

PRACTICE TEST 60

Passage 1

Scientists estimate that about 35,000 other objects, too small to detect with radar but detectable with powerful Earth-based telescopes, are also circling the Earth at an altitude of 200 to 700 miles. This debris poses little danger to us on the Earth, but since it is traveling at average relative speeds of six miles per second, it can severely damage expensive equipment in a collision. This threat was dramatized by a cavity one-eighth of an inch in diameter created in a window of a United States space shuttle in 1983. The pit was determined to have been caused by a collision with a speck of paint traveling at a speed of about two to four miles per second. The window had to be replaced.

As more and more nations put satellites into space, the risk of collision can only increase. Measures are already being taken to control the growth of orbital debris. The United States has always required its astronauts to bag their wastes and return them to Earth. The United States Air Force has agreed to conduct low-altitude rather than high-altitude tests of objects it puts into space so debris from tests will reenter the Earth's atmosphere and burn up. Extra shielding will also reduce the risk of damage. For example, 2,000 pounds of additional shielding is being considered for each of six space-station crew modules. Further, the European Space Agency, an international consortium is also looking into preventive measures.

1. Which of the following would be the best title for the passage?
(A) The Problem of Space Debris
(B) The Space Shuttle of 1983
(C) The Work of the European Space Agency
(D) A Collision in Space
2. It can be inferred from the passage that debris was harmful to one of the space shuttles because the debris was
(A) large
(B) moving very fast
(C) radioactive
(D) burning uncontrollably
3. What effect did orbital debris have on one of the space shuttles?
(A) It removed some of the paint
(B) It damaged one of the windows
(C) It caused a loss of altitude
(D) It led to a collision with a space station
4. The word "them" in line 11 refers to which of the following?
(A) Astronauts
(B) Wastes
(C) Tests
(D) Crew modules
5. Which of the following questions is NOT answered by the information in the passage?
(A) How can small objects orbiting the Earth be seen?
(B) What is being done to prevent orbital debris from increasing?
(C) Why is the risk of damage to space equipment likely to increase?
(D) When did the United States Air Force begin making tests in space?
6. Where in the passage does the writer mention a method of protecting space vehicles against damage by space debris?
(A) Lines 1-3
(B) Lines 6-8
(C) Line 9
(D) Lines 13-15

Passage 2

Scattered through the seas of the world are billions of tons of small plants and animals called *plankton*. Most of these plants and animals are too small for the human

eye to see. They drift about lazily with the currents, providing a basic food for many larger animals,

Plankton has been described as the equivalent of the grasses that grow on the dry land continents, and the comparison is an appropriate one. In potential food value, however, plankton far outweighs that of the land grasses. One scientist has estimated that white grasses of the world produce about 49 billion tons of valuable carbohydrates each year, the sea's plankton generates more than twice as much.

Despite its enormous food potential, little effort was made until recently to farm plankton as we farm grasses on land. Now, marine scientists have at last begun to study this possibility. especially as the sea's resources loom even more important as a means of feeding an expanding world population.

No one yet has seriously suggested that "planktonburgers" may soon become popular around the world. As a possible farmed supplementary food source, however, plankton is gaining considerable interest among marine scientists.

One type of plankton that seems to have great harvest possibilities is a tiny shrimplike creature called *krill*. Growing to two or three inches long, krill provide the major food for the giant blue whale, the largest animal ever to inhabit the Earth, flealizing that this whale may grow to 100 feet and weigh 150 tons at maturity, it is not surprising that each one devours more than one ton of krill daily.

Krill swim about just below the surface in huge schools sometimes miles wide, mainly in the cold Antarctic. Because of their pink color, they often appear as a solid reddish mass when viewed from a ship or from the air. Krill are very high in food value A pound of these crustaceans contains about 460 calories-about the same as shrimp or lobster to which they are related.

If the krill can feed such huge creatures as whales, many scientists reason. they must certainly be contenders as a new food source for humans.

1. Which of the following statements best describes the organization of the passage?
(A) The author presents the advantages and disadvantages of plankton as a food source.
(B) The author quotes public opinion to support the argument for farming plankton.
(C) The author classifies the different food sources according to amount of carbohydrate.
(D) The author makes a general statement about plankton as a food source and then moves to a specific example.
2. According to the passage, why is plankton considered to be more valuable than land grasses?
(A) It is easier to cultivate
(B) It produces more carbohydrates
(C) It does not require soil
(D) It is more palatable
3. Why does the author mention "planktonburgers" in line 13 ?
(A) To describe the appearance of one type of plankton
(B) To illustrate how much plankton a whale consumes
(C) To suggest plankton as a possible food source
(D) To compare the food values of beef and plankton
4. Blue whales have been known to weigh how much at maturity?
(A) One ton
(B) Forty tons
(C) One hundred and fifty tons
(D) Four hundred and sixty tons
5. What is mentioned as one distinguishing feature of krill?
(A) They are the smallest marine animals:
(B) They are pink in color.
(C) They are similar in size to lobsters.
(D) They have grass-like bodies.
6. The author mentions all of the following as reasons why plankton could be considered a human food source EXCEPT that it is
(A) high in food value
(B) in abundant supply in the oceans

(C) an appropriate food for other animals

(A) free of chemicals and pollutants

7. Where in the passage does the author first compare plankton to land grasses?

(A) Lines 2–3

(B) Lines 4–5

(C) Lines 13–14

(D) Lines 16–17