**DIRECTIONS:** In the passage that follows, certain words and phrases are underlined and numbered. In the right-hand column, you will find alternatives for the underlined part. In most cases, you are to choose the one that best expresses the idea, makes the statement appropriate for standard written English, or is worded most consistently with the style and tone of the passage as a whole. If you think the original version is best, choose "NO CHANGE." In some cases, you will find in the right-hand column a question about the underlined part. You are to choose the best answer to the question.

**A Microscope in the Kitchen**

I grew up with buckets, shovels, and nets **1** waiting by the back door; hip-waders hanging in the closet; tide table charts covering the refrigerator door; and a microscope **2** was sitting on the kitchen table. **3** Having studied, my mother is a marine biologist. **4** Our household might have been described as uncooperative. Our meals weren’t always served in the expected order of breakfast, lunch, and supper. Everything **5** was subservient to the disposal of the tides. When the tide was low, Mom could be found down on the mudflats. When the tide was high, she would be standing on the inlet bridge with her plankton net.

**6** I have great respect for my mother. I learned early that the moon affected the tides. Mom was always waiting for a full moon, when low tide would be much lower than usual and high tide much higher. The moon being closer to the earth when full, so its gravitational pull is stronger. I knew that it took about eight hours for the tides to change from high to low, sixteen hours for a complete cycle of tides. I didn’t have to wait to learn these things in school. In our house they were everyday knowledge.

[1] Often, my brother and I, joined our mother on her adventures into tidal lands. [2] At the very low tides of the full moon, when almost all the water was sucked away, we found the hideaways where crabs, snails, starfish, and sea urchins hid in order not to be seen. [3] Sometimes we would dig with shovels in the mud, where yellow and white worms lived in their leathery tunnels.

For plankton tows, we would stand on the bridge while Mom lowered a cone-shaped net that is often used by marine biologists. Then we would patiently wait. After a while, she would pull up the net, and we would go home. Later, we would see her sitting at the kitchen table, peering at a drop of water through the lenses of her microscope from the bottle—watching the thousands of tiny swimming organisms.

**1 A.** NO CHANGE

**B.** waiting, by the back door,

**C.** waiting by the back door,

**D.** waiting by the back door

**2 F.** NO CHANGE

* **G.** would sit
* **H.** sitting

**J.** sat

**3 A.** NO CHANGE

* **B.** As my mother’s interest is science, she is
* **C.** My mother’s occupation is that of

**D.** My mother is

**4**  Which choice would most effectively introduce the rest of this paragraph?

* **F.** NO CHANGE
* **G.** There seemed to be no explanation for why Mom ran our household the way she did.
* **H.** Our household didn’t run according to a typical schedule.

**J.** Mom ran our household in a most spectacular manner.

**5 A.** NO CHANGE

* **B.** was defenseless in the face of
* **C.** depended on

**D.** trusted in

**6** Which choice most effectively signals the shift from the preceding paragraph to this paragraph?

* **F.** NO CHANGE
* **G.** Our lives were likewise affected by the phases of the moon.
* **H.** A relationship exists between the moon and the tides.

**J.** The moon is a mysterious orb afloat in the sky.

**Correct Answers**

1 **The best answer is A.** It provides the best punctuation for the underlined portion. The phrase "waiting by the back door" describes the noun *nets* and is essential because it tells which nets the narrator "grew up with." Therefore, no comma should be placed after *nets*. The semicolon after the word *door* is appropriate because semicolons are used between items in a series when one or more of these items include commas.

2 **The best answer is H.** The verb form *sitting* is best here because it creates a parallel structure for all three items in the series: "nets *waiting*," "hip-waders *hanging*," "a microscope *sitting*."

3 **The best answer is D.** It offers the clearest, most concise wording for this sentence. "My mother is a marine biologist," is a clear statement that avoids unnecessary or confusing words.

4 **The best answer is H.** This is a good introductory sentence because the rest of the paragraph explains how the narrator's household "didn't run according to a typical schedule." The paragraph goes on to say that "meals weren't always served in the expected order" and that the mother operated according to the tides, which were not on a typical household schedule.

5 **The best answer is C.** It offers the clearest, most concise wording for this sentence. "Everything depended on the tides," is a precise, clear statement that avoids unnecessary or confusing words.

6 **The best answer is G.** This is the best introductory sentence because the rest of this new paragraph explains how "the phases of the moon" affected a "complete cycle of tides." The other choices do not logically lead into this explanation of what causes high and low tides.