READING
The theory of Darwin's Evolution (Brief adaptation of TOEFL model)

A. **Read the passage about 'The theory of Darwin's Evolution.**
B. **Select the correct signal phrases to give sense to the paragraphs below.**

[1] _____, Charles Darwin's Theory of Evolution is known as one of the most important and controversial scientific theories ever published. Darwin was an English scientist in the 19th century best known for his book "On the Origin of Species." In his book, _____different species shared characteristics of common ancestors, that they derived from them as the latter species evolved, and that new traits and characteristics were a result of natural selection. **The theory is based on the assumptions that life developed from non-life and progressed and evolved in an indirect manner.** So, the Theory of Evolution, while controversial, has restructured the modern scientific world's thinking on the development of life itself. Although initially entering into medicine, Darwin chose to pursue his interest in natural science and embarked on a five-year journey aboard the H.M.S. Beagle, a British ship belonging to the Royal Navy. Thanks to his experience aboard the Beagle, _____ the foundation for his Theory of Evolution while also inserting himself to the scientific community. Specifically, Darwin's keen observation of the fossils and wildlife he saw during his time on the ship served as the basis for the cornerstone of his theory: natural selection.

[2] Natural selection contributes to the basis of Darwin's Theory of Evolution. One of the core tenets of Darwin's theory is that more offspring are always produced for a species than can possibly survive. Yet, no two offspring are perfectly similar. As a result, through random mutation and genetic drift, over time offspring develop new traits and characteristics. Over time beneficial traits and characteristics that promote survival will be kept in the gene pool while **those** that harm survival will be selected against. Therefore, this natural selection ensures that a species gradually improves itself over an extended duration of time. _____, as a species continues to 'improve' itself, it branches out to create entirely new species that are no longer capable of reproducing together.

[3] _____ Darwin's theory, 'selective breeding' occurs in nature as 'natural selection' is the engine behind evolution. Thus, the theory provides an excellent basis for understanding how organisms change over time. However, it is just a theory and elusively difficult to prove. _____that a major disadvantage in Darwin's theory revolves around "irreducibly complex systems." An irreducibly complex system is known as a system where many different parts must all operate together. As a result, in the absence of one, the system as a whole collapse. Consequently, as modern technology improves, science pinpoints these "irreducibly complex systems" reaching microscopic levels. These complex systems, if so inter-reliant, would be resistant to Darwin's supposition of how evolution occurs. _____,

"To suppose that the eye with all its inimitable contrivance for adjusting the focus for different distances, for admitting different amounts of light, and for the correction of spherical and chromatic aberration, could have been formed by natural selection, seems, I free confess, absurd in the highest degree".

[4] In conclusion, "On the Origin of Species" states the most **consequential** theoretical framework ever published in a book. Darwin's Theory of Evolution remains, to this day, a lightning rod for controversy. _____, we can pinpoint there is a **plethora** of instances that still cast doubt on the processes of natural selection and evolution.

C. Read the passage again.

D. Tick (√) the correct answer to the questions below:

1. Which sentence is most similar to the highlighted sentence from paragraph 1?

The theory is based on the assumptions that life developed from non-life and progressed and evolved in an indirect manner.

a. According to Darwin, if we assume that life at its origins was created from non-organic compounds and developed in an unguided manner, his theory holds true.
b. Based on certain assumptions, we can prove that evolution occurs in all living and non-living entities.
c. Due to the controversy, it is hard to make assumptions about the Theory of Evolution.

2. According to paragraph 2, what are the causes for species developing new traits and characteristics?

a. medicine and longevity
b. survival and selection
c. mutation and genetic drift

3. In paragraph 3, what is natural selection most comparable to as a process?

a. selective breeding
b. irreducibly complex systems
c. the human eye

4. The word 'plethora' in paragraph 5 is closest in meaning to:

a. large
b. essential
c. prominent