The life of the sea otter, known to some people as a “floating teddy bear” and to scientists as Enhydra lutris, has not been easy, conservationists say. Their population off the California coast diminished from 18,000 in 1800 to 1,724 in 1988. In the 19th century, they were brought to the brink of extinction by American, Russian and Spanish fur traders. But in 1938 a rancher spotted several of the small furry animals floating on their backs, their usual position, off the coast of California. Since then, their numbers have slowly multiplied. The problem now is not that people hunt them for their fur but that the sea otters are at odds with the commercial shellfish industry. Many people in the shellfish industry want to get rid of the otters because they eat the very things that the industry wants: clams, abalone, lobster, crabs and sea urchins.

Another danger for the sea otter comes from the oil industry. Sea otters have no insulating layer of blubber to keep them warm in 50-degree waters. What keeps them warm is their long, thick fur. This fur must be kept fluffy and full of air bubbles in order to keep water from coming in direct contact with the otter’s skin. If there is an oil spill, as has been common in recent years, the oil could mat the sea otter fur, which would cause death by freezing within hours. As a result, conservationists are now concerned about what might happen if a large number of sea otters and slick meet.

1. Which of the following is the best title for this passage?
   1) Sea Otters: A conservationist’s Concern
   2) Oil Slicks
   3) Sea Otters and Their Fur
   4) The Life of the Sea Otter

The idea that spaceships may someday trek from star to star makes great science fiction but bad science. The laws of physics and the properties of matter limit the speed of spaceships, making it impossible to travel between stars in any reasonable time.

This is a surprisingly unpopular message, Instead of being relieved that we can’t be invaded by hostile aliens people are disturbed by the idea that our technology is approaching some theoretical limit so soon after it first started. Only 160 years separate the first steam locomotive form manned space flight, a stupendous rate of progress. Surely if technology could take us from 3 miles per hour to 25,000 miles per hour (7 miles per second) in only 160 years, someday speeds in excess of 186 miles per second should be possible.

Unfortunately, technology doesn’t work this way. Human experience shows us that new technologies reach their practical limits early in their development. The Great Pyramid of Egypt was built about 2680 B.C., only a few hundred years after the Egyptians first learned to cut and move large blocks of stones. They continued building pyramids for another 1,000 years, but never again one as big.
Men landed on the moon only eight years after Yuri Gagarin’s first orbital flight. The moon landing may be our Great Pyramid, an accomplishment never again to be equaled.

Although a manned mission to Mars may be technologically possible, it’s questionable whether it is justified in terms of its costs and risks. Even if peace and democracy should reign throughout the world and $1 trillion a year in armament expense is no longer needed, there will be many other things to do with the money.

2. The main idea of the passage is that _________.
   1) people enjoy reading science fiction
   2) we owe a great debt to the Egyptians
   3) people will soon travel at the speed of light
   4) interstellar travel is impractical

Zhou Libo’s show at the cavernous Shanghai International Gymnastics Center has been sold out for days, and after I finally get a ticket, I understand why. Sporting a tuxedo and a white bow tie, Zhou, 43, a stand-up comedian, delivers rapid-fire jokes, mostly about life in Shanghai. The theme is "I’m crazy about money," and Zhou riffs on soaring property prices, how much it costs to raise kids, even how much the U.S. owes China. The audience of some 3,700 roars its approval. People are clapping, slapping their thighs, stomping the floor. I manage a smile, but even though I am a Mandarin speaker, I don’t really get the humor, and many of my Chinese friends would be almost as lost. While Zhou sets up his jokes in Mandarin, the punch lines are nearly always in the local Shanghai dialect. This much I do get, however: the performance is an unabashed celebration of all things Shanghai and Shanghainese.

For China’s most dynamic, most cosmopolitan and sassiest city, this is a time to celebrate. After decades of hibernation following the founding of Mao Zedong’s People’s Republic in 1949, Shanghai is returning to its roost as a global center of commerce and culture. This year Shanghai, as host of World Expo 2010, is squarely in the international spotlight. The fair opens May 1, and organizers expect more than 70 million visitors over six months.

Shanghai’s style is to do things big. Its population of 19 million makes it one of the largest metropolises on the planet. More than 750 foreign multinational companies have offices in the city. The skyline counts more than 30 buildings over 650 ft. (200 m) tall. Stroll down certain streets, and you can easily imagine that you are in midtown Manhattan — so much so that on visiting the city in 2007 for the MTV Style Gala, Paris Hilton was moved to declare, "Shanghai looks like the future."
Yet Shanghai is still trying to determine what that future should be. For all the money (local and foreign), the constant building and rebuilding, the international profile — and the pride and confidence all these things engender — you get a sense when you speak with many Shanghainese that the city is suffering from a bit of an identity crisis. Much of it revolves around whether and how to preserve the past — not just physical structures but also what has always both made Shanghai part of and set it apart from the rest of China.

"On the one hand, living conditions are better than before," says prominent crime novelist Qiu Xiaolong, who sets his books in 1990s Shanghai. "At the same time, people feel kind of lost. In my books, people sit in front of their shikumen [stone gate] houses and talk. Nowadays people are shut up in air-conditioning. They want things to be better, but they don't know whether to look forward or back."

1. According to the passage, which city is used as a comparison of Shanghai?
   1) Manhattan
   2) London
   3) New York
   4) Melbourne

2. Why does the author find Zhou Libo's show not so impressive?
   1) Because he doesn't personally like the speaker's characters.
   2) Because almost climax of the jokes were conducted in local Shanghainese.
   3) Because most of the jokes were related to Mandarin life.
   4) Because the attendee were too crowded in Shanghai International Gymnastics Center.

3. Which following is not TRUE about Shanghai?
   1) It hosts the World Expo in 2010.
   2) It is one of the largest city with 19 million people.
   3) Its population is facing economic crisis at the moment.
   4) It is the hometown of Mao Zedong.
The Nixon Administration abhors the very idea of gasoline rationing, considers rationing unnecessary, and lacks the statutory authority to order it even if it wanted to. Nonetheless, Federal Energy Boss William Simon last week began gearing up the machinery to impose rationing, just in case. He ordered the Federal Bureau of Engraving and Printing to start printing a three-month supply of ration coupons, and announced a comprehensive—and imaginative—stand-by plan for their use. Key feature: a kind of Government-sanctioned black market or, in the words of policy planners, a "white market."

1. The word “abhors” is closest in meaning to ________.
   1) detests
   2) regards
   3) considers
   4) specifies

2. Which following word can be best replaced “impose”?
   1) resolve
   2) devote
   3) inflict
   4) influence

In their first week, the Vancouver Olympic Games looked well on their way to a gold medal in winter calamity—tragedy on the luge track, slush on the downhill course at Whistler and drenching rain on Cypress Mountain that eventually washed away the standing-room spectator zone, costing organizers around $1.4 million in refunded ticket sales. The signature snafu may be this: the Canadians couldn't make ice. A men's speed-skating final had to be halted for more than an hour because two ice-resurfacing machines were in various degrees of breakdown—sort of like the Games themselves. Still, you'd have a difficult time convincing most Canadians that their Olympics aren't measuring up. Snafus notwithstanding, Vancouver has been a determinedly cheerful host city and Whistler an advertisement for the staggering beauty of British Columbia. Besides, there's still time to pull it out. What matters most to Canada is the men's ice-hockey gold. Win that, on the Games' final day, and the rest will be forgiven. Because Canadians will have shown the world that not only can they make ice, they can play on it too.

1. The word “their” refers to __________.
   1) the Vancouver Olympic Games
   2) various degrees of breakdown
   3) refunded ticket sales
   4) Canadians

2. What does “the rest” refers to?
   1) The operating difficulties.
   2) The victory of men's ice hockey.
   3) Refunding ticket sale process.
   4) Men's speed skating delay.
American car registrations rose from one million in 1920 to ten million in 1923. Automobile sales in the state of Michigan outnumbered those in Great Britain and Ireland combined. By 1927, Americans were driving some twenty-six million automobiles, one car for every five people in the country.

1. It can be inferred from this paragraph that ...........
   1) car registration became required in the early 1920s
   2) more cars were sold in Michigan than in any other state
   3) America’s passion for cars grew in the 1920s
   4) most people in Ireland could not afford to buy cars

The star now disappears from the perceivable universe, like a cartoon character who jumps into a hole and pulls the hole in after him. What this process leaves behind is a different kind of hole—a profound disturbance in spacetime, a region where gravity is so intense that nothing, not even light, can escape from it. Any object falling within the boundary of a black hole will be sucked in and will disappear from our universe forever.

2. It can be concluded from the paragraph that light ..........  
   1) destroys a black hole
   2) can barely reveal a black hole
   3) does not exist near a black hole
   4) originates in spacetime

In recent years, the origin of tornado formation has been the subject of increasingly fruitful research. Nevertheless, some mystery still surrounds tornadoes, and their formation cannot be predicted with absolute accuracy, even when conditions for their occurrence seem just right. Tornadoes are usually associated with thunderstorm conditions. They require a moist airstream that is warm for the season and usually comes from a southerly direction. Tornadoes favor the warmest part of the day, when solar heating and thunderstorm development are at their maximum.

3. It can be concluded from the paragraph that ............  
   1) prediction of tornadoes will become more accurate in the future
   2) scientists have studied the effect of tornadoes on fruit trees
   3) if the right conditions exist, a tornado will form
   4) many questions about tornado formation remain unanswered
In the 19\textsuperscript{th} century, railroads initiated a revolution in transportation in the United States. That revolution continued in the 20\textsuperscript{th} century with the development of the mass-produced, affordable private automobile and a nationwide system of highways designed for cars. Although American manufacturer Henry Ford is often given credit for inventing the automobile, early autos had been running in Europe for years when he transformed the automobile from a mechanical curiosity into an indispensable product: a standardized vehicle, produced by the millions, which even consumers with the modest incomes could afford. That product, in turn, transformed America by carrying the transportation revolution a tremendous step farther. Railway trains in the 1800s had provided a means to move large numbers of people from one place to another. Now automobiles supplied a way to give individuals unprecedented mobility, and to travel almost anywhere suitably firm, level ground existed.

4. It can be inferred from the passage that Henry Ford ..........
   1) had helped create the railway network of the 1800s
   2) did not himself invent the automobile
   3) personally assembled all the automobiles produced in his factory
   4) hated horses and wanted to make them extinct

   Such a DNA bar code helped to convict Randall Jones, now on Death Row in Florida. Jones’s car got stuck in the mud. In search of a tow, he found a young couple asleep in a pickup truck parked by a fishing ramp. He shot each of them in the head with a rifle, dragged their bodies into the woods, used the truck to pull out his car, and then went back and raped the woman. In such cases, standard blood or semen analysis can identify a suspect with a certainty of about 90 to 95 percent, leaving some room for argument. However, Jones’s DNA pattern, which matched the sperm found in the victim’s body, could occur in only one person out of 9.34 billion—about double the present population of the world.

5. The paragraph suggests that the DNA method ..........
   1) may convict those who haven’t committed crimes
   2) would also completely exonerate a defendant who was innocent
   3) is the preferred method of investigation by the police
   4) is more economical than blood or semen testing

6. It can be inferred from the passage that Jones’s murder was ..........
   1) premeditated
   2) accidental
   3) passionate
   4) spontaneous
Many video games feature an invincibility power-up that makes the player impervious to damage, at least for a while. As the economic crisis hit in late 2008, some said the same about the industry itself. The theory went that sales of video games, which had been strong in 2008, would also be strong in 2009, because games are a relatively cheap form of entertainment that let people escape from gloomy economic reality.

At first glance the sales figures seem to debunk the idea that video games are recession-proof. In June 2009, for example, sales of games in America were 31% lower than in June 2008, according to NPD, a market-research firm. In July sales were down 26%, the fifth successive monthly decline. But the year ended with a record-breaking December, as people bought consoles and games for Christmas. Globally, says Piers Harding-Rolls of Screen Digest, a consultancy, sales of games were down by 6.3% in 2009. The decline was biggest in America (9.3%) and smaller in Europe (3.5%) and Japan (2%). The number of Nintendo Wii and Microsoft Xbox 360 consoles sold was flat in 2009; sales of Sony’s PlayStation 3 were up by 22% after a price cut.

In some respects, this stumble reflects gaming’s new popularity. When it was less of a mainstream activity it was not so connected to the wider economic cycle. The success of the family-friendly Wii has broadened gaming’s appeal, but the new players it has attracted are less avid gamers who are more likely to cut back in hard times. During 2009 more people turned to mobile, web-based or second-hand games, says Mr. Harding-Rolls.

Another way of looking at things, however, is to say that spending on gaming is driven by big hits, and that the slight decline in 2009 reflects creative rather than economic weakness. Entertainment industries always have their ups and downs, says Shigeru Miyamoto, the creative force behind many of Nintendo’s biggest games. There was an unusually large number of hits in 2008, which boosted sales, and fewer big releases in 2009 until late in the year, which may explain the weak mid-year sales. The biggest hit was “Modern Warfare 2”, released in November, which became the fastest-selling game in history, selling 7m copies worldwide on its first day. The top 20 games took a larger share of sales in 2009 than in 2008, which shows that the games industry, like the film industry, is becoming increasingly polarized between hits and misses. Hence the hit-and-miss results of the big publishers of video games.

Overall, says Mr. Miyamoto, 2009’s crop of games may just have been less compelling. “We were not able to produce fun-enough products,” he says. That highlights the importance of continued innovation, he says—but it leaves unanswered the question of whether gaming is indeed recession-proof.
1. Why are the sales of video games expected to be strong?
   1) Because the depression of economy makes everyone wants to play video game.
   2) Because there are no other entertainment during the gloomy economy.
   3) Because the video game is comparatively cheaper than other entertainments.
   4) Because the advertisement in video game industry has been increased recently.

2. Which paragraph does the passage mention about the causes of sale dip in video game industry?
   1) Paragraph 1
   2) Paragraph 2
   3) Paragraph 3
   4) Paragraph 4

3. What is the main idea of the passage?
   1) Despite of the decline of the sales, the video game industry is believed to be invincible.
   2) The video game is the most popular form of entertainment worldwide.
   3) The sales of video games had declined in 2009 because only few games were bought.
   4) Wii and Playstation 3 have the biggest market share in USA

4. The word “debunk” can be replaced by ______________.
   1) discredit
   2) support
   3) encourage
   4) maintain

5. The author’s attitude toward video game industry is ______________.
   1) optimistic
   2) pessimistic
   3) biased
   4) judgmental

6. The word “its” refers to ______________.
   1) game
   2) sale
   3) history
   4) console

7. In 2009, which continent has the biggest fall in sales of games?
   1) America
   2) Asia
   3) Africa
   4) Europe
Newspapers used to die all the time, and nobody thought a thing about it because other newspapers were being born. The law of the jungle is brutal but not particularly sad.

Somewhere around the time television got big, though, the newspapers birthrate fell close to zero; after that, every death was one step closer to extinction. You see the difference in the history of Seattle Post-Intelligencer. Its 146-year life span is a tale of dead start-ups, relaunches, mergers, fierce competition - all bloody and robust and healthy. Now the P-I is gone but for a skeleton crew of Web producers and opinion writers, and there won't be another paper along to replace it. With the Seattle Times also struggling, Seattle could become one of the first major American cities to go newspaperless.

Declining readership is normally blamed, but that's not quite it. Newspapers still attract readers—more than 400,000 each Sunday in Seattle when the P-I died March 17. That's more in one town than most cable-news shows draw from the entire U.S.

But large audiences won't save an ecosystem in which costs are high and advertising has plunged. Tiny audiences are fine for cable because you don't need much more than desk, a loudmouth host and a camera—the guests show up for free, lured by the bewitching red light that signals ON THE AIR. For online news, you don't even need the guests or the camera. A paper, by contrast, has presses and trucks and lifestyle reporters; comic strips, critics and recipes; the DIY column, beat writers, the sport pages, an investigative team, the statehouse bureau, s squad of chin strokers on the editorial board and that older fellow who write a “light” column that hasn’t been funny for years. That’s a lot of overhead.

The business was a gas while it lasted, but that’s a topic for the press-club bar. Instead, consider this: every time a news source dies and an online opinion site rises up, we move a little closer to the fact-starved day when the loudmouths have only themselves to talk about.

8. What is the appropriate main idea of the passage?
   1) As the time goes by, it is hard for newspaper business to survive.
   2) The television is becoming less popular as a media
   3) Seattle is one of major American cities that newspaper business fails
   4) The price of newspaper is so high that consumers turn to cable TV instead
9. The phrase “every death” refers to _____.
   1) television  
   2) Post-Intelligencer  
   3) jungle  
   4) newspaper company

10. It can be assumed from paragraph 3 & 4 that newspaper business _____.
    1) faces the declining of readership  
    2) has more audience than cable TV  
    3) suffers from high cost of production  
    4) needs to reduce the advertisement section

11. According to the last paragraph, _____.
    1) the less news source we have, the harder we will get the right information  
    2) the longer time goes by, the more importance of online opinion will become  
    3) the closer we starve for fact, the less news source we have  
    4) the more online opinion rises, the more fact we can consume

12. The word “struggling” means _____.
    1) satisfying  
    2) overwhelming  
    3) retaining  
    4) stumbling

13. The purpose of this passage is to _____.
    1) remind the importance of newspaper  
    2) disapprove the usage of cable TV  
    3) provoke readers to be more interested in news  
    4) advertise the new kind of newspaper

14. The statement “The business was a gas while it lasted...” means that _____.
    1) the last business which operates will be gas business  
    2) whenever the company can’t do the business, it completely disappears  
    3) every business will become bankruptcy at the end of its life span  
    4) while it lasted, the business is a gaseous state