

**Directions:** Read the passage. Then answer numbers 17 through 20.

## Earth's Breath

Many centuries ago, people believed that Earth was a living, breathing thing. They thought that the planet's breathing caused ocean tides. It is an understandable mistake.

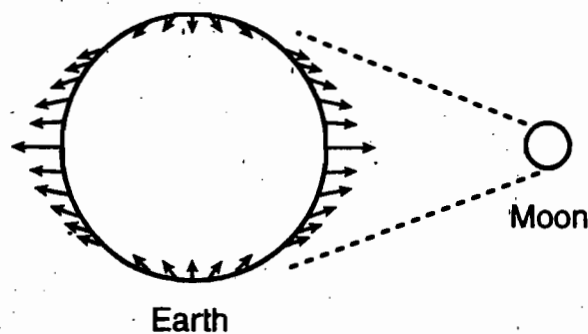
Twice daily, Earth's oceans seem to suck in a deep, slow breath—low tide. Water pulls away from the shore, exposing wide stretches of beach. Tiny crabs skitter into holes in the sand. Sea stars loll in rocky tidal pools created by water left behind by the retreating tide. Lovely, broken shells decorate the shore.

Then, over the next several hours, those same oceans exhale—bringing high tide. Rising water creeps up the sand. Sand castles melt into memories. Sunbathers pick up their towels and move farther away from the ocean to a higher place. Beached boats rock gently and then float with the rising water.

It is something to depend on, the tide. Day in, day out, year round, through the centuries, ocean tides continue. That is not to say that they are always the same. The Moon, our Sun, the weather, the season, all affect tidal movement. Most places on Earth have two high and two low tides each day. However, some places have more, others have fewer, and some see little difference between high and low.

The Moon and Sun are largely responsible for these effects. The Moon's gravity, because it is so near Earth, pulls the water on Earth's surface. Ocean water nearest the Moon rises toward it, creating a sort of bulge. This bulge is a high tide. On the opposite side of Earth, another bulge occurs. Here, the oceans farthest from the Moon are less affected by its gravity and fall away. This bulge is another high tide. As the moon rotates around Earth, these bulges slide with it. The Sun has a similar but less obvious effect on tides. The Sun's effect is less obvious because it is much farther away.

Fishermen and sailors depend on ocean tides. They inspire poets. Whole communities of sea plants and animals live by tidal rhythms. It is no wonder that ancient people believed they were the very breath of our planet.



Question from  
Practice ELA test

Q12 - Dec. 6, 2006

"saw" p 59

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17. According to the passage, ocean tides are caused by —

- A Earth's movement around the Moon
- B the Sun and Moon's gravity
- C sea plants and animals
- D sudden changes in Earth's weather

18. Which one of these is an *opinion* from the passage?

- A Lovely, broken shells decorate the shore.
- B The Moon, our Sun, the weather, the season, all affect tidal movement.
- C As the moon rotates around Earth, these bulges slide with it.
- D Ancient people believed they were the very breath of our planet.

19. Based on the passage, one can predict that —

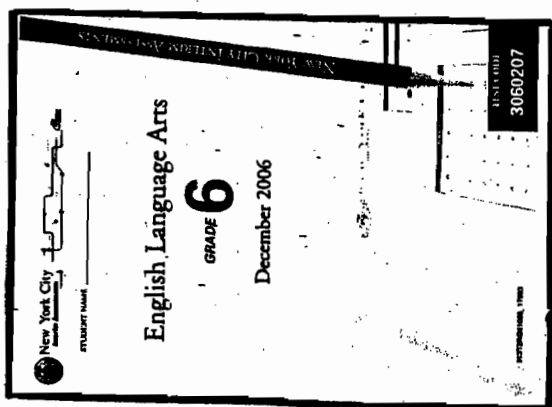
- A the Moon will continue to have a major effect on the ocean
- B the Sun will have a greater effect on tides in the future
- C fishermen will not rely on tides as much as in the past
- D tides will continue to change in unexpected ways

20. Read the sentences from the passage.

Then, over the next several hours, those same oceans exhale—high tide. Sandcastles melt into memories.

What is the author describing in these sentences?

- A Sandcastles melting because of the sun's heat
- B A person remembering sandcastles from childhood
- C The ocean washing away sandcastles
- D The time it takes to build sandcastles



ELA test questions

tides

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