五、閱讀測驗（占24分）

說明：第35題至第46題為單選題，每題2分。

第 35 至 38 題為題組

In March 2022, the Endurance—the lost vessel of the famed polar explorer Ernest Shackleton—was found in Antarctica, 107 years after it sank. The news made headlines around the world, not only for the incredible achievement of the search team, but because the discovery marked the final chapter in a legendary story of extraordinary courage and perseverance.

On August 4, 1914, Sir Ernest Shackleton, along with a skilled crew of 27, set sail on the Endurance toward the South Pole, hoping to make the first land crossing over Antarctica. From Plymouth, UK, the team arrived in Buenos Aires, Argentina, and on November 5 reached South Georgia Island, the last settlement of civilization en route to Antarctica. There, the real challenge began. Two days after leaving South Georgia in December, the Endurance encountered floating ice, and was soon completely trapped in pack ice.

The worthy vessel held up for nine months, drifting down south slowly and then pushed northward by the ice. Gradually, the pressure from the ice buckled the planks. Freezing water rushed in and **exacerbated the situation**. On October 27, 1915, Shackleton ordered his crew to abandon the ship, pitching tents on the ice a mile and a half away. Weeks later, they watched the Endurance sink beneath the Weddell Sea.

The next five months, the crew camped out on the pack ice as it drifted north, surviving on penguins, seals, and seaweed. Finally, the ice broke up enough for them to escape in lifeboats. For seven days, they sailed more than a hundred miles to the uninhabited Elephant Island. But the crew couldn't survive long there. So, Shackleton made a dangerous attempt to get help: With five crew members, he sailed 800 miles over 16 days across freezing, stormy seas to South Georgia Island. Then the group hiked for 36 hours across the island to reach a whaling station.

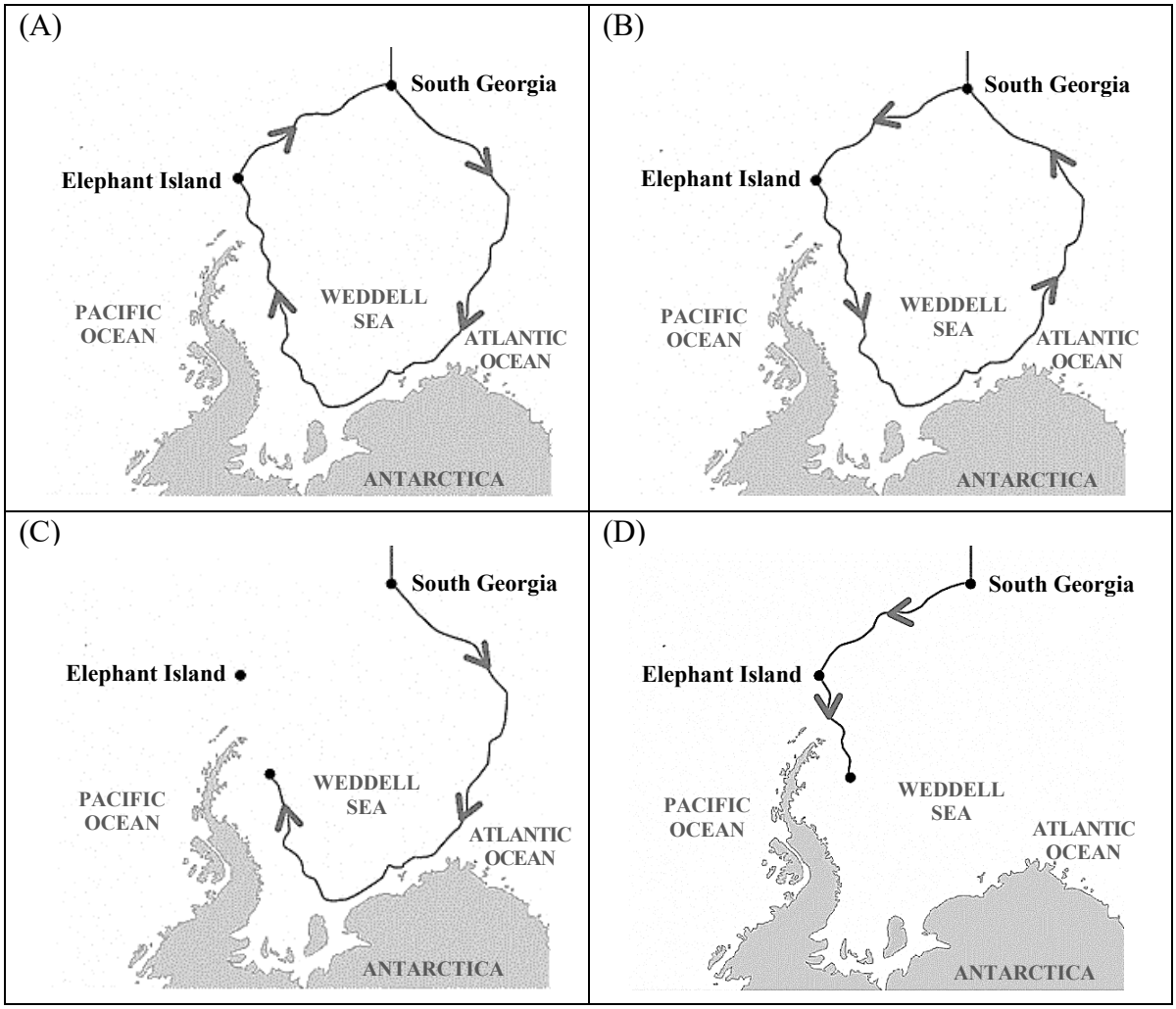
Help was almost at hand, but ice and bad weather hindered their return. On August 30, 1916, Shackleton finally got back to Elephant Island with a ship big enough to rescue the rest of his men. All the members of the expedition team survived, but the Endurance remained lost under the sea until its discovery in 2022.

35. What is this passage mainly about?
(A) A renowned Antarctic explorer.
(B) The extreme weather in Antarctica.
(C) A challenging voyage to Antarctica.
(D) The amazing discovery of a sunken ship.

36. Which of the following idioms is closest in meaning to "**exacerbated the situation**" in the third paragraph?
(A) Broke the ice.
(B) Cost an arm and a leg.
(C) Missed the boat.
(D) Added fuel to the fire.

37. According to the passage, which of the following is true about Shackleton and his Antarctic expedition?
(A) His journey lasted more than two years.
(B) He was the first man to cross over the Antarctic.
(C) His team camped out on Elephant Island for five months.
(D) He sent five crew members on a lifeboat to get help from a whaling station.

38. Which of the following shows the correct route of the Endurance after leaving South Georgia?



第 39 至 42 題為題組

In many old castles in Europe, visitors often find a fantastic spiral staircase, which provides a captivating focal point as it winds up the building. This prominent structure actually has a long and rich heritage.

In the Old Testament, reference is made to spiral staircases in the Temple of Solomon, suggesting that they were already in use by around 1,000 BC. The oldest spiral staircase still standing today is at Trajan's Column in Rome. The staircase was built in 113 AD, with a total of 185 steps carved in stone and marble. Around this time, spiral staircases began to find much wider use in Roman architecture and across Europe.

Throughout the Middle Ages, winding staircases became a well-established feature of European castles, mainly for their advantages in helping to defend against attackers. To begin with, these staircases were quite narrow, so attackers would have to ascend one at a time, making it impossible to launch a mass attack. Also, the stairs were designed to turn clockwise upwards. This means that ascenders would have their right hand tight against the narrowest part of the staircases, close to the central pole, and as a result were unable to use their sword effectively. The attackers' challenge was further complicated by the uneven steps of the staircase, often strategically designed by the castle owners. The defenders, living in the castles, were familiar with the stair pattern and could retreat up **them** very swiftly; while the attackers were much more likely to stumble and fall, particularly in the dimly lit confines of the staircase.

Being associated with medieval castles and kings, spiral staircases gradually won popularity in European architecture, with new materials emerging to cope with customers' needs. In Victorian times, cast iron spiral staircases were popular for public buildings and homes for the rich. In the latter half of the 20th century, steel frames became cost-effective, and thus affordable for a much wider staircase market. Then, steel spiral staircases as fire escape stairs appeared in many buildings. Today, spiral staircases come in a wide variety of materials: steel, wood, concrete, and recently even glass. The timeless appeal of their classical design makes spiral staircases a much-desired feature in luxury homes, offices, and public buildings nowadays.

39. Which question can the passage answer?
(A) Where was the first spiral staircase constructed?
(B) Who was the first designer of the spiral staircase?
(C) What is the world's most famous spiral staircase?
(D) Why is the spiral staircase popular in modern times?

40. What does "**them**" in the third paragraph refer to?
(A) Stairs. (B) Confines. (C) Attackers. (D) Defenders.

41. According to the passage, which is a correct time sequence of the materials used in making spiral staircases?
(A) stone → iron → steel → glass (B) stone → wood→ iron → steel
(C) iron → marble → wood → glass (D) marble → wood → stone → concrete

42. Which of the following statements can be inferred about spiral staircases in the Medieval Ages?
(A) The staircase was too narrow to allow any quick retreat.
(B) The clockwise design favored right-handed castle defenders.
(C) The uneven steps made it easier to ascend than descend the stairs.
(D) The staircase was dark enough for defenders to hide from attackers.

第 43 至 46 題為題組

Have you ever wondered why north comes at the top of a map? Well, north may seem a natural choice for the top spot today, but that wasn't always the case.

Documents from ancient times indicate that many maps in early ages were pointing to the east, where the sun rose. In ancient India, for example, maps were most likely oriented to the east. Though there is no physical evidence to support **this**, the word *dakshina* "south" in Indian languages also means "right," suggesting that ancient Indians were oriented toward the east, and therefore south was on their right-hand side. Ample evidences from the Old Testament also suggest that east was at the top of maps in pre-Biblical and Biblical eras, a reason why east is still referred to as the "Orient" today.

In the oldest surviving maps, south is at the top, and north points down. Early Egyptian maps showed south on top, most likely because the Nile, vital to Egyptian livelihood, originated in the south. As rivers were believed to flow downward, "up" was therefore south. Map makers in Arabia also drew maps with south on top since the earliest Muslims lived north of Mecca, and a south-oriented map would show the followers looking up toward their holy city.

The preference for north arose during the European age of exploration. At the time, sailors relied on the North Star to find their way across the Mediterranean and later the Atlantic. By the 16th century, when Europe's search for trading routes was at its peak, maps became Eurocentric, with north on top. The expansion of European imperialism in the following centuries further established the "north up" practice as the standard.

Today, map orientation is taking on a new perspective. In perhaps our most common interaction with maps—the use of GPS systems on our phones and in our cars, directions have ceased to be as important. The layouts are dynamic, oriented toward our travel path.

So, perhaps the north-on-top practice is less a rule and more **a blip**. After centuries of technological advancements, it seems we've ended up right where we began in ancient times: with ourselves in the middle, and our destinations at the top.

43. What is the passage mainly about?
(A) Why east is referred to as the "Orient."
(B) How maps differ from GPS in function.
(C) How map orientation evolved over time.
(D) Why maps were important during the age of exploration.

44. What does "**this**" refer to in the second paragraph?
(A) The word *dakshina*.
(B) Physical evidence.
(C) Ancient India.
(D) East-orientation of maps.

45. Which of the following is closest in meaning to "**a blip**" in the last paragraph?
(A) A temporary state.
(B) An urgent need.
(C) A critical decision.
(D) An advanced system.

46. Which of the following statements is true?
(A) Sailors took the North Star as their final destination.
(B) The GPS system has a fixed direction for orientation.
(C) South was placed at the top of maps in the pre-Biblical era.
(D) Old Islamic maps put south at the top for religious purposes.