PASSAGE 34

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Life beyond Earth

Is there intelligent life on other planets? For years, scientists said "no" or "we don't know". But today this is changing. Seth Shostak and Alexandra Barnett are astronomers. They believe intelligent life exists somewhere in the universe. They also think we will soon contact these beings.

Why do Shostak and Barnett think intelligent life exists on other planets? The first reason is time. Scientists believe the universe is about 12 billion years old. This is too long, say Shostak and Barnett, for only one planet in the entire universe to have an intelligent life. Second - the universe is huge. Tools like the Hubble Telescope "have shown that there are at least 100 billion galaxies," says Shostak. And our galaxy, the Milky Way, has at least 100 billion stars. Some planets circling these stars might be similar to Earth.

Have beings from space already visited Earth? Probably not, says Shostak. The distance between planets is too great. Despite this, intelligent beings might eve other methods, such as radio signals. In fact, they may be trying to communicate with US now, but we don't have the right tools to receive their messages. But this is changing, says Shostak. By 2025, we could make contact with other life **forms** in our universe.

Question 1: What is the main purpose of this reading passage?

A. to show how telescopes work

B. to explain the beliefs of two scientists

C. to explain how life started on Earth

D. to describe what life on other planets might look like

Question 2: What would be a good title for the second paragraph?

A. The Age and Size of the Universe

B. Earth: The Only Planet with Intelligent Life

C. Our Galaxy: The Milky Way

D. Why Intelligent Life Might Exist

Question 3: Why was it harder to look for intelligent life in the universe in the past?

A. Planets used to be farther apart.

B. We did not have the right tools.

C. We could only see smaller planets from Earth.

D. These lives might not exist then.

Question 4: According to Shostak, what might prevent beings from space visiting our Earth.

A. the great distance B. the radio signals

C. the unread messages D. our planet size

Question 5: In the last paragraph, what does **"life forms"** refer to?

A. planets B. radio signals C. intelligent beings D. messages

Question 6: Which of the following adjectives best describes the tone of the writer in this passage?

A. pessimistic B. disbelieving C. hopeful D. critical

LIVEWORKSHEETS