

Week 1 Assessment

1. Alfred knew the Epsteins didn't trust him any more when
 - a) they ask him to empty his pockets before he leaves for lunch.
 - b) they don't let him make the bank deposit as they usually do.
 - c) they fire him after his friend is caught robbing the store.
 - d) they tell him he will no longer be allowed to work the register.
2. Alfred works at the Epsteins' store because
 - a) he is saving money to pay his way through college.
 - b) he wants to open his own store one day, and this is a good place to learn.
 - c) it's the only job he could get after he dropped out of high school.
 - d) the Epsteins are old friends of his aunt.
3. Harlem is
 - a) a fictional neighborhood in New York City.
 - b) a neighborhood in Manhattan, New York City.
 - c) a neighborhood in Queens, New York City.
 - d) a neighborhood in South Central Los Angeles.
4. In the phrase, "Aunt Pearl sailed *serenely* past the nationalist rally..." the word *serenely* most closely means
 - a) angrily.
 - b) calmly.
 - c) fearfully.
 - d) straight.
5. In the sentence, "All this *sacrifice*, and I'll probably never even get to be a good fighter," the word *sacrifice* most closely means
 - a) extreme pain.
 - b) hard work.
 - c) to give something up.
 - d) to hurt someone else.
6. Integrity Requires _____.
 - a) Action.
 - b) Effort.
 - c) Fortitude.
 - d) Wholeness.

The Contender

7. James gets arrested by the police because
- a) he gets drunk at the club and starts a fight with Alfred in the street.
 - b) he robbed a store, and Alfred forgot to tell him about the silent alarm.
 - c) he was caught selling drugs outside of the Epsteins' store.
 - d) he was robbing a store, and Alfred called the police to report it.
8. Place the following events in chronological order, in the order in which they appear in the novel.
1. Alfred starts to train as a boxer.
 2. Alfred visits his uncle, who encourages him to learn a trade.
 3. James and his friends rob the Epsteins' store.
 4. James is late to meet Alfred for the movies.
 5. James' friends beat up Alfred.
- a) 4, 3, 5, 1, 2
 - b) 4, 5, 3, 2, 1
 - c) 4, 5, 3, 1, 2
 - d) 4, 3, 5, 2, 1
9. The setting of *The Contender* is
- a) Harlem in the 1960s.
 - b) Harlem in the present day.
 - c) Los Angeles in the 1960s.
 - d) Los Angeles in the present day.
10. When the police stop Alfred in Central Park, they let him go because
- a) he tells them he is running because he is late to work.
 - b) he tells them he is training as a boxer with Mr. Donatelli.
 - c) one of the cops recognizes him from church.
 - d) they have nothing on him, and have no choice but to let him go.

Week 2 Assessment

1. At the party, Alfred finds out that James is
 - a) a teetotaler; he no longer drinks, smokes, or uses drugs.
 - b) an alcoholic.
 - c) now using hard drugs.
 - d) planning revenge against Major.
2. In the context of the sentence, “Has Alfred *strayed* from the path of righteousness?” the word *strayed* most closely means
 - a) cheated.
 - b) escaped
 - c) left.
 - d) stayed on.
3. Place the events from the novel in chronological order:
 1. Alfred goes to a party with Major, James, and their friends.
 2. Alfred sees his first real fight at Madison Square Gardens.
 3. Aunt Pearl finds out that Alfred is boxing, and isn’t sure what to do.
 4. Major threatens Alfred if he doesn’t help him rob the Epsteins again.
 - a) 1, 4, 2, 3
 - b) 2, 3, 4, 1
 - c) 2, 4, 3, 1
 - d) 4, 2, 3, 1
4. Red calls Alfred “trash” because
 - a) Alfred doesn’t know how to do sit ups.
 - b) Alfred is black.
 - c) Alfred smells really bad.
 - d) Alfred works out in street clothes.
5. Spoon is
 - a) a teacher at Alfred’s high school.
 - b) an ex-boxer who is now a teacher.
 - c) Mr. Donatelli’s best boxer.
 - d) one of the members of Major’s gang.

The Contender

6. The author of *The Contender* is
 - a) Angela Johnson.
 - b) J. K. Rowling.
 - c) Louis Sachar.
 - d) Robert Lipsyte.
7. When Aunt Pearl asks the Reverend about Alfred's boxing, he responds that
 - a) Alfred is just curious, and will soon get tired of it.
 - b) boxing is the best thing to teach Alfred self-discipline.
 - c) he was a boxer in his youth, and it made him a better man.
 - d) it is the devil's business, and Alfred should quit immediately.
8. When Major tells Alfred he wants his help robbing Epsteins' store again, Alfred.
 - a) agrees to disarm the burglar alarm.
 - b) immediately reports them to the police.
 - c) lies and says he doesn't know the alarm code.
 - d) stands up to Major and says "no."
9. When Red is rude to Bud and breaks the rules of the gym, Bud doesn't tell Mr. Donatelli because
 - a) Bud is afraid of getting fired.
 - b) he believes that everyone should get a second chance.
 - c) he is afraid of Red because Red is white and Bud is black.
 - d) Red is a fantastic fighter, and Bud doesn't want to discourage him.
10. Willie Streeter loses the fight when
 - a) he is knocked out by the other fighter.
 - b) he jumps out of the ring to avoid another punch.
 - c) Mr. Donatelli has a heart attack, momentarily distracting Willie.
 - d) Mr. Donatelli stops the fight due to Willie's injury.

Week 3 Assessment

1. After Alfred's first fight, Mr. Donatelli says
 - a) "Great job."
 - b) "I'm sorry, Brooks."
 - c) "Not bad."
 - d) "That's not enough."
2. After running from the police, Alfred visits the gym and decides to
 - a) convince Major and his friends to rob the gym.
 - b) keep training with Mr. Donatelli.
 - c) quit boxing and go back to high school.
 - d) turn himself in to the cops.
3. After their visit to Coney Island, Major and Alfred run from the police because
 - a) Major insulted them, and the cops respond by trying to arrest them all.
 - b) the car Major "borrowed" is really stolen.
 - c) they are afraid of the cops, even though they did nothing wrong.
 - d) they have been identified as the Epsteins' burglars.
4. Alfred knows that Mr. Donatelli is going to let him have a real fight when
 - a) he beats Angel in a sparring match on his first try.
 - b) he has him fitted for a custom-made mouthpiece.
 - c) he jumps up and down, yelling in excitement over Alfred's talent.
 - d) Spoon tells him that the old man made a decision.
5. Alfred's first fight is
 - a) a disaster; he is knocked out.
 - b) a draw; he ties with his opponent.
 - c) a victory; he wins.
 - d) bittersweet; he loses, but wins one round out of three.

The Contender

6. Alfred's friend Henry trains at the gym, but isn't a boxer because
- a) he has a crippled leg because of childhood polio.
 - b) he is afraid of getting hit.
 - c) his mother won't let him.
 - d) Mr. Donatelli says he isn't a contender.
7. Before his first boxing match, Alfred goes to
- a. a swanky hotel room, where he takes a bath and orders room service.
 - b. his father's grave, to tell him about his achievement.
 - c. Spoon's house to rest and eat a good meal.
 - d. the club, to brag about how he is going to beat his opponent.
8. In the sentence "In these one-night *amateur* shows, the club in charge matches up the fighters at the last minute," the word *amateur* most closely means
- a) cheap.
 - b) illegal.
 - c) local.
 - d) not professional.
9. In the sentence, "Pop-pop, into Rivera's *gasping* face," the word *gasping* most closely means
- | | |
|--------------------|----------|
| a) breathing hard. | c) smug. |
| b) gorgeous | d) ugly. |
10. Place the following events from the novel in chronological order:
- 1) Alfred is in his first real boxing match.
 - 2) Alfred goes to Coney Island with Major.
 - 3) Alfred goes to a party, and breaks all of Mr. Donatelli's rules.
 - 4) Alfred regains Mr. Epstein's trust.
- | | |
|---------------|---------------|
| a) 2, 3, 4, 1 | c) 3, 2, 4, 1 |
| b) 3, 2, 1, 4 | d) 4, 3, 2, 1 |

Final Assessment

1. After Alfred's first fight, Mr. Donatelli says
 - a) "Great job."
 - b) "I'm sorry, Brooks."
 - c) "Not bad."
 - d) "That's not enough."
2. After running from the police at Coney Island, Alfred visits the gym and decides to
 - a) convince Major and his friends to rob the gym.
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 - c) quit boxing and go back to high school.
 - d) turn himself in to the cops.
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 - a) Major insulted them, and the cops respond by trying to arrest them all.
 - b) the car Major "borrowed" is really stolen.
 - c) they are afraid of the cops, even though they did nothing wrong.
 - d) they have been identified as the Epsteins' burglars.
4. After winning his second fight, Alfred feels
 - a) bad; he can't get the sound of his opponent's knockout out of his head.
 - b) elated; he is excited to finally be a winner.
 - c) nothing; he worries that he is a heartless person because he didn't care about his opponent's injury.
 - d) sick; he threw up all over the ring after he injured Griffin.
5. Alfred finds James
 - a) hiding in a dumpster in the alley.
 - b) hiding in Alfred's room at Aunt Pearl's house.
 - c) in a cave in the park where they hung out as kids.
 - d) in the club, surrounded by gangsters and junkies.

The Contender

6. Alfred knows Aunt Pearl understands his dream because
 - a) her late husband was a boxer.
 - b) she is impressed when she sees him in his first fight.
 - c) she once had a dream to be a singer, but her mother stopped her.
 - d) she trained as a fighter, but had to quit because she was a woman.

7. Alfred works at the Epsteins' store because
 - a) he is saving money to pay his way through college.
 - b) he wants to open his own store one day, and this is a good place to learn.
 - c) it's the only job he could get after he dropped out of high school.
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 - a) he has a crippled leg because of childhood polio.
 - b) he is afraid of getting hit.
 - c) his mother won't let him.
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10. At Thanksgiving, Alfred tells his family he has decided to
 - a) continue boxing and volunteer at the community center.
 - b) go to trade school to learn how to be an electrician.
 - c) quit his job at Epsteins' and become a professional boxer.
 - d) return to high school to earn his diploma.

Character Based Literacy Program Assessment Name _____
The Contender

11. In Alfred's fourth and final fight, he

- a) dies.
- b) loses.
- c) throws in the towel.
- d) wins.

12. In the sentence, ""All this sacrifice, and I'll probably never even get to be a good fighter,"" the word sacrifice most closely means

- | | |
|------------------|--------------------------|
| a) extreme pain. | c) to give something up. |
| b) hard work. | d) to hurt someone else. |

13. Integrity Requires _____.

- | | |
|------------|---------------|
| a) Action. | c) Fortitude. |
| b) Effort. | d) Wholeness. |

14. James tries to rob Epsteins' again because

- a) he is a drug addict, and needs the money for a fix.
- b) he needs the money to help his family keep their apartment.
- c) he wants to frame Alfred, because he blames him for getting arrested.
- d) Major threatens to give him a squealer's scar if he doesn't.

15. Mr. Donatelli tells Alfred he should retire because

- a) he doesn't have the killer instinct.
- b) he doesn't like Alfred's attitude, and wants him out of his gym.
- c) he is the worst boxer he's ever seen.
- d) he would be better off getting an education.

Character Based Literacy Program Assessment Name _____
The Contender

16. Place the following events from the novel in chronological order:

- 1) Alfred fights in his last fight.
- 2) Alfred takes James to the hospital.
- 3) Alfred wins his second fight.
- 4) Mr. Donatelli recommends Alfred retire from boxing.

a) 3, 1, 4, 2

c) 3, 4, 1, 2

b) 3, 2, 4, 1

d) 3, 1, 2, 4

17. Red calls Alfred “trash” because

- a) Alfred doesn’t know how to do sit ups.
- b) Alfred is black.
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 - c) one of the cops recognizes him from church.
 - d) they have nothing on him, and have no choice but to let him go.

Answer Key

Week 1

1. B
2. C
3. B
4. B
5. C
6. D
7. B
8. A
9. A
10. B

Week 3

1. D
2. B
3. B
4. B
5. C
6. A
7. C
8. D
9. A
10. C

Final

1. D
2. B
3. B
4. A
5. C
6. C
7. C
8. C
9. A
10. D
11. B
12. C
13. D
14. A
15. A
16. C
17. D
18. B
19. D
20. A
21. D
22. B
23. B

Week 2

1. C
2. C
3. C
4. D
5. B
6. D
7. A
8. D
9. B
10. D