

**READ THE PASSAGE** Stop after each paragraph and tell yourself what it is mostly about.**Life on Jupiter's Icy Moon**

Jupiter is the largest planet in our solar system and is made up of many different kinds of gases. It is so big that 1,300 Earths could fit *inside* Jupiter! And it has 63 moons. Some of its moons are like small planets, and others are pieces of frozen rock and ice. Studying Jupiter's moons has helped scientists learn more about the solar system. But the moon that scientists are most interested in is Europa (yur-OH-pa).

The conditions on Europa make it the most likely place other than Earth to have life in our solar system. It is covered in a layer of ice, and some scientists believe a liquid ocean lies beneath the icy surface. If this is true, Europa may have simple forms of life in these oceans. The creatures on Europa would probably be too small to see without a microscope. But the idea of anything at all living on Europa is very exciting.

Right now, we cannot explore Europa because it is too cold and too far away to send people there. The spacecrafts and robots we have are not sturdy enough to land on the surface. But scientists have big plans. In the future, they hope to send one robot to melt some of the ice on Europa's surface, and another robot to swim through its oceans. The information that these robots gather could change what we think about life beyond Earth.

**SKILL PRACTICE** Read the item. Write your response.

1. Why are scientists so interested in Europa?

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2. What detail from the text helps you to imagine the size of Jupiter?

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3. What is the last paragraph's main idea?

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**STRATEGY PRACTICE** As you were reading, which paragraph was easiest to understand? Why?

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