1 27 Read the article. Which problem do you think is the most serious? Why?

Our Greatest Threats

In the future, our planet will face many different challenges. But will the greatest threats to our survival come from space, from the Earth, or even from ourselves?

Space

On February 15, 2013, an asteroid entered the Earth's atmosphere over Russia. It was 20 m long, and weighed more than the Eiffel Tower. When it exploded, 30 km above the ground, it was traveling at about 65,000 km/h. Many glass windows broke in the explosion and about 1,500 people were injured. The largest piece of the asteroid weighed 654 kg and landed in a lake.

Many scientists think that another large asteroid will hit the Earth one day. It will probably land in the ocean and it will cause a tsunami – a huge wave. When tsunamis travel to land, they cause floods.

The Earth

From March to May, 2010, a volcano erupted in Iceland, and there was a huge cloud of ash in the sky over Europe. Twenty countries didn't allow planes to take off for over a week. No one was injured, but millions of people couldn't get home, and the disaster cost $7.3 billion.

But that was just a normal volcano. Supervolcanoes are over 1,000 times bigger than normal volcanoes. There is one under Yellowstone Park in the U.S. It is about the same size as Mount Everest. One day, it will erupt. A huge cloud of ash will block the sun and some countries will become too cold for humans.

Humans

At the moment, 750 million people in the world don't have access to clean water. Three billion people earn less than $2.50 every day.

By 2050, experts think that there will be over 9.6 billion people on the planet. Will there be enough natural resources for everybody? All of these people need food, water, and somewhere to live. Cities will become more crowded; traffic and pollution will get worse. More people use more energy and this causes climate change, too. Is overpopulation our greatest threat?

2 **Read the article again. Choose the correct answer.**

1 The asteroid …
- **a** was longer than the Eiffel tower.
- **b** hit Russia 30 km from a city.
- **c** weighed 654 kg.
- **d** broke windows in buildings.

2 The volcano in Iceland …
- **a** was a supervolcano.
- **b** caused problems for travelers.
- **c** hurt lots of people.
- **d** erupted for a week.

3 The article says …
- **a** access to clean water will be our biggest problem in the future.
- **b** the current population of the world is 750 million people.
- **c** overpopulation causes environmental problems.
- **d** at the moment, there are enough natural resources for everyone.

3 **Read again. Complete the sentences with one word.**

1 The asteroid in Russia was heavier than the Eiffel Tower.

2 One day, a large asteroid will cause a _____.

3 The _____ of the eruption in Iceland was $7.3 billion.

4 The Yellowstone Park _____ is as big as Mount Everest.

5 The _____ of the world will be 9.6 billion in 2050.

6 Environmental problems will get _____ in the future.

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