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DSST Human/Cultural Geography Exam (Dantes Subject Standardized Tests)

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Question: 1

Which part of a hurricane features the strongest winds and greatest rainfall?

A. Eye wall
B. Front
C. Eye
D. Outward spiral

Answer: A

Explanation:
The eye wall of a hurricane has the strongest winds and the greatest rainfall. The eye wall is the tower-like rim of the eye. It is from this wall that clouds extend out, which are seen from above as the classic outward spiral pattern. A hurricane front is the outermost edge of its influence; although there will be heavy winds and rain in this area, the intensity will be relatively small. The eye of a hurricane is actually a place of surprising peace. In this area, dry and cool air rushes down to the ground or sea. Once there, the air is caught up in the winds of the eye wall and is driven out ward at a furious pace.

Question: 2

What is the most common type of volcano on earth?

A. Lava dome
B. Composite volcano
C. Shield volcano
D. Cinder cone

Answer: B

Explanation:
The composite volcano, sometimes called the stratovolcano, is the most common type of volcano on earth. A composite volcano has steep sides, so the explosions of ash, pumice, and silica are often accompanied by treacherous mudslides. Indeed, it is these mudslides that cause most of the damage associated with composite volcano eruptions. Krakatoa and Mount Saint Helens are examples of composite volcanoes. A lava dome is a round volcano that emits thick lava very slowly. A shield volcano, one example of which is Mt. Kilauea in Hawaii, emits a small amount of lava over an extended period of time. Shield volcanoes are not known for violent eruptions. A cinder cone has steep sides made of fallen cinders, which themselves are made of the lava that intermittently shoots into the air.

Question: 3

Which biome features scrubby plants and small evergreen trees and also has a hot, dry summer followed by a wetter winter?

A. Taiga
B. Coniferous forest
C. Chaparral
D. Savanna

Answer: C

Explanation:
The chaparral biome features scrubby plants and small evergreen trees and also has a hot dry summer followed by a wetter winter. This biome is mainly found around the Mediterranean Sea, though there are also chaparrals in Australia, South Africa, and the American Southwest. The taiga is a colder biome found primarily in northern Europe and Asia. The vegetation of the taiga is mainly scattered stands of coniferous trees. A coniferous forest, meanwhile, is a warmer forest composed of trees that have needles and cones rather than leaves. These trees are better suited for a cold climate than are deciduous trees. A savanna is a tropical grassland with only a few trees. Savannas are clustered around the equator.

Question: 4

Which type of rock is formed by extreme heat and pressure?

A. Limestone
B. Metamorphic
C. Sedimentary
D. Igneous

Answer: B

Explanation:
Metamorphic rock is formed by extreme heat and pressure. This type of rock is created when other rocks are somehow buried within the earth, where they are subject to a dramatic rise in pressure and temperature. Slate and marble are both metamorphic rocks. Metamorphic rocks are created by the other two main types of rock: sedimentary and igneous. Sedimentary rock is formed when dirt and other sediment is washed into a bed, covered over by subsequent sediment, and compacted into rock. Depending on how they are formed, sedimentary rocks are classified as organic, caustic, or chemical. Igneous rocks are composed of cooled magma, the molten rock that emerges from volcanoes. Basalt and granite are common varieties of igneous rock.

Question: 5

What is the name for a brief interval of coolness in between warm periods in the Pacific Ocean?

A. La Niha
B. Tropical gyre
C. El Niho
D. ENSO

Answer: A

Explanation:
La Niha is a brief interval of coolness in between warm periods (El Niho) in the water of the Pacific Ocean. For a long time, La Niha was considered only in terms of its relation to El Nifco. Increasingly, however, it is being studied as a climate event in its own right. A tropical gyre is a circle of winds made up of equatorial currents in one direction and countercurrents in the other direction. There are tropical ores in both the Northern and Southern hemispheres. El Niho is an annual event, though some years it is considerably more pronounced. It is an increase in the temperature of coastal Pacific water, sometimes by as much as 20 Celsius. El Niho has a great impact on fishing and weather in the areas that border the Pacific Ocean. The El Niho—Southern Oscillation (ENSO) occurs during a particularly intense EI Niho; the flow of equatorial wind and water during an ENSO actually reverses course.

Question: 6

The rocks and landmasses that make up the earth's surface are called the

A. atmosphere
B. biosphere
C. hydrosphere
D. lithosphere

Answer: D

Explanation:
The rocks and land formations that make up the earth's surface are collectively known as the lithosphere. The lithosphere does not include the core or mantle of the earth. The atmosphere is the air, water, and particles that are above the surface of the earth. The biosphere encompasses all the living things of the earth, such as animals, plants, fungi, and bacteria. The hydrosphere is all the water on and beneath the surface of the earth, including all the lakes, oceans, rivers, and creeks.

Question: 7

Which of the following landmasses is not part of the Ring of Fire?

A. Japan
B. Cascade Mountains in Washington

C. Andes Mountains in South America
D. Mount Kilimanjaro

Answer: D

Explanation:
Mount Kilimanjaro is not part of the Ring of Pire, a circle of volcanoes that stretches around the Pacific Ocean. The Ring of Fire extends from islands east of Australia through Indonesia, Japan, the Aleutian Islands connecting Russia to Alaska, and down the western coast of the Americas. It includes such famous volcanoes as Mount Saint Helens and Krakatoa. Over 90 percent of earthquakes and over 80 percent of volcanic eruptions occur along the Ring of Fire.

Question: 8

In the plate movement known as _____ an oceanic plate slides underneath a continental plate.

A. faulting
B. spreading
C. Subduction
D. converging

Answer: C

Explanation:
In the plate movement known as Subduction, an oceanic plate slides underneath a continental plate. Oceanic plates are denser, so they tend to go beneath when they are pressed against lighter continental plates. The edge of the oceanic plate will be melted by the earth's mantle and may reemerge as a volcano. The Cascade Range of the northwest United States was formed by Subduction. In faulting, the edges of two plates grind against each other laterally. The San Andreas Fault in California is perhaps the most famous example of this process. In spreading. plates pull apart from each other, typically creating a rift valley and the potential for earthquakes. In converging, two plates of similar density press against each other, creating mountain ranges where they meet.

Question: 9

Which of the following statements about loess is true?

A. It is primarily carried by water.
B. It has low mineral content.
C. It is very dense.
D. It has been essential to the success of farming in the American Midwest.

Answer: D

Explanation:
Loess, a form of silt or dust, has been a major reason for the success of farming in the American Midwest. Loess is rich in minerals and is light enough to be moved by the wind. It has a very low density and is porous enough to retain a great deal of water. All of these attributes make it an ideal base for farm soil. There are also great deposits of loess in China, with similar benefits for agriculture.

Question: 10

Which of the following currents is responsible for the climate of the British Isles?

A. North Equatorial Current
B. Canary Current
C. Gulf Stream
D. Labrador Current

Answer: C

Explanation:
The climate of the British Isles is mild for its latitude because of the Gulf Stream, an air current originating in the Gulf of Mexico. As this current of warm air makes its way northeast across the Atlantic, it divides, with the North Atlantic Current bringing moisture and mild temperatures to Ireland and the United Kingdom. Even though the latitude of the British Isles is roughly the same as that of Alaska, the land is arable, and the temperature remains warm for the most part. The North Equatorial Current, on the other hand, is a current of warm air that runs west just above the equator. The Canary Current brings cool air from western Europe down around the western tip of Africa, which includes the Canary Islands. The Labrador Current moves cool air from the water in between Canada and Greenland south to the northeastern United States.

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