72. We apply the work-energy theorem to the object in question. It starts from a point at the surface of the Earth with zero initial speed and arrives at the center of the Earth with final speed v_f. The corresponding increase in its kinetic energy, $\frac{1}{2}mv_f^2$, is equal to the work done on it by Earth's gravity: $\int F\,dr = \int(-Kr)dr$ (using the notation of that Sample Problem referred to in the problem statement). Thus,

$$\frac{1}{2}mv_f^2 = \int_R^0 F\,dr = \int_R^0 (-Kr)\,dr = \frac{1}{2}KR^2$$

where R is the radius of Earth. Solving for the final speed, we obtain $v_f = R\sqrt{K/m}$. We note that the acceleration of gravity $a_g = g = 9.8\,\mathrm{m/s^2}$ on the surface of Earth is given by $a_g = GM/R^2 = G(4\pi R^3/3)\rho/R^2$, where ρ is Earth's average density. This permits us to write $K/m = 4\pi G\rho/3 = g/R$. Consequently,

$$\begin{aligned} v_f &= R\sqrt{\frac{K}{m}} = R\sqrt{\frac{g}{R}} = \sqrt{gR} \\ &= \sqrt{(9.8\,\mathrm{m/s^2})\,(6.37\times10^6\,\mathrm{m})} = 7.9\times10^3\ \mathrm{m/s}\ . \end{aligned}$$