



Selective Entrance Test: Sample Test

READING COMPREHENSION YEAR 6

DO NOT TURN OVER THIS PAGE UNTIL YOU ARE TOLD

INSTRUCTIONS

- All answers must go in your answer booklet.
- This test asks you to answer 35 questions on written and visual material.
- For each question you are given four possible answers marked **A, B, C and D**. You must choose the answer you think correct and mark its letter (**A, B, C or D**) in your answer booklet in the section labelled Reading Comprehension.
- Mark your answers carefully - be sure that the question number on your answer booklet corresponds to the number of the question you are answering.
- Do not spend too much time on any one question; you may come back to the difficult ones later if you have time.
- Use a lead (graphite) pencil.
- If you think you know an answer, mark it even if you are not certain it is correct. *Marks will not be deducted for incorrect answers, only awarded for correct ones.*
- If you decide to change an answer, erase it completely and mark your new answer.
- You will have 35 minutes to do this test. Once you start this test, keep working until you have finished or the supervisor tells you to stop.
- You are allowed to write on this test booklet to help you work through the questions, but you must put your answers in your answer booklet.
- Do not turn the page. Wait for the supervisor to give you the signal to start.

WRITE YOUR FULL NAME TO ACKNOWLEDGE YOU HAVE READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS HERE:

Red Sands

The following passage is from a novel written in 1956. Robin, a young man who dreams of travelling into space, has decided to sneak onto an Air Force rocket testing site called 'White Sands'. 'Red Sands' is the name of a new, second site. Robin is in disguise on a bus transporting soldiers and workers back to the sites from a nearby town, listening to the conversation of two soldiers.

'I was thinking of asking for a transfer back to White Sands,' said one of the men slowly. 'Some of that new fuel they're bringing in makes me real uneasy.'

'Ahh,' said the other, 'you're just letting that extra security talk give you nerves. Sure, it's supposed to be atomic stuff, new, maybe even untested as far as I know, but, nuts, you can't get blown up any worse than you can handling that liquid oxygen and peroxide they got at White Sands. In fact, I understand that this stuff isn't half as tricky to pour as the old stuff.' 5

'Yeah, I know. I seen some of it being poured yesterday into that new big fellow¹ they're lining up for tomorrow. But the point is that even if it's easier to pour – none of that fizzing and spitting you get when you leak a drop or two – it's atomic. That's the thing, atomic. What would happen if a White Sands rocket blew ... it'd be a big bang, sure enough, but it wouldn't blow the whole countryside to bits. But take this new stuff ... whew ... '. 10

The other soldier was silent a moment. 'Well,' he said finally, 'could be. On the other hand, I heard them say that it is really not half as explosive as the old stuff. That loxygen they use in the original Vikings² is really dangerous, will go off quick at any spark. But this new stuff, it won't actually go off until it's touched off after the rocket has gone up a few miles. It's actually hard to blast – and then I understand they ain't sure it'll work.' 15

The other one nodded. 'Uh uh, so they say, but you notice where they moved our outfit, didn't you? They don't want to blow the main fields out of existence by accident, just in case they might be a little wrong. So they invented this Red Sands layout. I don't even like the name.' 20

The soldiers fell silent awhile. Robin turned these words over carefully. He had read nothing of any Red Sands operation, and he remembered nothing of any talk about atomic fuels. In fact he'd understood that the problem was still one they had failed to solve – though the idea was intriguing. 25

¹ *new big fellow*: a slang term referring to a large rocket

² *That loxygen they use in the original Vikings*: the name of the fuel used in the older 'Viking' rockets

1 The second soldier's response in lines 3–7 is best described as

- A** cold.
- B** anxious.
- C** defensive.
- D** dismissive.

2 In lines 1–13, the two soldiers

- A** disagree about the benefits of atomic fuel.
- B** disagree about the dangers of using the atomic fuel.
- C** are both worried that security at the testing sites is poor.
- D** are both concerned that the atomic fuel is too dangerous to handle.

3 In the final paragraph (lines 24–27), Robin seems

- A** troubled by the danger he has put himself in.
- B** concerned about the soldiers' safety.
- C** surprised by what he has heard.
- D** confused and frightened.

4 By the end of the passage, the two soldiers are

- A** angered by what is happening at Red Sands.
- B** still confused about the operation at Red Sands.
- C** satisfied with what is happening at Red Sands.
- D** feeling more optimistic about their prospects at Red Sands.

Whale Sharks

You are scuba diving one day, out in the depths far from the coast, when a large, shadowy bulk emerges, slowly and silently. Your heart rate increases. As it approaches, it becomes enormous, and then you realise – against all hope – from the shape of its tail that it’s not a whale; it’s a shark. In fact, it’s a whale shark – the largest shark on earth!

5

Strangely, for some people, no other experience would give them more pleasure. Many visitors to Ningaloo Reef off the coast of Western Australia rate a swim with a whale shark as ‘one of the best experiences of my life’. Divers can swim right alongside them and admire the beautiful spotted patterning on their skins, which scientists are able to ‘read’ like human fingerprints.

10

We are taught very early on to be fearful of sharks, so the bigger the shark, the bigger our fears. And with good reason: sharks occupy the top of the food chain in the ocean ecosystem – excluding humans, of course. So it is ironic that the largest member of the shark family should strike the least amount of fear in us. Surprisingly, the world’s largest shark does not have the biggest bite either. In fact, it does not hunt at all. Instead it filter-feeds on tiny organisms called plankton and remains safe from other ocean predators simply by being too large to attack.

15

But size does not always work in the favour of these gentle giants: accidental collisions with boats and drifting into fishing nets is common. And for some fishermen around the world catching a whale shark is like striking gold. As a result of these and other factors, the number of whale sharks has halved in the last 75 years.

20

Expanding whale shark tourism might help to reverse this threat of extinction. Some argue that unregulated tourism could put whale sharks in even more danger. But on the other hand, the potential economic benefits of whale shark tourism for nearby fishing communities in the Asia Pacific could help to improve conservation of the species and prompt a decline in their being hunted for food.

25



Helmut Corneli / Alamy Stock Photo

- 5** The main function of the first paragraph (lines 1–5) is to evoke
- A** sympathy and concern for whale sharks.
 - B** admiration and affection for whale sharks.
 - C** tension and excitement about whale sharks.
 - D** disorientation and confusion about whale sharks.
-
- 6** The word ‘Strangely’ (line 6) suggests a sense of the writer’s
- A** relief.
 - B** envy.
 - C** disapproval.
 - D** surprise.
-
- 7** The passage suggests that scientists are interested in the ‘spotted patterning’ (line 9) of whale sharks because
- A** it is a form of camouflage.
 - B** it can identify individual whale sharks.
 - C** all whale sharks have identical patterns.
 - D** whale sharks use their spots to confuse their prey.
-
- 8** In lines 14 and 15, the writer finds it ‘surprising’ that whale sharks are
- A** as big as they are.
 - B** not classified as whales.
 - C** harmless despite their size.
 - D** not eaten by other predators.
-
- 9** In relation to the ‘threat of extinction’ (line 22), the writer considers tourism to be
- A** the only solution.
 - B** a possible solution.
 - C** an unrealistic approach to the problem.
 - D** a counter-productive approach to the problem.

Wildlife at Risk

The following figures show various threats to wildlife populations worldwide. In Figure 1, 'Habitat' refers only to the kind of environment or place an animal lives in. In Figure 2, 'terrestrial species' refers to land-bound animals, 'freshwater species' to animals that live in rivers, lakes and other inland water areas, and 'marine species' to those in the ocean.

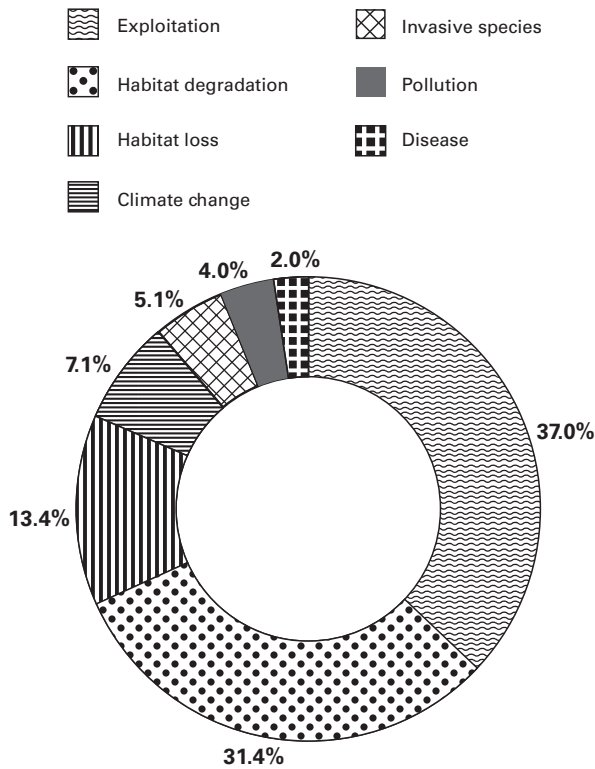


Figure 1

Species population decline from 1970–2010

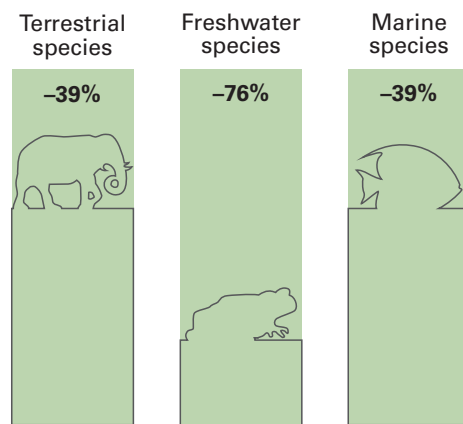


Figure 2

10 Which of the following could best replace Exploitation as a label in Figure 1?

- A** Abuse
- B** Neglect
- C** Harvesting
- D** Overhunting

11 Figure 1 and Figure 2 suggest that decreases in wildlife population are most influenced by

- A** natural changes to habitat.
- B** human-related activity.
- C** weather-related phenomena.
- D** the spread of infectious disease.

12 Which of the following best describes the relationship between Figure 1 and Figure 2?

- A** Figure 2 is irrelevant to the information in Figure 1.
- B** Figure 1 complements the information in Figure 2.
- C** Figure 1 contradicts the information in Figure 2.
- D** Figure 2 explains the information in Figure 1.

Self-Driving Cars

In a recent survey, nine Fremantle residents were asked what they thought about self-driving cars being used in Australia. Below are their responses.

I

You would have to be stupid to hand over control of your driving to a mindless computer.

II

A lot of people still drive recklessly, and use mobile phones while driving. Self-driving cars will eliminate these dangerous practices.

III

The disabled, the sick and the elderly will have more freedom and mobility if they don't have to rely on public transportation or assistance from others to get around.

IV

People should have the right to choose whether they drive a car themselves, or are driven by the car.

V

Computers don't get distracted or tired or angry. If a computer controls the car, it will make very quick and accurate calculations to avoid problems.

VI

The police will be able to shift their focus from writing speeding tickets to other areas of need.

VII

With a self-driving car, you won't need a driver's licence, driving experience, or any special ability to be out on the road.

VIII

Self-driving cars will destroy many jobs in the transportation sector, especially in the freight transportation (truck driving) and taxi industries.

IX

If a self-driving car is programmed to avoid hitting pedestrians, who is at fault if the car swerves and hits a house? The driver? The pedestrians? Or maybe it's the car manufacturer's fault?

13 Which one of the following responses elaborates on the point made in Response II?

- A Response I
- B Response IV
- C Response V
- D Response IX

14 Which one of the following responses makes a similar argument to Response III?

- A Response II
- B Response IV
- C Response VI
- D Response VII

15 Response VI implies that self-driving cars will be

- A disliked by the police.
- B safer than the cars we have now.
- C less powerful than the cars we have now.
- D harder for the police to monitor than the cars we have now.

16 Responses VI and VIII each suggest that self-driving cars will

- A be beneficial for society overall.
- B have a mostly negative impact on society.
- C have an impact on society beyond road safety.
- D have an impact on society that no-one can predict.

17 Response IX suggests a need for

- A human control over vehicles.
- B more protective road barriers.
- C better safety technology in road vehicles.
- D well-defined laws relating to responsibility.

The Mountain Climb

The following passage is taken from a novel. David, a boy, has moved with his family to a new home. The day after moving in, he is attempting to climb a nearby mountain and reaches a ledge after climbing for two hours.

David threw himself on the grass and rolled in it. It was warm and soft and sweet-smelling; it soothed away the hurt of his aching muscles and the sting of his scratches. He rolled over on his back and cushioned his head in his hands. The sky seemed to be slipping along overhead like a broad blue river. The breeze ruffled his hair and whispered, the bushes murmured and gossiped to each other. Even the sunlight seemed to hum to him as it laid warm hands on his face. 5

But there was another sound, which now and then rose above these murmurs. Then it would fade and be drowned out by the breeze. Hard to say why, but it just did not seem to fit there. David propped himself up on his elbows and listened more intently. The sound faded: he had been imagining it. No, he had not been imagining it – there it was again. He sat up. Now he noticed that the ledge was divided by a thicket which grew from the inner side to the outer. The noise, whatever it was, came from the other side of the thicket. 10

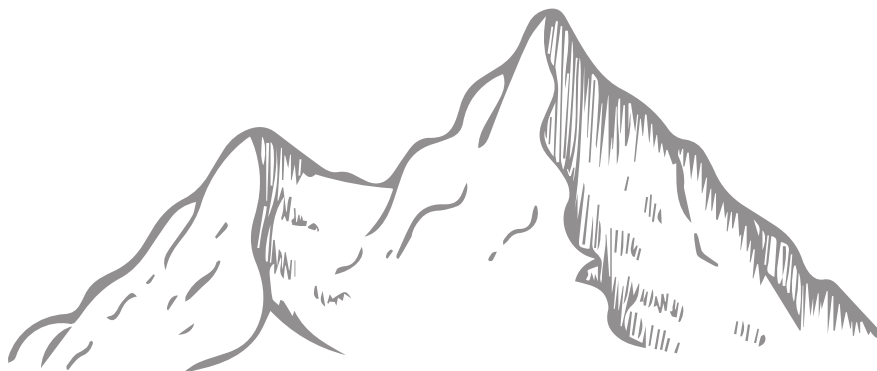
David's curiosity was aroused. The noise did not sound dangerous, but – well, he had never been up a mountain before, and there was no telling what he might find. He dropped into a crouch and crept silently up to the tangle of bushes. His heart began to pound, and he swallowed to relieve the dryness in his throat. The noise was much more distinct now, and it sounded like – like – yes, not only sounded like, but was – someone talking to himself. 15

Who could it possibly be? Well, there was only one way to find out. 20

He dropped down on his stomach and carefully began to worm his way under the thicket. There were vines, too, and some prickly things like thistles, which had to be pushed out of the way without allowing their leaves to rustle. He progressed by inches, pushing with his toes, pulling with his fingertips, wriggling with the rest of his body. At last he could see light breaking through the foliage in front of him – he was nearing the other side. A bunch of leaves hung before his face. He hesitated, then pushed them aside gently, slowly – and peered out. 25

He thought his heart would stop.

There stood an enormous bird.



18 Which of the following best describes David in lines 1–6?

- A engrossed
- B empowered
- C delirious
- D confused

19 The ‘noise’ described by David in lines 7–11 is best described as

- A strident and uplifting.
- B melodic but annoying.
- C discordant and repulsive.
- D intermittent but penetrating.

20 In lines 1–13, David is initially

- A overcome by how he feels, then proud of his accomplishment.
- B proud of his accomplishment, then overcome by how he feels.
- C absorbed by how he feels, then alert in studying his surroundings.
- D alert in studying his surroundings, then absorbed by how he feels.

21 David pushed away the vines and thistles ‘without allowing their leaves to rustle’ (line 23) because he

- A didn’t want to draw attention to himself.
- B was scared of hurting himself on the thistles.
- C didn’t want to disturb the beautiful surroundings.
- D was worried they would prevent him from hearing the sound.

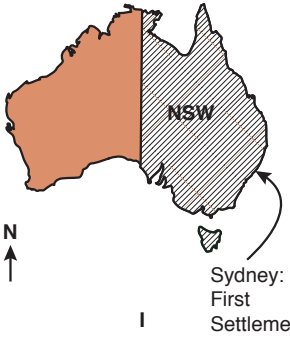
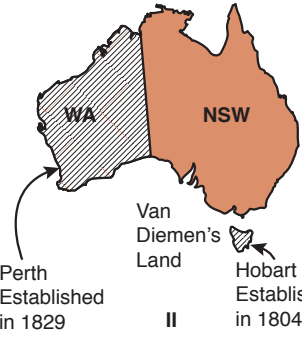


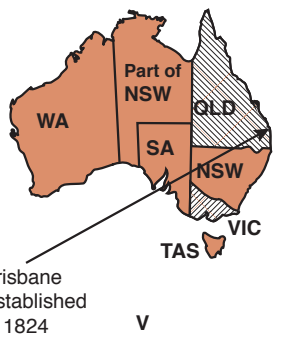

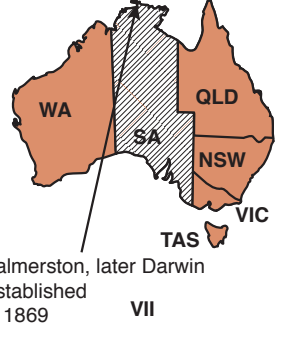

22 In the passage as a whole, David is best described as

- A absent-minded.
- B over-anxious.
- C inquisitive.
- D fearless.

Evolution of the Commonwealth

Maps I–VIII below show how the Commonwealth of Australia evolved in the years 1788–1911.

How the Commonwealth Evolved

<p>In 1788</p>  <p>I Sydney: First Settlement</p>	<p>In 1829</p>  <p>II Perth Established in 1829 Hobart Established in 1804</p>	<p>1788 The colony of New South Wales is established. Exploration begins.</p> <p>1825 Van Diemen's Land becomes a separate colony.</p> <p>1829 Western Australia is proclaimed a colony.</p>
<p>In 1836</p>  <p>III Adelaide Established in 1836</p>	<p>In 1856</p>  <p>IV Melbourne Established in 1835</p>	<p>1836 South Australia is proclaimed a colony.</p> <p>1851 The Port Phillip District of New South Wales becomes the colony of Victoria.</p> <p>1856 Van Diemen's Land becomes the colony of Tasmania.</p>
<p>In 1859</p>  <p>V Brisbane Established in 1824</p>	<p>In 1862</p>  <p>VI</p>	<p>1859 Queensland is proclaimed a colony.</p> <p>1861 The western boundary of South Australia is extended.</p> <p>1862 Part of Queensland's western boundary is extended.</p>
<p>In 1863</p>  <p>VII Palmerston, later Darwin Established in 1869</p>	<p>In 1911</p>  <p>VIII</p>	<p>1863 The Northern Territory, as it is now known, is added to South Australia.</p> <p>1901 The Commonwealth of Australia is formed.</p> <p>1911 The Commonwealth acquires</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Northern Territory from South Australia • the Australian Capital Territory from New South Wales.

23 Which one of the following statements best describes the process shown in the maps?

- A In 1788, the boundaries of future colonies had already been decided.
- B Once colonies were established, their boundaries remained unchanged.
- C Most of the colonies gave up some of their territory to New South Wales.
- D Most of the colonies were formed from territory given up by New South Wales.

24 Which one of the following was proclaimed a colony in the same year that its capital city was founded?

- A Western Australia
- B Victoria
- C Van Diemen's Land
- D Queensland

25 The purpose of down-diagonal shading  in map VI is to show that in 1862 Queensland

- A was given new boundaries.
- B lost some land area to New South Wales.
- C gained some land area from South Australia.
- D was the only colony whose boundaries remained unchanged.

26 Maps VI and VII show that until 1863 the area now known as the Northern Territory was governed from

- A Perth.
- B Adelaide.
- C Sydney.
- D Brisbane.

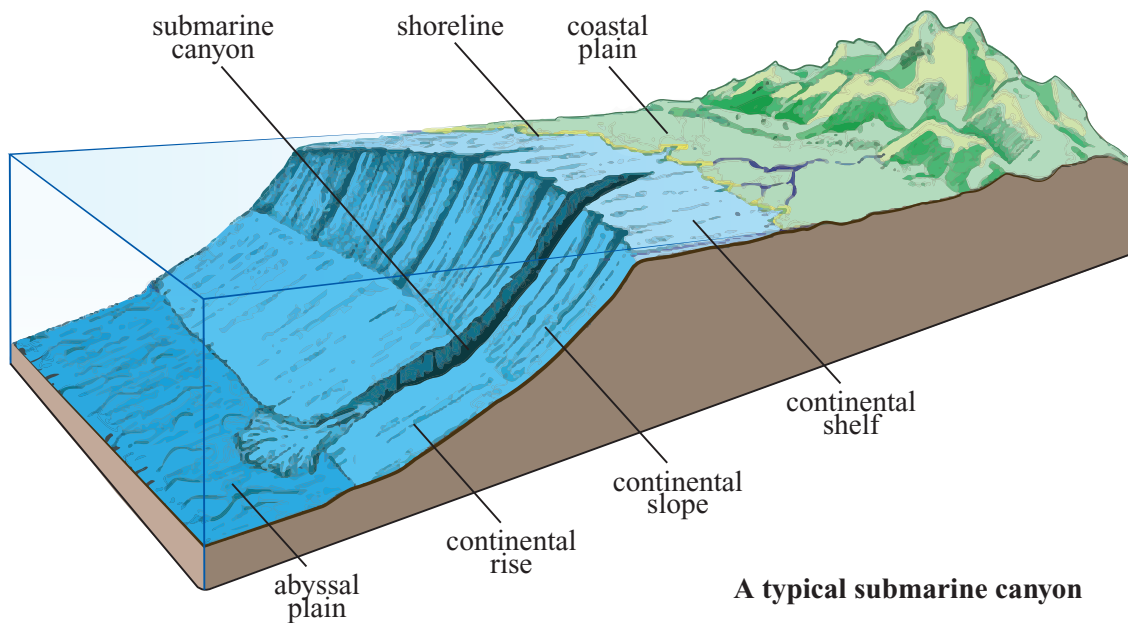
27 Which one of the following shows how the colony of South Australia **increased** in size ↑ or **decreased** ↓ in the period 1836–1911?

A	↓	↓	↓
B	↓	↑	↓
C	↑	↓	↓
D	↑	↑	↓
	during 1861	during 1863	during 1911

Perth Canyon

Did you know that not far from Perth is a canyon that is around the same length as the Grand Canyon but twice as deep? The Perth Canyon is a submarine canyon and is often overlooked because it's underwater. Scientists know it was once part of the Swan River (the same river that flows through Perth today). Millions of years ago, when the sea levels were much lower, the flow of the river towards the sea cut into the rock to form the deep canyon. Although scientists have known about the canyon for a long time, they have not known its exact size and shape or much about the variety of sea life and plants living in it.

5



Unlike deep-sea trenches, submarine canyons are located on the slopes of continental shelves, which are the parts of the landmass that extend underwater from the edges of a continent or island. There are many submarine canyons around the world but not all of them have been explored.

10

Scientists have recently been mapping the Perth Canyon to try and find out exactly how large it is. During this mapping they have discovered several interesting features, including the form of an ancient waterfall twelve times higher than Niagara Falls in North America. In addition, in some places the canyon is more than four kilometres deep. At such a depth the pressure is very high, which means it is unreachable by humans unless they travel there in a specially designed vehicle. The scientists used a remotely-operated vehicle (ROV) fitted with cameras and lights (there is no natural light in the deep ocean) to do their exploring for them. This vehicle takes video and photos and has sent the scientists images of many different types of sea life and underwater plant species, some which have never been seen before. The scientists describe the Perth Canyon as a 'global diversity hotspot': this means there is a greater variety of species living in the area compared with other parts of the ocean. The shape of the canyon 'funnels' water that is rich in nutrients upwards from the lower, deeper parts of the ocean toward the surface, attracting many other sea animals. Pygmy blue whales like to feed at the rims of the abyss. The sperm whale and humpback whale also visit the area to forage for food during their annual migration across the oceans.

15

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- 28** The passage suggests that in comparison to the Grand Canyon, the Perth Canyon
- A** is bigger overall.
 - B** is similar in depth.
 - C** is less interesting to scientists.
 - D** has been more thoroughly mapped.

- 29** Lines 3–6 of the passage imply that the submarine canyon
- A** has always been covered by the sea.
 - B** is still being eroded by the flow of the Swan River.
 - C** was mostly above the sea when it originally formed.
 - D** formed about the same time as the Grand Canyon.

- 30** The comparison to Niagara Falls (line 15) is included in the description mainly to
- A** provide a known scale for comparison.
 - B** suggest that the canyon could become a tourist attraction.
 - C** emphasise that the canyon has been around for a long time.
 - D** suggest it is surprising that the canyon is not more well known.

- 31** The Perth Canyon is described as a ‘global diversity hotspot’ (line 23) because it
- A** has extreme temperatures compared to other submarine canyons.
 - B** is receiving more scientific attention than other parts of the world’s ocean.
 - C** can be easily explored by scientists wanting to study marine plants and animals.
 - D** has a higher concentration of plant and animal life than other parts of the ocean.

- 32** Which one of the following statements is consistent with the information in the passage?
Pygmy blue whales like to feed at ‘the rims of the abyss’ (line 27) because
- A** there is less competition from other whale species.
 - B** they are vulnerable to predators in the deeper ocean.
 - C** it is the only place they can find the type of food they like to eat.
 - D** they can find food that would otherwise be too deep in the ocean to reach.

Failure Quotes

The following quotations present ideas relating to failure.

I

We are all failures – at least the best of us are.

J.M. Barrie

II

Success is often achieved by those who don't know that failure is inevitable.

Coco Chanel

III

I have not failed. I've just found 10,000 ways that won't work.

Thomas A. Edison

33 Which of the following best reflects Quotation I?

- A Failure brings us together.
- B Failure helps us become better people.
- C Only successful people overcome their failures.
- D Admitting to our failures requires great courage.

34 Which of the following sayings is most closely related to Quotation II?

- A 'Ignorance is bliss.'
- B 'Actions speak louder than words.'
- C 'Everything comes to those who wait.'
- D 'All good things must come to an end.'

35 Quotation III is most likely intended to be

- A self-pitying.
- B an angry rebuke.
- C mildly humorous.
- D a triumphant declaration.

END OF TEST

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