



21st Century

TEENS *Senior*²

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History that is hard to trace.

河北省 石家庄二中实验学校
杨贵彬

21st Century **TEENS** *Senior*

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Questions before reading:

1. What do we know about “novel coronaviruses”?
2. What are the differences between “viruses” and “bacteria”?
3. Does theory now are valid enough to know enough about viruses? Why?



世界上为什么有病毒？病毒来源的三种科学假说。



词数 361 测试见IV版
建议阅读时间 7分钟



Since December, there have been tens of thousands of COVID-19 cases both in and out of China, caused by a previously unknown virus: novel coronavirus.

It's not the first time for viruses to make headlines. Viruses have brought big trouble to humans, with their potential to cause widespread disease and death.

What are they? Viruses are considered to be non-living organisms (有机物). They can infect animals and plants, making them sick. They contain genetic materials like DNA and are protected by a coating of protein.

Unlike bacteria, viruses can't reproduce (繁殖) on their own. Instead, they invaded the cells of living organisms to reproduce, spread and take over. But the basic question is, where did viruses first come from?

Until now, no clear explanation for their origin exists. "Tracing the origins of viruses is difficult," Ed Rybicki, a virologist at the university of Cape Town in South Africa, told Scientific American, "because viruses don't leave fossils (化石) and because of the tricks they use to make copies of themselves within the cells they've invaded."

Understanding the origins of viruses means fully understanding the history of their hosts – not only humans, but also bacteria, plants and other animals, which is a complicated task, says Nature.

However, there are three main theories (推测) to explain the origin of viruses. First, viruses started as independent organisms, then became parasites (寄生者). Second, viruses evolved from pieces of DNA (脱氧核糖核酸) or RNA (核糖核酸) that "escaped" from larger organisms. The third one is that viruses co-evolved with their host cells, which means they existed alongside these cells.

For the time being, these are only theories. The technology and proofs we have today cannot be used to test these theories and discover the most plausible explanation. Continuing studies may provide us with clearer answers. Or future studies may find that the answer is even more mysterious than it now appears.



Viruses have unclear evolutionary origins. CFP

Questions before reading:

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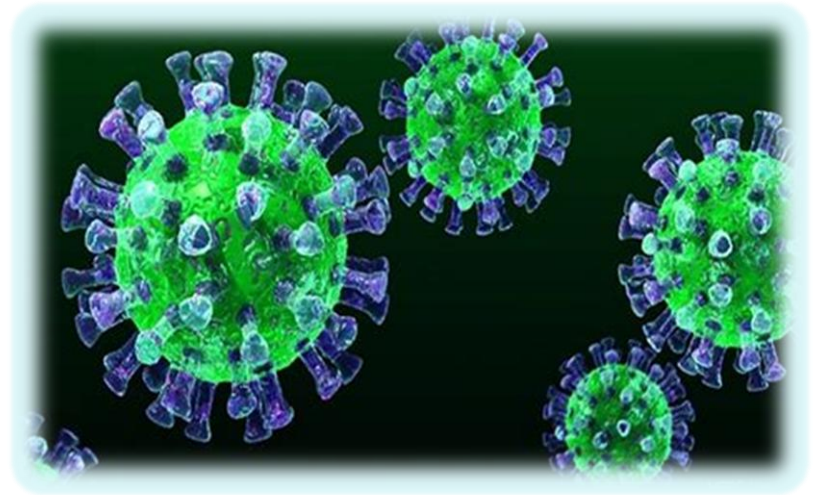
Suggested answers:

1. “Novel coronaviruses” are a kind of new viruses that appears recently this winter, causing many **infections** and **deaths** in and out of China.
2. Viruses are considered to be **non-living organisms**, which can infect animals and plants, making them sick and they **invade** the cells of living creatures to **reproduce**. Bacteria, however, can reproduce themselves.
3. For the time being, theories are **not valid** enough and they **cannot** be tested. Scientists need **further** studies.

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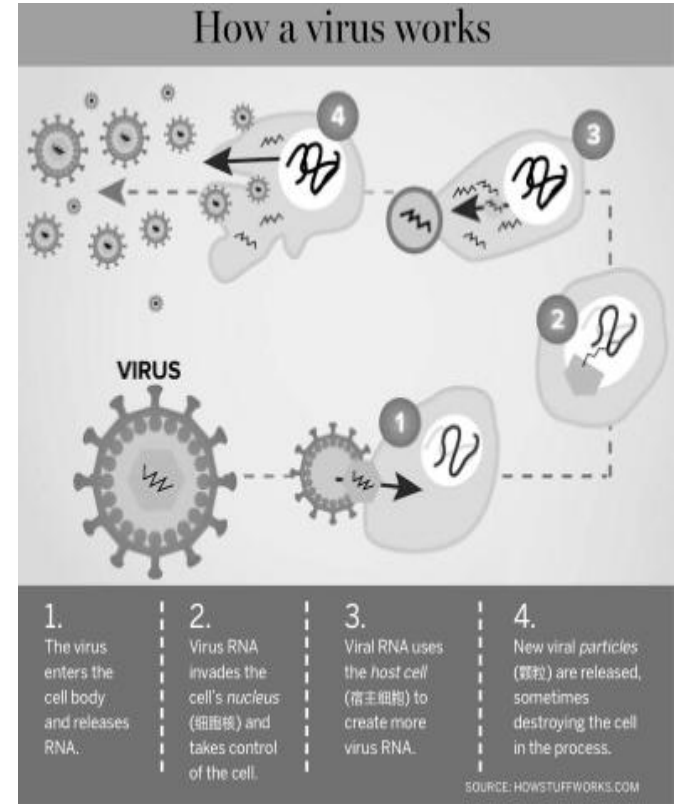
Q: What does the underlined word “plausible” mean in the paragraph?

- A. Incredible.
- B. Ridiculous.
- C. Reasonable.
- D. humorous.



Question: For what purpose is this article written?

- A. To persuade people to believe that viruses are dangerous.
- B. To explain clearly how viruses are formed in history.
- C. To inform people about some basic information about viruses.
- D. To show people how people infected with viruses can be cured.



bacteria

infect

invade

evolve

to change, develop, grow

small living things that causes diseases

to enter and spread gradually

to make someone get a disease

Learn to use:

1. Wearing masks is important for people to prevent themselves from getting _____ with flus.
2. Make sure that your personal online space won't be _____ by others.
3. City is a human creation, and it is continuing to _____ and grow as a part of the system.
4. _____ exist in large numbers in air, water and soil, and also in living and dead creatures and are often a cause of disease.

Collect key phrases:



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Challenge the sentence.

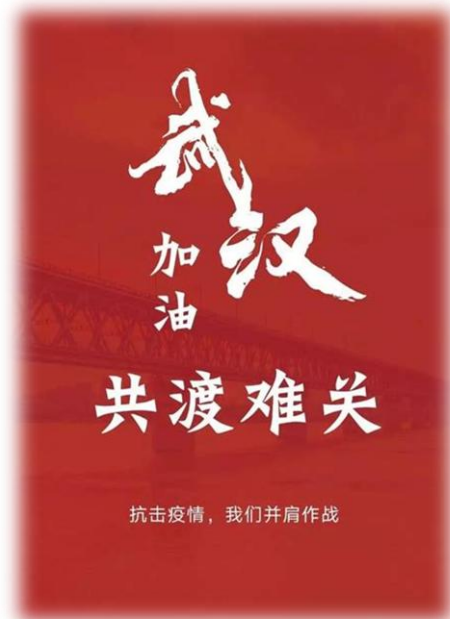
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Teens

Understanding the origins of viruses means fully understanding the history of their hosts – not only humans, but also bacteria, plants and other animals, **which is a complicated task, says Nature.**

情境互动：

1. 足够的睡眠和适当的运动对健康是至关重要的。

2. 昨天他熬夜到很晚，导致他今天早上起床头很疼。



Thanks for listening!

