Emphasize “Context and Balance”***

Teachers should select materials “Meeting Test Points”: They should ensure texts have rich verbs (testing tenses/voice/non-finite forms), diverse sentence patterns (testing complex sentences), space for word conversion (e.g., “help→helpful→helpfully”), and clear logic (testing conjunctions).

Regarding test points “Comprehensive and Balanced”: Test designers should ensure that foundational questions (articles, prepositions) account for 60%, and difficult questions (non-finite forms, complex sentences) account for 40%, avoiding excessive repetition of certain test points.

Teachers should control Long-Complex Sentence Proportion: They should recommended 30%-50% for daily proposition, matching students’ cognitive levels<sup>[6]</sup>.

### **5. Basic Implementation Pathway for Proposition**

Based on the conceptual consistency of “Double Reduction” and core competencies, combined with the four-dimensional design framework of “policy empowerment — competency orientation — question-type adaptation — problem avoidance,” high school English test proposition must follow a closed-loop pathway of “preparation — design — calibration — feedback” to ensure strategies are operable and goals are verifiable.

#### ***5.1 Pre-Preparation: Anchor to Foundations, Anticipate Problems***

The premise of proposition implementation is clarifying “foundation boundaries” and “risk points” to solidify groundwork for subsequent design, with the core being triple alignment of “policy — curriculum standards — student realities.”

Regarding Foundation Clarification: Teachers should systematically integrate three core foundations: At the Policy level, they should extract core requirements of “Double Reduction’s” “reduce quantity and improve quality” and “assessment-driven instruction” (e.g., eliminating out-of-syllabus content, controlling ineffective propositions); At the Curriculum level, they should specify assessment criteria for Academic Quality Level II (e.g., “comprehensive application in less familiar contexts,” “textual logic analysis”), clarify the 3,000 + 200 word range and core grammar test points (tenses, non-finite forms, complex sentences); At the Practice level, they should analyze three-year Gaokao question type data (e.g., grammar gap-filling’s reasonable 30%-50% long-complex sentence range) and school-specific student conditions (e.g., weaknesses in non-finite verbs, insufficient detail location ability in reading), ensuring propositions align with both Gaokao trends and teaching realities.

#### ***5.2 Stratified Design: Implement Strategies by Question Type, Achieve Dual Alignment of “Double Reduction—Competencies”***

Teachers should use six question types as carriers to embed “reduce quantity and improve quality” and core competency cultivation into specific design steps, ensuring each question type’s proposition

adheres to the four-dimensional framework.

Regarding Basic Question Types (Reading A, Grammar Gap-filling, Seven-Select-Five): Teachers should focus on “burden reduction + foundational competency consolidation”<sup>[3]</sup>. Reading A strictly selects “structured authentic texts” (e.g., campus notices, activity guides), designs questions following “text order,” and creates “concise symmetrical” options (e.g., all numbers or “a + noun”) to reduce ineffective reading time. Grammar gap-filling uses a “60% foundational + 40% advanced” ratio, with foundational questions on articles and prepositions (Level I) and advanced questions on non-finite forms and complex sentences (Level II), controlling long-complex sentences at 30%-50%. Seven-Select-Five includes “vocabulary/logical anchors” (e.g., synonym repetition, pronoun reference) in each option, avoiding distractors with vague anchors.

Regarding Integrated Question Types (Reading B/C/D, Cloze Test): Teachers should focus on “quality improvement + higher-order competency cultivation.” Reading B selects texts “with stories and viewpoints” (e.g., cross-cultural communication, environmental practices), designing questions around “cause-effect inference and educational intent” (e.g., “What concept does the author convey through the community service story?”). Reading C/D selects social science concepts (e.g., school bullying solutions) and scientific research texts (e.g., plant drought resistance research), focusing questions on “argument logic and concept understanding” (e.g., “How does the author support the viewpoint with experimental data?”). Cloze tests follow the “background-conflict-resolution-reflection” framework, with middle blanks focusing on contextual logic (contrast, cause-effect) and the last blank sublimating the theme (e.g., “courage,” “appreciation”), ensuring options show “contextual interference” (at least two options reasonable in isolation).

### ***5.3 Pilot Testing Calibration: Verify Adaptability, Avoid Implementation Deviations***

Pilot testing is a critical step to ensure propositions meet “Double Reduction” and core competency requirements. It identifies issues through small-scale practice, achieving precise connection between “design and implementation.”

Regarding Stratified Pilot Testing Subjects: Test administrator should select student samples from Academic Quality Levels I, II, and III (e.g., below-average, average, and excellent students across grades), covering different ability levels to verify the “fundamental nature” (whether Level I students face no out-of-syllabus pressure) and “advanced nature” (whether Level II students can complete comprehensive applications).

Regarding Focused Pilot Testing Indicators: Evaluation should set indicators around dual dimensions of “Double Reduction” and core competencies<sup>[4]</sup>: ①Double Reduction dimension — student completion time (whether reduced by 10%-15% compared to traditional tests), number of out-of-syllabus words/odd questions (whether zero), and student feedback (whether they feel “no mechanical drill sense”); ②Competency dimension — language ability (grammar gap-filling accuracy, written expression precision), thinking quality (Reading C argument question accuracy, continuation writing logical coherence), and cultural awareness (written expression cross-cultural content appropriateness).

Regarding Iterative Problem Adjustment: Proposition teams should calibrate propositions based on pilot results — if students report too many long-complex sentences in Reading C (exceeding 50%), they should split complex sentences; if written expression “campus waste solutions” is too vague, they should refine task requirements (e.g., “must list 2 specific measures”); if continuation writing shows “character collapse,” they should add prompts like “align with original character traits” to ensure propositions both “reduce quantity and improve quality” and precisely target competency cultivation.

### ***5.4 Evaluation Feedback: Construct a Closed-Loop Mechanism of “Proposition—Teaching—Competencies”***

The ultimate goal of proposition implementation is to provide feedback to teaching, optimizing instruction and proposition through evaluation results to achieve “assessment-driven teaching and competency advancement” under Double Reduction.

Regarding Result Analysis: Teachers should go beyond “score ranking” to focus on “ability performance”—for example, if the error rate for “non-finite verbs” in grammar gap-filling exceeds 40%, they should deduce that classroom teaching needs to strengthen the connection between “non-finite verbs and context”; if “logical breaks” are common in continuation writing, they should add

daily training on “textual logical cohesion” (e.g., use of connectors, plot inference).

Regarding Teaching Adaptation: Teachers should transform proposition strategies into teaching strategies — for example, the proposition characteristic of Reading A’s “structured texts” corresponds to classroom strategy training of “locating information through subheadings”; the assessment requirement of cloze tests’ “contextual logic” guides classroom focus on “textual coherence” rather than isolated vocabulary discrimination, reducing after-class burdens from the source.

Regarding Dynamic Optimization: Schools should track Gaokao trends and student condition changes to update proposition pathways — for example, if Gaokao grammar gap-filling’s long-complex sentence proportion drops to 27.3% (2024), they should adjust daily propositions to around 30%; if students’ “cross-cultural communication ability” is weak, increase “Chinese-foreign cultural comparison” scenarios in writing (e.g., “introducing Spring Festival vs. Christmas differences to pen pals”), ensuring propositions remain synchronized with “Double Reduction” policy, core competency requirements, and teaching realities.

## 6. Conclusion

High school English test design is an organic unity of “policy orientation, curriculum standards, teaching realities, and student development.” Under the “Double Reduction” background, proposition designers must prioritize “reducing quantity and improving quality,” benchmark against Academic Quality Level II, and target core competencies. Through differentiated design of each question type, tests should achieve three functions: “fundamental assessment — ability enhancement—value guidance.” Simultaneously, designers must avoid pitfalls such as out-of-syllabus vocabulary, knowledge errors, and loose logic must be avoided, making tests “precise burden reduction tools, instructional guidance manuals, and moral education vehicles.” Only in this way can assessment truly fulfill its diagnostic and developmental functions, promoting the coordinated enhancement of students’ English proficiency and comprehensive competencies.

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