Read the articles and answer the following questions.

**In Syria’s Lost Cause, Jared Malsin draws attention to the six-year rebellion in Syria.**

1. Explain why ‘the rebellion against the Assad regime is in crisis’ but may not end any time soon.
2. Explain how ‘civilians have paid the heaviest price.’
3. The beleaguered rebels believe the only way for them to offset Russia’s aid to the regime is for allies to send them game-changing weapons. Why is that unlikely to happen and no guarantee against defeat?

**In The Increasingly Compelling Case for Why You Shouldn’t be Allowed to Drive, Mat Vella imagines the changes that might be set in motion by self-driving cars.**

4. How might self-driving cars remake not just the driving experience but urban planning and lifestyles too?
5. Explain the writer’s observation that ‘every Eden has its serpent.’
6. It is predicted that self-driving cars will become prevalent in the next one or two decades. What is your opinion of this impending driverless revolution? What changes do you anticipate for yourself and how would life in your country be transformed? What repercussions might be set in motion and would they be as destructive as the proverbial serpent in Eden?

**In Encounters with the Archgenius, David Von Drehle discusses artificial intelligence and the human mind with David Gelernter.**

7. ‘Among the thundering vanguard, though, is a growing group of worried individuals, some of them doomstruck Cassandras, some machine-hating Luddites and a few who fit in neither group.’
   (a) What is the writer suggesting about the advocates of artificial intelligence and some of its naysayers?
   (b) Where does Gelernter belong and why?
8. ‘Gelernter argues that the entire field of AI is off track and dangerously so.’ Explain why he thinks so.
9. Are you with the ‘thundering vanguard’ or ‘worried individuals’? Can AI replicate the human mind? In time to come, AI will become even more integrated into our lives. Do you see such a development as benevolent or catastrophic?

**Hannah Beech highlights China’s war on the media while Julian Sanchez considers the real meaning of Apple’s battle with the FBI over encryption. Nikhil Kumar suggests that the arrest of a student leader spotlights India’s battle for free speech.**

10. In the articles, the actions of governments threaten the freedom accorded to citizens, companies, and organisations. Explain what is at stake in each case.
11. Based on your evaluation of developments and challenges affecting your country, under what circumstances, if at all, would you support decisions that are meant to safeguard national interests and security but will limit the freedom or privacy of citizens, companies, or organisations?
Complete the contextual meanings of the following words.
After completing this exercise, use the words in sentences of your own making.

The Court’s Next Trial
1. It was a quip typically hurled at judges who diverged from Scalia’s own philosophy, but it also encapsulated his dismay at much of the culture surrounding him. Ans: quip: a [A14] wi________ remark. ENCAPSULATED: expressed the essential features of (something) [A39] su________
2. And so it would hardly have surprised the brilliant and irascible jurist that mere hours after he was found dead on a Saturday morning in a quiet quarter of the West Texas mountains, a circus was already unfolding. Ans: irascible: Having or showing a tendency to be easily angered; [D34] te________. CIRCUS: A public scene of [D30] fr_________, noisy, or confused activity
4. It isn’t inevitable that the fight over replacing Scalia will end in gridlock, but it’s close. Ans: a situation, typically one involving opposing parties, in which no progress can be made; [A20] de________
5. It was designed that way, to reflect the court’s exalted role as the branch of government most likely to bend towards justice. And while no court has ever been devoid of politics, the Supreme Court has historically resisted the partisan excesses seen in the neighbourhood’s other buildings. Ans: exalted: of a [D4] no________, elevated, or lofty nature. DEVOID: [D8] en_________ lacking or free from
6. A bon vivant, sought-after public speaker and unparalleled writer who charmed many an opponent … Scalia became by far the most famous Justice on the bench. Ans: a person who devotes himself to a [D19] so________ and luxurious lifestyle
7. Scalia began shaking up the staid, hierarchical Supreme Court from the moment he sat down for his first oral argument in the far-right chair that is reserved for the most junior Justice. Ans: sedate, respectable, and [A11] un________
8. Though the sessions are indeniably more engaging and penetrating than they once were, with eight Justices and at least two lawyers vying for time and talking over one another, they can take on the feel of a crowded presidential debate stage. Ans: penetrating: having or showing great [A10] in________. VYING: competing [D32] ea_________ with someone in order to do or achieve something
9. Critics noted that his reference to Obama was gratuitous, since it wasn’t even part of the case. Ans: done without good reason; [A24] un__________ for
10. “I prefer not to take part in the assembling of an apparent but specious unanimity,” he wrote in a separate opinion in a 9-0 case striking down a Massachusetts restriction on abortion protesters. Ans: specious: superficially [A5] pl________, but actually wrong. UNANIMITY: agreement by all people involved; [D31] co_________
11. But it is a tough recipe for a court that aims to be a redoubt from the fray in an increasingly frayed democracy. Ans: redoubt: a protected place of [A16] re_________ or defence. FRAY: a [D13] he________ dispute or intensely competitive situation. FRAYED: under great [A40] st________
12. It is too early to tell, and may even require undue optimism in this season of vitriol, but perhaps Scalia’s departure will boost Roberts’ efforts. Ans: undue: un_________ or inappropriate because excessive or disproportionate. VITRIOL: bitter criticism or [A6] ma________

The Increasingly Compelling Case for Why You Shouldn’t Be Allowed to Drive
13. Other stoked non-drivers have posted videos of themselves reading books, brushing their teeth and otherwise ignoring the road as their cars zoomed along. Ans: excited or [D28] eu________
14. Born-again evangelists of self-driving cars include some of the most venerable names in the business … (Toyoda, a racing buff, was adamantly opposed to self-drivers before reversing himself late last year.) Ans: VENERABLE: accorded a great deal of [A37] re__________, especially because of age, wisdom, or character. ADAMANTLY: firmly and [D17] re______

15. These words may grate in the sunburnt ears of car-loving Americans. Ans: have an [D26] ir______ effect

16. There is no “right to drive” enshrined in the U.S. Constitution, but forced to choose, a lot of people would rather take the wheel than the Fifth – no matter how many statistics are marshalled to prove that driving puts others’ lives at risk. Ans: ENSHRINED: [A27] pr__________ (a right, tradition, or idea) in a form that ensured it will be protected and respected. MARSHALLED: brought together and arranged in [A36] or__________ (facts, ideas, objects, etc.)

17. Freedom vs. security that quintessential quandary of the 21st century, will frame the transition from human drivers to more skilful computers. Ans: QUINTESSENTIAL: representing the most [A29] pe______ or typical example of a quality or class. QUANDARY: a state of [D38] pe_________ or uncertainty over what to do in a difficult situation

18. Today you pay higher insurance premiums to drive a zippy roadster than a dowdy minivan. Ans: unfashionable and [D2] un__________ in appearance

19. Such questions are likely to contort ethicists and lawyers for years to come. But all revolutions involve upheaval and this one is poised to create far more than it destroys. Ans: CONTORT: cause to [D12] de_______ from what is normal, proper, or accurate. UPHEAVAL: a strong, sudden, or violent [A3] di______ in politics, social conditions, etc. POISED: ready; on the [A25] br_______ of

20. A few hours later, I walked out of the hospital more or less unscathed. Ans: without suffering any [D18] in___________, damage, or harm

21. Your car, for one, bears the stamp of human fallibility. Ans: the tendency to make [D9] mi______ or be wrong

22. If you have ever tried to bump Dad to the backseat at a rest stop in Montana … you have an inkling of the uphill fight that lies ahead for the driverless revolution. Ans: INKLING: slight knowledge or [A1] su_______. UPHILL: requiring great effort; [A21] ar_______

23. The coming years will no doubt be a seesaw of competing calculations, in which irrefutable data vies with ingrained passion. Ans: IRREFUTABLE: impossible to [A22] de__________ or ________ disprove. INGRAINED: deeply [A15] em__________

24. Indeed, during the cross-country test of the self-driving Tesla, the car … had a disquieting tendency to race into curves at breakneck speed. Ans: inducing feelings of [A33] an_______ or worry

25. Manufacturers like Volvo and Mercedes-Benz have ratified that position by promising to assume the liability for any mistakes their smart vehicles make. Ans: approved and given formal [A23] sa______ to