

《雅思阅读真经3》命中10月13日考试 PDF转换可能丢失图片或格式，建议阅读原文

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its climatic convulsions had purely natural causes. The event fascinates scientists because it gives them a glimpse of how Earth's climate system operates when left to its own devices. "It's important because we were trying to understand the warming over the past 100 years," says Alan Robock of the University of Maryland's Department of Meteorology. "Some people have said it's just a 'recovery from the Little Ice Age.' " So, what caused the Little Ice Age? Because the sun is the ultimate source of Earth's warmth, some researchers have looked to it for an answer. In the 1970s, solar researcher John Eddy noticed the correlation of sunspot numbers with major ups and downs in Earth's climate. He found that a period of low activity from 1645 to 1715, called the Maunder Minimum, matched perfectly one of the coldest spells of the Little Ice Age. Judith Lean, a solar physicist at the Naval Research Laboratory in Washington, estimates that the sun may have been about a quarter of 1 percent dimmer during the Maunder Minimum. This may not sound like much, but the sun's energy output is so immense that 0.25 percent amounts to a lot of missing sunshine -- enough to cause most of the temperature drop, she says. Other researchers have examined earthly causes. Volcanic eruptions are known to meddle with climate by injecting a veil of sun-blocking aerosols into the atmosphere. The eruption of Mount Pinatubo in 1991 dropped Earth's average air temperature by about 1 degree -- an effect that lasted about two years. Martin Robock points out that there were more frequent eruptions during the Little Ice Age than during the 20th century. Most prominent was the 1815 eruption of Tambora in Indonesia. It pumped into the

atmosphere vast amounts of ash -- ten times that of Krakatoa, another famous Indonesian volcano. The following year has been called the "Year without a Summer." In June and July of 1816, New England and northern Europe suffered frost and even snow. Scientists dispute the importance of these two causes, and of other possibilities such as shifts in ocean currents. But it seems possible that during the Little Ice Age Earth's climate was hit by a one-two punch from a dimmer sun and a dustier atmosphere. The Little Ice Age affected almost any type of food production, especially crops highly adapted to use the full-season warm climatic periods. During the coldest times, England's growing season was shortened by one to two months compared to present day values. The availability of varieties of seed today that can withstand extreme cold or warmth, wetness or dryness, was not available in the past. Therefore, climate changes had a much greater impact on agricultural output in the past. Grapes for wine-making were no exception. Ladurie (1971) notes that there were many "bad years" for wine during the Little Ice Age in France and surrounding countries due to very late harvests and very wet summers. In England in the late eleventh century, vineyards were recorded in 46 places, from East Anglia through to modern-day Somerset. With the coming cooler climate in the 1400s, temperatures became too cold for grape production and the vineyards in southern England gradually declined. In addition to increasing grain prices and lower wine production, there were many examples of economic impact by the dramatic cooling of the climate. Cod fishing greatly decreased, especially for the Scottish fisherman, as the cod moved

farther south. In the Hohe Tauern Mountains of the Austrian Alps, advancing glaciers closed the gold mines of the Archbishop of Salzburg who was one of the wealthiest dukes in the empire. Due to famine, storms, and growth of glaciers, many farmsteads were destroyed, which resulted in less tax revenues collected due to decreased value of the properties. The cooler climate during the LIA had a huge impact on the health of Europeans. As mentioned earlier, dearth and famine killed millions and poor nutrition decreased the stature of the Vikings in Greenland and Iceland. Cool, wet summers led to outbreaks of an illness called St. Anthony's Fire. Whole villages would suffer convulsions, hallucinations, gangrenous rotting of the extremities, and even death. Malnutrition led to a weakened immunity to a variety of illnesses. In England, malnutrition aggravated an influenza epidemic of 1557-58 in which whole families died. In fact, during most of the 1550s deaths outnumbered births. The Black Death (Bubonic Plague) was hastened by malnutrition all over Europe. Not all of the impact was bad. One thing that happened during the Little Ice Age was that it spoiled the 1816 summer vacation of poet Percy Bysshe Shelley and his wife, Mary, with friends at Lake Geneva in Switzerland. The weather was so cold that they stayed indoors much of the time, entertaining one another with horror stories. Mary Shelley's contribution was Frankenstein, the immortal fable of human tampering with the forces of nature. In Shelley's tale, a legacy of the Little Ice Age, the monster and his creator meet their fates in a frozen Arctic sea. Today she might have chosen a parched greenhouse desert. 该文所附题目请参考《雅思

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