

T.C.R. ENGLISH

Nature | Water | Life

Exercise: Find the Main Idea

1) The main idea in paragraph 1 is that..

- a- to desalinate water or build water pipelines is expensive
- b- moving icebergs might be possible in the future
- c- Many people are short of water.
- d- scientists are considering towing icebergs from the poles.

2) The main idea in paragraph 2 is that....

- a- There are those who contemplate the chance to use icebergs as water in the future.
- b- Scientists are already moving big pieces of ice from the poles.
- c- Saudi Arabia is particularly interested in using icebergs for water.
- d- Insulation of an iceberg remains an unsolved problem.



Icebergs for Water

1) One billion people in the world are short of water. How can this problem be solved? Some suggestions have been to desalinate ocean water or to build enormous water pipelines from areas where water is abundant. One possibility that scientists are considering is towing icebergs from either the North Pole or the South Pole to parts of the world with a water shortage. Although many questions must be answered before such a project could be



Icebergs the future water source

3) The main idea in paragraph 3 is that....

- a- there are a lot of problems in transporting icebergs
- b- the icebergs from the North Pole are different from the ones in the South Pole .
- c- South Pole icebergs might be easier to transport because they are flat.
- d- The first problem is the iceberg to choose.

4) The main idea in paragraph 5 is that....

- a- Every year enough icebergs form to supply the whole world with fresh water.
- b- Scientists believe it might be possible to transport icebergs in the future.
- c- Icebergs are likely to be new huge sources of water in the near future.
- d- A lot of transportation problems must be solved.

tried, moving icebergs seems a reasonable possibility in the future.

2) Engineers, mathematicians, and glaciologists from a dozen countries have been considering the iceberg as a future source of water. Saudi Arabia is particularly interested in this project because it has an acute water shortage. Scientists estimate that it would take 128 days to transport a large iceberg (about 1/2 mile square) to Saudi Arabia. Yet the iceberg would be completely melted by the 104th day. Therefore, insulation would be essential, but how to insulate the iceberg remains an unsolved problem.

These procedures must be very expensive as well. Icebergs from the Arctic are not regular in shape; a great percentage of them are below the surface of the water. Antarctic icebergs are flat and more



regular in shape. The southern variety would be easier to pull to a seacoast city and use for fresh water.

3) The problems in transporting an iceberg are numerous. The first problem is choosing the iceberg to tow. The icebergs that form in the North Pole are quite difficult to handle because of their shape. Only a small portion extends above the water -most of the iceberg is below the surface, which would make it difficult to tow or pull. South Pole icebergs, on the other hand, are flat and float like table tops; thus, they would be much easier to move.

4) How can a 200 million-ton iceberg be moved? No ship is strong enough to pull such enormous weight through the water. Perhaps several ships or tugboats could be used. Attaching ropes to an iceberg this size is also an enormous problem. Engineers think that large spikes or long metal rods could be driven into the ice. What would happen if the iceberg split into several pieces during the towing? Even if an iceberg with very few cracks were chosen, how could it be pulled through stormy waters? Furthermore, once the iceberg reached its destination, very few ports would be deep enough to store it.

5) All these problems must be solved before icebergs can become a reasonable source of water. Yet scientists estimate that it will be possible to transport them in the near future. Each year, enough icebergs form to supply the whole world with fresh water for a full year. In addition, icebergs are free and nonpolluting. As a solution to the world's water problems, icebergs may be a workable possibility. (427 words)