

Brewster

Reading Test

60 MINUTES, 47 QUESTIONS

Turn to Section 1 of your answer sheet to answer the questions in this section.

DIRECTIONS

Each passage or pair of passages below is followed by a number of questions. After reading each passage or pair, choose the best answer to each question based on what is stated or implied in the passage or passages and in any accompanying graphics (such as a table or graph).

Questions 1-9 are based on the following passage.

This passage is adapted from Mark Slouka, *Brewster: A Novel*.
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This was a time trial, he said—a one-mile time trial, four laps—not a race. It was meant to give an idea of where we stood, no more.

Line We'd gathered around the middle of the long side
5 of the track, just ten or twelve of us, including three others who seemed new like me, jogging back and forth in the wind, loosening up. The rest had walked over to the other side of the field.

Falvo took me aside. "Warmed up? How're the
10 shoes?"

"Fine." In the distance I could see kids walking toward the parking lot. The sun stabbed out from under the clouds, glancing off the windshields.

He raised his voice over the wind. "All right, I
15 want you all to stay contained, stay smooth. I don't want to see anybody draining the well today—that means you, Mr. McCann." A tall, tough-looking kid with red hair and a tight face smiled like a gunslinger.

He turned to me. "I don't want you doing
20 anything stupid, Mosher. Some of these boys have been at it for a while. Don't think about them, think about yourself."

I shrugged.

"Pace yourself. Let them do what they do. They'll
25 be about thirty yards ahead after the first lap. Don't worry about them. Go out slow, feel your way, then bring it home as best you can. OK?"

"Sure," I said.

"Remember, it's a time trial. Not a race."

30 There was no starting gun. We lined up in the gusty wind, Falvo standing in the soggy infield in his dress shoes holding his clipboard like a small high table against his chest with his left hand and his stopwatch in his right and then he barked, "Runners
35 . . . marks? Go!"

They didn't run, they flowed—the kid in the headband, the red-headed kid, and two or three others in particular—with a quiet, aggressive, sustained power that looked like nothing but felt
40 like murder and I was with them and then halfway through the third turn they were moving away smooth as water and I could hear them talking among themselves, and I was slowing, burning, leaning back like there was a rope around my neck.
45 "Too fast, Mosher, too fast," I heard Falvo yelling, and his ax-sharp face came out of nowhere looking almost frantic and then it was gone and there was just the sound of my breathing and the crunch of my sneakers slapping the dirt. The group, still in a tight
50 cluster, wasn't all that far ahead of me.

By the end of the second lap I heard someone far away yelling "Stop, Mosher, that's enough," and then at some point someone else calling "Coming through—inside," and they passed me like a single
55 mass, all business now, and I remember staggering after them, gasping, drowning, my chest, my legs, my throat filling with lead and looking up through a fog of pain just in time to see the kid with the headband, halfway down the backstretch, accelerating into a
60 sustained, powerful sprint.

I don't know why. I can't explain it. By the end of the third lap I was barely moving, clawing at the air, oblivious to everything except the dirt unfolding endlessly in front of me. "Let him go," I heard
 65 somebody say. They'd all finished by then, recovered, and now stood watching as I staggered past them like something shot. "C'mon . . ." I heard someone start to call out uneasily, and then, "What's his name?" A small crowd, I found out later, sensing something
 70 going on, had gathered by the fence to the parking lot. The last of the newcomers had passed me long ago.

I remember seeing him appear in front of me like I was coming up from underwater and trying to
 75 swerve but I was barely standing and I walked right into him and he caught me as I fell, his one good arm around my back, saying over and over, "All right, easy now, easy, you're done, keep walking, walk it off," like he was gentling a horse. I threw up on the
 80 infield grass.

"What we have here," he was saying, "is a failure to communicate. Stay within yourself, I said. Don't drain the well, I said."

"What did I get?" I couldn't seem to hold my head
 85 up, or open my eyes—the pain kept coming in waves. "What?"

"Time. What time did I get?"

He laughed—that bitter Falvo laugh—ha!—like he'd just been vindicated. "He wants to know what
 90 he got," he said, like there was somebody with us. "You want to know what you got? I'll tell you what you got: proof you could beat yourself senseless—something I very much doubt you needed."

1

Based on the passage, which character would most likely agree with the idea that, when trying something new, it is best not to push one's limits?

- A) Falvo
- B) McCann
- C) Mosher
- D) The person who said "Let him go"

2

Which choice provides the best evidence for the answer to the previous question?

- A) Lines 14-17 ("All right . . . McCann")
- B) Lines 19-22 ("He turned . . . yourself")
- C) Lines 55-60 ("I remember . . . sprint")
- D) Lines 76-79 ("he caught . . . horse")

3

In the context of Falvo's instructions to the runners, the main purpose of lines 24-27 ("Pace . . . OK") is to

- A) provide useful general information to the group.
- B) emphasize and elaborate on advice given earlier.
- C) introduce a philosophy applicable to sports and life.
- D) reveal Falvo's underlying motivation.

4

In the context of the passage, “I shrugged” (line 23) and “‘Sure,’ I said” (line 28) mainly serve to show the narrator’s

- A) shyness.
- B) dismissiveness.
- C) dishonesty.
- D) hostility.

5

Based on the passage, how did the experienced runners respond to Falvo’s advice?

- A) They enthusiastically embraced it.
- B) They acted like they hadn’t heard it.
- C) They generally accepted it.
- D) They only pretended to take it seriously.

6

What does the narrator say about his motivation for performing as he did in the time trial?

- A) That he was determined to keep up with the other runners
- B) That he wanted to prove something to himself
- C) That he wished to improve on his previous time
- D) That he was unable to provide a reason for his behavior

7

Which choice provides the best evidence for the answer to the previous question?

- A) Lines 36-39 (“They didn’t . . . power”)
- B) Line 61 (“I don’t . . . explain it”)
- C) Lines 73-76 (“I remember . . . into him”)
- D) Lines 91-94 (“I’ll . . . needed”)

8

Based on the passage, when Falvo says, “Don’t drain the well” (line 83), he most probably means

- A) don’t use up all of your energy.
- B) don’t get sick.
- C) don’t try to outdo one another.
- D) don’t quit before you’re finished.

9

As used in line 89, “vindicated” most nearly means

- A) avenged.
- B) set free.
- C) defended against.
- D) proven right.