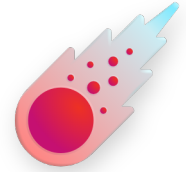




Read the passage carefully. Then answer the questions using clues and evidence from the text.

The Meteor's Mark: End of the Dinosaurs

For millions of years, giant dinosaurs ruled Earth. Then, about 66 million years ago, something drastic happened, and these magnificent creatures suddenly vanished. Scientists have long wondered what could cause such a widespread disappearance. It was a puzzle that needed many clues to solve.



In the late 1970s, a father-and-son team, Luis and Walter Alvarez, found a strange layer of clay in rocks around the world. This clay layer was exactly 66 million years old. What made it unusual was that it contained a lot of iridium, a rare metal on Earth but common in meteorites. This discovery suggested something from space might have played a role.



Later, a massive crater was found buried beneath the Yucatán Peninsula in Mexico. It was named Chicxulub (CHEEK-shoo-loob) and measured over 90 miles wide. Scientists studied the rocks from this crater and found they matched the age of the iridium layer. The sheer size of the crater indicated an incredibly powerful impact.

Imagine a space rock larger than Mount Everest hitting Earth! The impact would have thrown huge amounts of dust and debris into the air, blocking out the sun for months, maybe even years. This would have made plants unable to grow, leading to starvation for plant-eating dinosaurs, and then for meat-eating dinosaurs too. The evidence points to a single, catastrophic event that changed life on Earth forever.



COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

- (1) **Based on the passage, what can you conclude about why the dinosaurs disappeared?**
- (A) They slowly died out due to old age.
 - (B) A giant meteorite impact caused their extinction.
 - (C) Volcanoes erupted and covered the Earth in lava.
 - (D) They were hunted by new, smaller predators.
- (2) **What does the passage suggest about why the discovery of iridium was an important clue?**
- (A) Iridium is a very common metal found everywhere.
 - (B) It showed that Earth's rocks were very old.
 - (C) It hinted that something from space had affected Earth.
 - (D) It proved that dinosaurs ate meteorites.
- (3) **The author mentions the Chicxulub crater measured over 90 miles wide most likely to show that...**
- (A) the crater was easy to find. (B) the impact was incredibly powerful.
 - (C) dinosaurs lived near very large holes.
 - (D) scientists made a mistake in their measurements.
- (4) **Which statement is NOT well-supported by evidence from the passage?**
- (A) The impact caused dust to block out the sun.
 - (B) The crater found in Mexico was named Chicxulub.



- C The iridium layer was found only in Mexico.
- D Plant-eating dinosaurs starved before meat-eating dinosaurs.

(5) What clues in the passage helped you infer that the meteor impact led to the extinction of dinosaurs? Use details from the passage.

