

Read the passage - 'The Importance of Sending People to Space / Robots: The New Space Explorers' - and answer the question below:

The Importance of Sending People to Space / Robots: The New Space Explorers

Read the passage and answer the following question(s).

The Importance of Sending People to Space

- 1 Several generations of people have seen pictures of Neil Armstrong stepping onto the Moon in 1969. At the time, the hundreds of millions who watched this historic event likely thought it marked the beginning of a bold new kind of exploration. Perhaps they thought they would soon hear more messages from outer space. Maybe they envisioned that by the turn of the century someone would walk on the surface of Mars. Now, though, more than 40 years later, it's robots—not astronauts—who are making most of the voyages beyond Earth's atmosphere. Robotic space exploration does have some advantages. However, there are many reasons why we should make sending more people into space a priority.

Beyond the Program

- 2 The capabilities of the space probes and rovers we now use would have been the stuff of science fiction just a few short decades ago. Like any other machines, though, they have one major weakness. They can do only what they are programmed to do. They cannot make a distinction between unusual and expected observations. They cannot reason. They cannot think. A human scientist who identified a curious specimen on Mars would likely concentrate on finding out everything possible about it. The unthinking robot would probably treat it as just another sample.

Efforts Yield Results

- 3 One of the arguments in favor of using robots to explore space is that machines can go places humans cannot. This may be true, but let's consider the other side. Maybe the reason astronauts are not able to go to these places yet is that we aren't putting enough effort into figuring out how to meet their complex needs during prolonged space missions. Humans have proven time and again that they are able to solve problems that may have seemed impossible at first. There is no reason to assume that the challenge of sending people to Mars, Jupiter, or Neptune and getting them back home safely would be any different.

Costs and Benefits

- 4 Humans, as living things, have many needs that robots do not. Giving astronauts what they require to stay healthy in space naturally makes these kinds of missions more expensive than ones that use robots. It's vital to weigh these increased costs against the benefits. If sending one human crew to Venus could advance our knowledge of the universe as much as three robotic space missions could, even a much higher cost would be justified.

Keeping the Dream Alive

- 5 It is said that the idea of traveling into space captures the imagination. For most, though, it's not an image of a small vehicle rolling across the surface of Mars that inspires awe and wonder. It's the notion that—one day—people from Earth will explore distant worlds that are literally millions of miles away from our home planet.

Robots: The New Space Explorers

- 1 For some, the words "space exploration" bring to mind images of brave astronauts holding their helmets and waving at a crowd of smiling people before climbing into a rocket ship and blasting off. This may indeed be the scene commonly presented in blockbuster movies. These days, though, most voyages into space are made by machines. By making use of robots, humans can learn a great deal about our solar system and what lies beyond. The best part? We can do so without leaving the safety of Earth. Therefore, it is no longer necessary for people to attempt a risky trip to the Moon or to another planet.

Anything Astronauts Can Do . . .

- 2 The probes, rovers, and other types of equipment that travel into space are designed by brilliant individuals who have a deep knowledge of both robotics and space exploration. These machines can be programmed to do many of the same things a human might do. For example, space probes can measure the temperature on a planet and determine the gases that are present in its atmosphere. They can take photographs of a planet's surface. Some can even collect samples and bring them back to Earth.

Accomplishing What Isn't Humanly Possible

- 3 We are so far away from other planets that current technology makes it impractical for humans to travel to them. Machines do not care how far they are away from Earth, though, or even if they ever come back. Robots can go farther into space and explore more distant objects and planets than humans can. Robotic spacecraft have traveled to the closest planet to the Sun and those farthest away. Some have even ventured farther into the Milky Way.

Smart Spending of Space Dollars

- 4 We live in a world where many question whether it is wise to spend *any* money on exploring space. Even those who believe we should would likely agree that wise spending should be a priority. It is a well-established fact that it is cheaper to send robots into space than it is to send people. Consider the following: In 2011, NASA sent a rover called the Mars Science Laboratory to Mars. The cost of this mission was about 2.5 billion dollars. According to NASA, sending people on a similar mission would potentially increase the price tag to hundreds of billions of dollars.

Robotic Space Explorers: Creations That Inspire Awe

- 5 There are those who will argue that the concept of a robot traveling to Mars or Pluto simply isn't as exciting as the notion of men and women making the same journey. Perhaps, though, they simply need to look at the idea of robotic space exploration in a slightly different way. These robots are making discoveries in places people cannot yet reach. They are a reminder of the practically limitless genius of the human mind.

1. What are two central ideas that are shared by both passages?
 - A. Both passages are about the use of robots in space exploration and how costly and dangerous it is for humans to travel in space.
 - B. Both passages are about the space race between the United States and other world powers, and how robots will level the playing field between all countries.
 - C. Both passages are about the possibility of humans exploring other planets, and how there are problems with providing power to robotic explorers.
 - D. Both passages are about the importance of using humans to travel in space and how costly it is to develop robotic technology.
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Read the passage - 'The Importance of Sending People to Space / Robots: The New Space Explorers' - and answer the question below:

2. Read this sentence from paragraph 2 of "The Importance of Sending People to Space."

The capabilities of the space probes and rovers we now use would have been the stuff of science fiction just a few short decades ago.

Which statement explains what the author means by the phrase stuff of science fiction?

- A. Scientists have worked on the ideas for years.
 - B. People would not have believed it was possible.
 - C. Audiences watched the ideas in blockbuster movies.
 - D. The technology was kept from the public.
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Read the passage - 'The Importance of Sending People to Space / Robots: The New Space Explorers' - and answer the question below:

3. Which statement identifies the effect of the Moon landing described in paragraph 1 of "The Importance of Sending People to Space" on those who witnessed it?
 - A. It caused individuals to predict that robots would soon go into space.
 - B. It caused individuals to consider whether people should explore space.
 - C. It caused individuals to think about the future of space exploration.
 - D. It caused individuals to question the money spent on space exploration.

4. Which statement describes how paragraph 5 of "Robots: The New Space Explorers" contributes to the development of the passage?
- A. It shows why it is necessary for robots to explore space instead of people.
 - B. It explains why people should be excited by the idea of robots exploring space.
 - C. It tells why the idea of robots going to other planets does not inspire awe.
 - D. It illustrates why it is unlikely that people will ever travel to other planets.

Read the passage - "The Importance of Sending People to Space / Robots: The New Space Explorers" - and answer the question below:

5. Select the sentence from "The Importance of Sending People to Space," below, that BEST supports the inference that the author favors increased funding for the space program.

(A) One of the arguments in favor of using robots to explore space is that machines can go places humans cannot. (B) This may be true, but let's consider the other side. (C) Maybe the reason astronauts are not able to go to these places yet is that we aren't putting enough effort into figuring out how to meet their complex needs during prolonged space missions. (D) Humans have proven time and again that they are able to solve problems that may have seemed impossible at first.

6. Which TWO sentences from "The Importance of Sending People to Space" BEST support the inference that the author would support increased funding for the space program?

Pick up to 5 answers.

- A. At the time, the hundreds of millions who watched this historic event likely thought it marked the beginning of a bold new kind of exploration.
- B. Now, though, more than 40 years later, it's robots—not astronauts—who are making most of the voyages beyond Earth's atmosphere.
- C. Maybe the reason astronauts are not able to go to these places yet is that we aren't putting enough effort into figuring out how to meet their complex needs during prolonged space missions.
- D. If sending one human crew to Venus could advance our knowledge of the universe as much as three robotic space missions could, even a much higher cost would be justified.
- E. For most, though, it's not an image of a small vehicle rolling across the surface of Mars that inspires awe and wonder.

Read the passage - 'The Importance of Sending People to Space / Robots: The New Space Explorers' - and answer the question below:

7. Read this sentence from paragraph 2 of "The Importance of Sending People to Space."

They cannot make a distinction between unusual and expected observations.

Now read this dictionary entry for distinction.

distinction *n.* (dih-stingk-shuhn) 1. a feature that sets something apart from something else 2. the state of being different 3. the act of telling different things apart 4. special treatment given based on a difference

Which definition BEST clarifies the meaning of distinction as it is used in the sentence?

- A. entry 1
- B. entry 2
- C. entry 3
- D. entry 4

8. In paragraph 3 of "The Importance of Sending People to Space," the author argues that we could send people to more distant locations if we made more of an effort to figure out how to do so. Discuss whether you believe the author's argument is strong or weak overall. Consider the author's reasoning and use of evidence. Identify two pieces of information that would strengthen the author's argument.
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Read the passage - "The Importance of Sending People to Space / Robots: The New Space Explorers" - and answer the question below:

9. How does the author of "The Importance of Sending People to Space" distinguish her position from the one presented in paragraph 2 of "Robots: The New Space Explorers"?
- A. She argues that sending humans into space is worth the higher cost.
 - B. She insists that humans are good problem solvers who rise to every challenge when given the chance.
 - C. She argues that humans can do crucial things robots cannot, such as reasoning.
 - D. She claims that robots would be unable to collect samples and bring them back to Earth.

Read the passage and answer the following question(s).

On the Shore

The punctual tide draws up the bay,
With ripple of wave and hiss of spray,
And the great red flower of the light-house tower
Blooms on the headland far away.

5 Petal by petal its fiery rose
Out of the darkness buds and grows;
A dazzling shape on the dim, far cape,
A beckoning shape as it comes and goes.

10 A moment of bloom, and then it dies
On the windy cliff 'twixt the sea and skies.
The fog laughs low to see it go,
And the white waves watch it with cruel eyes.

Then suddenly out of the mist-cloud dun,
As touched and wooed by unseen sun,
15 Again into sight bursts the rose of light
And opens its petals one by one.

Ah, the storm may be wild and the sea be strong,
And man is weak and the darkness long,

20 But while blossoms the flower on the light-house tower
There still is place for a smile and a song.



"On the Shore" by Sarah Chauncey Woolsey from *Verses*. In the public domain.

10. Read the first stanza of the poem.

The punctual tide draws up the bay,
With ripple of wave and hiss of spray,
And the great red flower of the light-house tower
Blooms on the headland far away.

Click on the TWO words that explain the meaning of "punctual" as it is used in the poem.

(A) prompt

(B) special

(C) slow

(D) tardy

(E) regular

Read the passage - 'On the Shore' - and answer the question below:

11. Which statement best describes the speaker's point of view in the last stanza?
- A. The speaker believes that man is powerless.
 - B. The speaker believes in the beauty of the sea.
 - C. The speaker believes in the happiness found in nature.
 - D. The speaker believes in hope in the darkness.

Read the passage - 'On the Shore' - and answer the question below:

12. What is the purpose of lines 9 through 12 of "On the Shore"? Choose the TWO answers that apply.

Pick up to 5 answers.

- A. to depict the flashing of the light from the tower
- B. to tell the reader that the storm is over
- C. to bring the poem to an unhappy ending
- D. to describe the victory of the storm over the light
- E. to show how strong the weather conditions were

Read the passage - 'On the Shore' - and answer the question below:

13. Which theme does the rose represent in the poem?
- A. Sometimes change is hard to see.
 - B. Old things can be better than new things.
 - C. There is hope in the midst of difficulty.
 - D. True beauty is on the inside.
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Read the passage - 'On the Shore' - and answer the question below:

14. Choose the word or words from each drop-down menu that best complete the sentence.

By comparing the lighthouse to a flower, the poet suggests the lighthouse is 1 - (A) beautiful (B) troubling (C) interesting (D) strange and 2 - (A) mysterious (B) frightening (C) unwelcome (D) tense, and is as much a part of 3 - (A) nature (B) man's trouble (C) danger (D) the night as the ocean waves.

15. How does the poet make the red flower of the light-house tower more appealing?
- A. by giving it personal feelings
 - B. by comparing it to the surf
 - C. by having it save a life
 - D. by contrasting it with a harsh setting