

Passage A

5 One of the theories in the literature on human evolution that typically receives no more than a passing mention is the proposition that humans are descended from an aquatic ancestor. This “Aquatic Ape Theory,” as it is often called, fills many gaps in the mysteries of human evolution and is consistent with several observations. It seems that it is the apparent absurdity of humans coming from water creatures rather than lack of any evidence that prevents theory from becoming more widespread.

10 Evidence for aquatic ancestors of human beings comes from a variety of sources. For instance, humans are mostly devoid of body hair, much like other mammals such as the elephant and rhinoceros, both of which have aquatic ancestors. Humans require iodine in their diets, which comes from the ocean, and exhibit a breath-holding reflex found in aquatic mammals like seals and dolphins. Likewise, humans exhibit a distinctively different spinal shape from all of their primate relatives, one similar to that developed by aquatic animals for swimming. Proponents of the Aquatic Ape Theory note the various difficulties which the ancestors of humans would have encountered in the evolution toward bipedalism on the land, but in the water this would make perfect sense, given the body support provided by the water and the necessity to breathe.

30 **Passage B**

A minority of anthropologists hold the view that humans are descended from an aquatic ancestor, a concept known as the “Aquatic Ape Theory.” The theory has not merited serious consideration, but while it may be flawed, it is an interesting theory to pursue given that it brings to the forefront key mysteries in human evolution such as hairlessness and the development of bipedalism.

40 Much of the evidence for an aquatic ancestor of humans, such as lack of body hair, bipedalism, breath reflex, and the requirements of iodine in humans’ diet, often seems plucked to support a theory. There are any number of reasons that humans would develop an iodine requirement, or lose their body hair. However the question remains – what was the reason for these developments? It is not terribly far-fetched to speculate that an ancestor of modern humans was a tree dwelling primate like modern day monkeys which spread to the plains of Africa and found it advantageous to hide from predators or even occasionally forage in lakes and rivers. This could easily have led to a development of standing more upright, since this would ensure breathing in the water and an ability to scan for dangerous predators.

55 While perhaps the notion of a long-lived aquatic ancestor

of modern humans is far-fetched, the holes addressed by the theory are worth exploring.

21. It can be inferred that the authors of both passages agree that
- (A) no theory other than that of an aquatic ape ancestor adequately explains why humans are the only primate without significant body hair
 - (B) the theory that humans are descended from an aquatic mammalian ancestor is not commonly rejected based on flaws, but on its absurdity
 - (C) any aquatic ancestors of humans probably lived in lakes and rivers and not in the ocean
 - (D) if humans had a recent aquatic ancestor, this ancestor lived exclusively in Africa
 - (E) the theory that humans have recent aquatic ancestors is not completely unfounded
22. The author of the passage A’s attitude toward the theory of an aquatic ape ancestor of humans can be best described as
- (A) overt dismissal
 - (B) cautious exploration
 - (C) careful questioning
 - (D) tacit advocacy
 - (E) unwavering reverence
23. Passage B is primarily concerned with
- (A) countering the position set forth in passage A
 - (B) addressing a potential objection to the theory of a recent aquatic ancestor of humans
 - (C) investigating mysteries in human evolution and proposing potential explanations through variations of the theory in passage A
 - (D) articulating the evidence for the theory set forth in passage A and explaining why this evidence is in fact much stronger than scientists currently believe
 - (E) ruling out alternative theories for the many features of humans which it believes are best explained by the existence of an aquatic mammalian ancestor of humans
24. Which one of the following is mentioned in passage A, but not in passage B, as evidence for a human ancestor that was an aquatic mammal?
- (A) the requirement of iodine in humans’ diet
 - (B) humans’ lack of significant body hair
 - (C) the shape of the human spine
 - (D) a breath-holding reflex
 - (E) bipedalism

25. Each of the following, if true, would most support the “Aquatic Ape Theory” as described in both passages EXCEPT:

- (A) a recessive gene for webbed fingers and toes in human beings
- (B) the inability of human eyes to retain focus for both water vision and vision outside the water
- (C) the absence of the same breath-holding reflex in other mammals without recent aquatic ancestors
- (D) natural outlets in human sinuses to account for changes in pressure when swimming and diving
- (E) the existence of waterproof skin on human beings

26. The relationship between the passages is most analogous to

- (A) Two airplane mechanics, one of whom is convinced that an airplane’s engine is malfunctioning, another which is more skeptical but agrees the problem merits investigation.
- (B) An insurance agent who attempts to sell a policy only by pointing to its benefits, and a skeptical would-be buyer who quickly identifies the policy’s many flaws.
- (C) Two medical students, one of whom believes that he knows little of what will be on the upcoming exam and must study, and another of whom likewise believes that she knows little, but that studying is futile.
- (D) A soda bottler who believes that something has contaminated a recent shipment, and a corporate spokesperson who insists that the soda bottler deny this.
- (E) Two cross-country skiers who agree on the best brand of skis to use, but disagree on which specific skis in that brand are the best.

27. Which one of the following can be inferred from passage B?

- (A) If humans had aquatic mammalian ancestors, they are the only modern primate for which this is true.
- (B) The elephant and rhinoceros are the only other mammals with aquatic mammalian ancestors.
- (C) Predators were the main cause of death for humans who spread out on to the savannahs of Africa.
- (D) There are some facts that human evolution does not completely explain.
- (E) Aquatic apes, if they existed, probably did not feed on water-dwelling creatures.

STOP

IF YOU FINISH BEFORE TIME IS CALLED, YOU MAY CHECK YOUR WORK ON THIS SECTION ONLY.
DO NOT WORK ON ANY OTHER SECTION IN THE TEST.