

Directions: In this section, you are going to read a passage with ten statements attached to it. Each statement contains information given in one of the paragraphs. Identify the paragraph from which the information is derived. You may choose a paragraph more than once. Each paragraph is marked with a letter. Answer the questions by marking the corresponding letter on *Answer Sheet 2*.

Could Food Shortages Bring Down Civilization?

- A) For many years I have studied global agricultural, population, environmental and economic trends and their interactions. The combined effects of those trends and the political tensions they generate point to the breakdown of governments and societies. Yet I, too, have resisted the idea that food shortages could bring down not only individual governments but also our global civilization.
- B) I can no longer ignore that risk. Our continuing failure to deal with the environmental declines that are undermining the world food economy forces me to conclude that such a collapse is possible.
- C) As demand for food rises faster than supplies are growing, the resulting food-price inflation puts severe stress on the governments of many countries. Unable to buy grain or grow their own, hungry people take to the streets. Indeed, even before the steep climb in grain prices in 2008, the number of failing states was expanding. If the food situation continues to worsen, entire nations will break down at an ever increasing rate. In the 20th century the main threat to international security was superpower conflict; today it is failing states.
- D) States fail when national governments can no longer provide personal security, food security and basic social services such as education and health care. When governments lose their control of power, law and order begins to disintegrate. After a point, countries can become so dangerous that food relief workers are no longer safe and their programs are halted. Failing states are of international concern because they are a source of terrorists, drugs, weapons and refugees(难民) threatening political stability everywhere.
- E) The surge in world grain prices in 2007 and 2008—and the threat they pose to food security—has a different, more troubling quality than the increases of the past. During the second half of the 20th century, grain prices rose dramatically several times. In 1972, for instance, the Soviets, recognizing their poor harvest early, quietly cornered the world wheat market. As a result, wheat prices elsewhere more than doubled, pulling rice and corn prices up with them. But this and other price shocks were event-driven—drought in the Soviet Union, crop-shrinking heat in the U.S. Corn Belt. And the rises were short-lived: prices typically returned to normal with the next harvest.
- F) In contrast, the recent surge in world grain prices is trend-driven, making it unlikely to reverse without a reversal in the trends themselves. On the demand side, those trends include the ongoing addition of more than 70 million people a year, a growing number of people wanting to move up the food chain to consume highly grain-intensive meat products, and the massive diversion(转向) of U.S. grain to the production of bio-fuel.
- G) As incomes rise among low-income consumers, the potential for further grain consumption is huge. But that potential pales beside the never-ending demand for crop-based fuels. A fourth of this year's U.S. grain harvest will go to fuel cars.

- H) What about supply? The three environmental trends—the shortage of fresh water, the loss of topsoil and the rising temperatures—are making it increasingly hard to expand the world's grain supply fast enough to keep up with demand. Of all those trends, however, the spread of water shortages poses the most immediate threat. The biggest challenge here is in irrigation, which consumes 70 % of the world's fresh water. Millions of irrigation wells in many countries are now pumping water out of underground sources faster than rainfall can refill them. The result is falling water tables(地下水位) in countries with half the world's people, including the three big grain producers—China, India and the U.S.
- I) As water tables have fallen and irrigation wells have gone dry, China's wheat crop, the world's largest, has declined by 8% since it peaked at 123 million tons in 1997. But water shortages are even more worrying in India. Millions of irrigation wells have significantly lowered water tables in almost every state.
- J) As the world's food security falls to pieces, individual countries acting in their own self-interest are actually worsening the troubles of many. The trend began in 2007, when leading wheat-exporting countries such as Russia and Argentina limited or banned their exports, in hopes of increasing local food supplies and thereby bringing down domestic food prices. Vietnam banned its exports for several months for the same reason. Such moves may eliminate the fears of those living in the exporting countries, but they are creating panic in importing countries that must rely on what is then left for export.
- K) In response to those restrictions, grain-importing countries are trying to nail down long-term trade agreements that would lock up future grain supplies. Food-import anxiety is even leading to new efforts by food-importing countries to buy or lease farmland in other countries. In spite of such temporary measures, soaring food prices and spreading hunger in many other countries are beginning to break down the social order.
- L) Since the current world food shortage is trend-driven, the environmental trends that cause it must be reversed. We must cut carbon emissions by 80% from their 2006 levels by 2020, stabilize the world's population at eight billion by 2040, completely remove poverty, and restore forests and soils. There is nothing new about the four objectives. Indeed, we have made substantial progress in some parts of the world on at least one of these—the distribution of family-planning services and the associated shift to smaller families.
- M) For many in the development community, the four objectives were seen as positive, promoting development as long as they did not cost too much. Others saw them as politically correct and morally appropriate. Now a third and far more significant motivation presents itself: meeting these goals may be necessary to prevent the collapse of our civilization. Yet the cost we project for saving civilization would amount to less than \$200 billion a year, 1/6 of current global military spending. In effect, our plan is the new security budget.
36. The more recent steep climb in grain prices partly results from the fact that more and more people want to consume meat products.
37. Social order is breaking down in many countries because of food shortages.
38. Rather than superpower conflict, countries unable to cope with food shortages now constitute the main threat to world security.
39. Some parts of the world have seen successful implementation of family planning.
40. The author has come to agree that food shortages could ultimately lead to the collapse of world civilization.
41. Increasing water shortages prove to be the biggest obstacle to boosting the world's grain production.
42. The cost for saving our civilization would be considerably less than the world's current military spending.

43. To lower domestic food prices, some countries limited or stopped their grain exports.
44. Environmental problems must be solved to ease the current global food shortage.
45. A quarter of this year's American grain harvest will be used to produce bio-fuel for cars.