

## Part 3 (Questions 21–27)

**Directions:** On the following pages read Passage I (a poem) and Passage II (an excerpt from a short story) about uncertainty. You may use the margins to take notes as you read. Answer the multiple-choice questions on the answer sheet provided for you. Then write your response for question 26 on page 1 of your essay booklet and question 27 on page 2 of your essay booklet.

### Passage I Home Techtonics

Our house is at the crest  
of a mountain formed  
by a fault line that's still  
doing its work. We're up  
5 over five thousand feet,  
and probably, slowly, the spot  
  
that we sit on is going  
to get higher and higher.  
So, at some point, the house  
10 is coming down, shaken  
to bits, I suppose, and what  
we're banking on is that  
we've chosen the right moment  
  
in geologic time, a sweet  
15 spot between cataclysms.<sup>1</sup>  
And that's what Annie and I  
hope for generally,  
and what everyone seems  
to want—some forgettable  
  
20 moment between great wars  
or typhoons or plagues—to have  
timed it just right, so we're  
in just the right place between  
what we read about in history  
25 books and the moments after  
which history won't matter much.

—John Brantingham  
from *Earthshine*, November 2007–December 2009  
[www.ruminations.us](http://www.ruminations.us)

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<sup>1</sup>cataclysms — upheavals

## Passage II

...It is the latter half of the twenty-first century and there are a dozen Settlements in orbit about the Earth. Each is, in its way, an independent little world. The smallest has ten thousand inhabitants, the largest almost twenty-five thousand. I'm sure that all Earthmen know this, but you people are so entangled in your own giant world, that you rarely think of us except as some little inconsequential<sup>1</sup> objects out in space. Well, *think* of us.

Each Settlement imitates Earth's environment as closely as it can, spinning to produce a pseudo-gravity, allowing sunlight to enter at some times, and not at others, in order to produce a normal day and night. Each is large enough to give the impression of space within, to have farms as well as factories, to have an atmosphere that can give rise to clouds. There are towns, and schools, and athletic fields.

We have some things that Earth has not. The pseudo-gravitational field varies in intensity relative to position within each Settlement. There are areas of low gravity, even zero gravity, where we can outfit ourselves with wings and fly, where we can play three-dimensional tennis, where we can have unusual gymnastic experiences.

We also have a true space culture, for we are used to space. Our chief work, aside from keeping our Settlements running efficiently, is to build structures in space for ourselves and for Earth. We work in space, and to be in a spaceship or a spacesuit is second nature to us. Working at zero gravity is something we have done from childhood.

There are also some things Earth has that we do not. We don't have Earth's weather extremes. In our carefully controlled Settlements, it never gets too hot or too cold. There are no storms and no unarranged precipitation. ...

Each Settlement produces something that other Settlements would like to have, in the matter of food, of art, of ingenious devices. What's more, we must trade with Earth as well, and many Settlers want to visit Earth and see some of the things we don't have in the Settlements. Earthpeople can't realize how exciting it is for us to see a vast blue horizon, or to look out upon a true ocean, or to see an ice-capped mountain.

Therefore, there is a constant coming and going among the Settlements and Earth. But each Settlement has its own ecological balance; and, of course, Earth has, even these days, an ecology that is enormously and impossibly rich by Settlement standards.

We have our insects that are acclimated and under control, but what if strange insects are casually and unintentionally introduced from another Settlement or from Earth? ...

Even worse, what if pathogenic parasites—bacteria, viruses, protozoa—are introduced? What if they produce diseases against which another Settlement and, of course, Earth itself, have developed a certain immunity, but one against which the Settlement that suffers the invasion is helpless. For a while, the entire effort of the Settlement must go into the preparation or importation of sera<sup>2</sup> designed to confer immunity, or to fight the disease once it is established. Deaths, of course, occur invariably. ...

What's more, rightly or wrongly the inhabitants of the Settlements persist in viewing Earthpeople themselves as particularly dangerous. It is on Earth where the most undesirable

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<sup>1</sup>inconsequential — unimportant

<sup>2</sup>sera — plural of serum

40 life-forms and parasites are to be found; it is Earthpeople who are most likely to be infested, and there are parties on all the Settlements who support the notion—sometimes quite vehemently—of breaking all contacts between the Settlements and Earth.

That is the danger of which I want to warn Earthpeople. Distrust—and even hatred—of Earthpeople is constantly growing among the Settlers. ...

—Issac Asimov  
excerpted from “Good-bye to Earth”  
*Gold*, 1995  
HarperPrism

## Multiple-Choice Questions

**Directions** (21–25): Select the best suggested answer to each question and record your answer on the separate answer sheet provided for you.

**Passage I** (the poem) — Questions 21–22 refer to Passage I.

21 Lines 1 through 11 suggest that the area in which the narrator lives is prone to

- (1) hurricanes
- (2) forest fires
- (3) earthquakes
- (4) mud slides

22 The narrator's attitude towards life's circumstances tends to be based on

- (1) acceptance
- (2) enthusiasm
- (3) rebellion
- (4) regret

**Passage II** (the short story excerpt) — Questions 23–25 refer to Passage II.

23 The opening paragraph serves to

- (1) contrast solutions
- (2) emphasize confusion
- (3) list topics
- (4) attract attention

24 The narrator and his people face difficulty in maintaining their land's

- (1) biological balance
- (2) natural beauty
- (3) geological structure
- (4) weather conditions

25 The narrator suggests that the worst threat from Earthpeople is their

- (1) weapons
- (2) germs
- (3) politics
- (4) genes

## Short-Response Questions

**Directions** (26–27): Write your responses to question 26 on page 1 of your essay booklet and question 27 on page 2 of your essay booklet. Be sure to answer **both** questions.

26 Write a well-developed paragraph in which you use ideas from **both** Passage I (the poem) and Passage II (the short story excerpt) to establish a controlling idea about uncertainty. Develop your controlling idea using specific examples and details from **both** Passage I and Passage II.

27 Choose a specific literary element (e.g., theme, characterization, structure, point of view, etc.) or literary technique (e.g., symbolism, irony, figurative language, etc.) used by **one** of the authors. Using specific details from **either** Passage I (the poem) **or** Passage II (the short story excerpt), in a well-developed paragraph, show how the author uses that element or technique to develop the passage.