



**Time allowed: 30 minutes • Total marks: 25 (1 mark per question)**

- Read the passage carefully before you start the questions.
- Circle the letter of the correct answer for each question.
- You can look back at the passage as often as you like.
- If a question is hard, move on and come back to it at the end.

## Islands of Fire

*Read the passage carefully, then answer the questions. The numbers show the paragraphs.*

- 1 Early one November morning in 1963, the crew of a fishing boat south of Iceland smelled sulphur and saw a column of black smoke rising from the open sea. There was no ship on fire. The smoke was coming from the water itself, where an underwater volcano had begun to erupt.
- 2 Within a day, explosions were hurling ash and steam high into the sky. Within a week, something astonishing had appeared where there had been only waves: a ridge of dark rock, hissing as the sea broke over it. A brand new island was being born, and the world could watch. It was named Surtsey, after a giant of fire from old Icelandic stories.
- 3 At first the ocean fought back. Storm waves tore away the loose ash almost as fast as the volcano could pile it up. But then the eruption changed: rivers of lava flowed over the young island and cooled into a hard black shield that the sea could not easily chew away. By the time the eruption ended in 1967, Surtsey stood firm, more than a mile across.
- 4 Then came the second miracle, slower and quieter than the first. Scientists declared the island a protected laboratory, a place where nature could arrive without any help. They watched seeds float in on the tide and gulls carry others in their feathers. The first green shoot, a sea rocket plant, appeared within two years. Mosses followed, then grasses, then nesting birds whose droppings fed richer soil.
- 5 Surtsey is not unusual in how it formed, only in how closely it was watched. Much of the ground we stand on began the same way. The islands of Hawaii are the tops of huge volcanoes rising from the ocean floor, and new land is still being added there whenever lava reaches the sea and hardens.
- 6 Volcanoes are usually described as destroyers, and they can be. But Surtsey tells the other half of the story. The same fire that buries fields can also build them, raising new ground from the sea for life, patient and inventive, to claim.

## Section A: Comprehension

Questions 1 to 13 are about the passage Islands of Fire.

- 1 What first alerted the fishing crew to the eruption?  
☐ A A radio warning from Iceland   ☐ B The smell of sulphur and a column of black smoke  
☐ C A wave that rocked the boat   ☐ D Floating rocks around the boat   ☐ E A flash of red light
- 2 Where was the volcano when the eruption began?  
☐ A Under the sea   ☐ B On a nearby island   ☐ C On the Icelandic coast  
☐ D On the fishing boat's route map   ☐ E Inside a mountain

- 3 How quickly did the new ridge of rock appear?
- ☐ A Within an hour   ☐ B After a year   ☐ C After the eruption ended   ☐ D Within a week  
☐ E Within a month
- 
- 4 Where does the island's name come from?
- ☐ A The captain of the fishing boat   ☐ B An Icelandic word for smoke  
☐ C The scientist who first landed there   ☐ D A nearby town   ☐ E A fire giant from old Icelandic stories
- 
- 5 Why did the ocean nearly destroy the island at first?
- ☐ A The tide covered it twice a day   ☐ B The rock was too hot to harden  
☐ C Storm waves tore away the loose ash   ☐ D Fishing boats broke it apart  
☐ E The eruption stopped too soon
- 
- 6 What saved the island from being washed away?
- ☐ A A wall built by scientists   ☐ B A change in the weather   ☐ C Sand carried in by the tide  
☐ D The sea level dropping   ☐ E Lava cooled into a hard shield the sea could not chew away
- 
- 7 What does the phrase the sea could not easily chew away suggest about the sea?
- ☐ A It is full of hungry fish   ☐ B It is calm and gentle   ☐ C It tastes of salt  
☐ D It attacks land like a creature gnawing at it   ☐ E It moves faster than lava
- 
- 8 Why did scientists forbid ordinary visitors to Surtsey?
- ☐ A The island was too dangerous to land on   ☐ B So nature could arrive without any human help  
☐ C They wanted to keep its location secret   ☐ D The rock was too sharp for boots  
☐ E They planned to build a laboratory there
- 
- 9 What was the first plant to grow on the island?
- ☐ A A moss   ☐ B A grass   ☐ C A sea rocket   ☐ D A gull-sown berry   ☐ E A pine seedling
- 
- 10 How did some seeds reach the island, according to paragraph 4?
- ☐ A Floating on the tide and carried in gulls' feathers   ☐ B Planted by scientists   ☐ C Blown from Hawaii  
☐ D Dropped from aircraft   ☐ E Carried by fishing boats
- 
- 11 Why are the islands of Hawaii mentioned?
- ☐ A They erupted in 1963 as well   ☐ B They are protected laboratories  
☐ C They are named after fire giants  
☐ D They formed the same way, as volcano tops rising from the ocean floor  
☐ E They are shrinking as Surtsey grows
- 
- 12 What does the final paragraph say volcanoes can do besides destroy?
- ☐ A Warm the sea for swimmers   ☐ B Build new ground for life to claim   ☐ C Predict earthquakes  
☐ D Make soil too poor for plants   ☐ E Protect coasts from storms
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- 13 What is the main purpose of this passage?
- ☐ A To inform readers how a new island formed and came to life   ☐ B To warn readers about volcanoes  
☐ C To tell a legend about a fire giant   ☐ D To persuade readers to visit Iceland  
☐ E To describe a fishing voyage
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## Section B: Spelling, punctuation and grammar

Questions 14 to 25 test spelling, punctuation and grammar.

14 Which word is spelt incorrectly?

- ☐ A furniture   ☐ B adventure   ☐ C creature   ☐ D capture   ☐ E temperture

15 Which sentence is punctuated correctly?

- ☐ A Lava ash and steam, poured from the crater.   ☐ B Lava, ash, and steam poured, from the crater.  
☐ C Lava, ash and steam poured from the crater.   ☐ D Lava ash, and steam poured from the crater.  
☐ E Lava, ash and, steam poured from the crater.

16 Which sentence uses an apostrophe correctly?

- ☐ A The islands black beache's formed within months.  
☐ B The islands' black beaches formed within month's.  
☐ C The island's black beache's formed within months.  
☐ D The islands black beaches formed within months'.  
☐ E The island's black beaches formed within months.

17 Choose the correct word: The eruption had a huge \_\_\_\_ on the coastline.

- ☐ A affect   ☐ B afect   ☐ C effekt   ☐ D effect   ☐ E affects

18 Choose the correct word: Scientists \_\_\_\_ the island since 1963.

- ☐ A have studied   ☐ B has studied   ☐ C studying   ☐ D studies   ☐ E was studied

19 Which word in this sentence is an adjective? Fierce waves battered the young island.

- ☐ A waves   ☐ B Fierce   ☐ C battered   ☐ D island   ☐ E the

20 Which word in this sentence is a verb? New rock cooled in the salty air.

- ☐ A rock   ☐ B salty   ☐ C cooled   ☐ D air   ☐ E new

21 What is the plural of volcano?

- ☐ A volcanos'   ☐ B volcanose   ☐ C volcanoies   ☐ D volcano   ☐ E volcanoes

22 Choose the best conjunction: The sea cooled the lava \_\_\_\_ it met the waves.

- ☐ A unless   ☐ B or   ☐ C in case   ☐ D as soon as   ☐ E so that

23 Which sentence is an exclamation?

- ☐ A The island grew quickly.   ☐ B How quickly the island grew!   ☐ C Did the island grow quickly?  
☐ D Measure how quickly the island grew.   ☐ E The island's growth was quick.

24 Which option shows the words in alphabetical order?

- ☐ A ash, crater, cinder, lava   ☐ B cinder, ash, crater, lava   ☐ C ash, cinder, crater, lava  
☐ D lava, crater, cinder, ash   ☐ E ash, cinder, lava, crater

25 Which word is spelt incorrectly?

- ☐ A swiming   ☐ B running   ☐ C hopping   ☐ D jogging   ☐ E skipping

**End of paper. Well done!**

