PASSAGE 4 – Questions 31-40

The Pacific Ocean contains approximately 20,000 to 30,000 islands. Islands, excluding Australia, that are south of the Tropic of Cancer are grouped into three divisions: Melanesia, Micronesia, and Polynesia.

Melanesia includes the nation of Papua New Guinea, provinces of Indonesia, and the Solomon Islands. Micronesia means 'small islands,' most of which are north of the equator. Finally, Polynesia, which means 'many islands,' includes the Hawaiian Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Easter Island, among others. Migrants from South East Asian cities were the first settlers. The next wave of migrants **populated** New Guinea, gradually spreading to Fiji. The last of the Pacific islands to be settled was Polynesia. Hawaii was discovered sometime between the 7th and 13th centuries.

Bats were the only mammals on these islands until the arrival of the first humans. Birds adapted to environmental niches, like grazers and insectivores. Due to the cool and humid location, New Zealand lost plants and animals, like the giant flightless bird, that were intolerant of its climate. However, the extinction coincided with the arrival of the Melanesians, so **it** was probably caused by hunting and fires. Adding to that, mining and a natural drought destroyed a majority of the natural habitat. This was repeated on Easter Island, where early settlers wiped out 22 species of sea birds and land birds. By the time the Europeans had arrived, most of the plant life was extinct and nearly 30% of the forests were cleared.

The invasion of New Zealand by the Europeans resulted in a complete transformation of the island, importing over 3,198 species of plants and animals and filling most of the wetlands. Australia also imported animals and plants from many Pacific island countries. Sheep, pigs, goats and foxes were brought to Australia, which further disrupted the native ecosystems. Many plants and animals are presently endangered.

The plants and animals that inhabit Pacific islands are found nowhere else on earth. They are often adapted to specific habitats and live on a small part of a few islands. New Caledonia is an island that has been isolated from other lands for over 80 million years. 66 percent of the plant life there evolved on the island. Numerous plant species, unique in the world, are on a small area of one mountain and are represented by only a few **specimens**.

This varied genetic heritage is of such scientific importance that New Caledonia has been listed as one of the ten hot spots where the primary forest is in danger of extinction. It also boasts 68 species of bird; the most diverse bird life in the Southwest Pacific.

During the first Ice Age, ocean levels were much lower than they are at present. Levels in the shallow seas, now separating Asia from North America near the present-day Bering strait, dropped approximately 300 feet, creating 1,000 miles of grassland plain. Called the 'Bering Land Bridge,' this linked Asia and North America together. The Bering Sea has a long history of stable animal populations, despite the harsh environments, which sustain human life. Lemmings, ox, and mammoths all made the journey across the land bridge. Although mammoths have been extinct for quite a while now, the other two have remained.

Pacific walruses inhabit shallow waters of the Bering Sea during winter. They congregate to feed on clams, their principal food. **[A]** This type of feeding releases nutrients into the water, providing food for starfish and increasing the roughness of the sea floor. **[B]** **Actual impact of the ecology of bottom communities is unknown, but**

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walruses, along with other animals like beavers and sea otters, have huge effects on the biological communities they occupy. [C] Animals such as seals, bowhead whales, and walruses are important for the subsistence of their community. **[D]**

Pacific islands have the same pollution and over fishing problems as most countries. Destructive forms of fishing in Asian nations have taken their toll on marine animals such as birds and tuna. Many of these nations have now entered joint venture agreements to enable them to develop their marine resources more efficiently.

31. The word "populated" in the passage is closest in meaning to

A. inhabited B. exiled

C. traveled D. governed

32. The word "it" in the passage refers to

A. arrival B. extinction

C. climate D. hunting

33. Why does the author mention "The invasion of New Zealand by the Europeans" in the passage?

A. To demonstrate its destructive effect on local ecosystems

B. To explain how many of New Zealand's species came into being

C. To show the lack of responsibility that early settlers had toward new places

D. To draw a comparison to the way Australia expanded in the Pacific

34. According to paragraph 5, what is unique about the Pacific Islands?

A. They have a long history of traditional management approaches for marine resources.

B. They are home to rare and unique animals.

C. They are made up of 66% plant life.

D. They have all been damaged by European settlers.

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35. The word "specimens" in the passage is closest in meaning to_____.

A. genres B. features

C. examples D. images

36. According to paragraph 7, how has the Bering Sea aided life forms in the past?

A. By providing creatures with plentiful food

B. By being home to a diverse and varied ecosystem

C. By allowing transit across the great iceshelves in the Americas

D. By keeping creatures cool and comfortable in the ice

37. According to the passage, which of the following is true of walruses?

A. They protect the surrounding ecosystem by preventing over-fishing.

B. Their unique feeding habits enrich the ecosystem with nutrients.

C. They are solitary animals which hunt and eat by themselves.

D. They are usually found living in the deepest regions of the Bering Sea.

38. Which of the following best expresses the essential information in the highlighted sentence? Incorrect answer choices change the meaning in important ways or leave out essential information.

A. Although ecological impacts are not known, many species are largely dependent on animals occupying a sub-level.

B. The true biological diversity of all the walruses is revealed only below the species level.

C. Beavers and otters are strongly related to the walrus family because there is a clear cause-effect relationship.

D. There is a great deal that still needs to be learned about biological communities and ecosystems.

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39. According to paragraph 9, what measures have been taken to protect sea creatures?

A. Protection agencies have begun guarding areas known for high fish population.

B. Destructive fishing methods such as drag-nets have been outlawed.

C. Agreements have been made to ensure that marine resources are used carefully.

D. Restrictions have been placed on amounts permitted to be fished in certain areas.

40. Look at the four squares [_] that indicate where the following sentence can be added to the passage.

Walruses blow the clams loose with a jet of water, then suck them from their shells.

Where would the sentence best fit?

A. [A] B. [B]

C. [C] D. [D]

THIS IS THE END OF THE READING PAPER.
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