

Directions: In this section, there is a passage with ten blanks. You are required to select one word for each blank from a list of choices given in a word bank following the passage. Read the passage through carefully before making your choices. Each choice in the bank is identified by a letter. Please mark the corresponding letter for each item on **Answer Sheet 2** with a single line through the centre. You may not use any of the words in the bank more than once.

The now extinct passenger pigeon has the dubious honor of being the last species anyone ever expected to disappear. At one point, there were more passenger pigeons than any other species of bird. Rough 26 of their population went as high as five billion and they accounted for around 40 percent of the total indigenous bird population of North America in the early 19th century.

Despite their huge population, passenger pigeons were 27 to human intrusion into their nesting territory. Their nests were shabby things and two weeks after the eggs 28, the parent pigeons would abandon their offspring, leaving them to take care of themselves. People discovered that these baby pigeons were really tasty, and the adult birds were also quite 29. First the Native Americans and then the transplanted Europeans came to consider the birds a great 30.

By the 1850s, commercial trapping of passenger pigeons was proceeding at an 31 pace. Hundreds of thousands of the birds were being harvested every day to be made into popular pigeon pies. In addition, large 32 of the pigeons' nesting territory were being cleared away for planting crops and creating pasture land. As numerous as the passenger pigeons were, they were not an 33 resource. By the 1880s, it was noticed that the bird population had become seriously 34. The last passenger pigeons killed in the wild were shot in 1899.

Eventually those billions and billions of birds shrank to a single remaining 35, a passenger pigeon named Martha, who died on September 1, 1914, in captivity at the Cincinnati Zoo. In addition to being the end of an era, it was also the first time humans were able to exactly time the extinction of a species.

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| A) vulnerable | I) hatched |
| B) unprecedented | J) expired |
| C) tracts | K) excerpts |
| D) specimen | L) estimates |
| E) robust | M) edible |
| F) refuge | N) depleted |
| G) plazas | O) delicacy |
| H) infinite | |