**Directions**

Read the following selection. Then answer the questions that follow.

***from* Bat Boy**

**Matthew McGough**

But there was a better seat at Yankee Stadium. Sitting alone in the bleachers that night watching the Yankees and Red Sox, I noticed for the first time a kid my age, dressed in pinstripes, down the right-field line: a Yankees bat boy. He sat on a stool and watched the game a long throw from where I was sitting in the bleachers. I must have known that the Yankees employed bat boys, but until that night I'd always looked right past them. Each inning I watched him walk out to the outfield grass to play catch with Jesse Barfield, the Yankees right fielder. I wondered how he'd earned the right to walk on

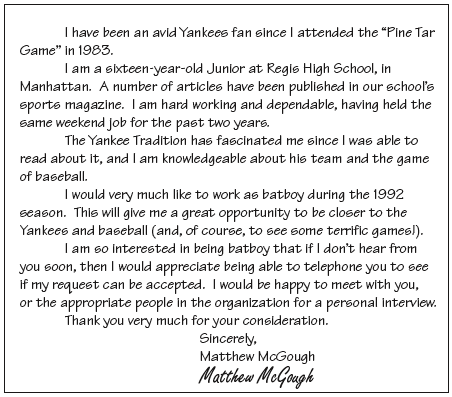
such hallowed ground.

He clearly hadn't earned it by virtue of his athletic ability; the bat boy who was out there that night couldn't throw and could barely catch. He one-hopped the ball to Barfield on one throw and then sent the next over his head, it rolling all the way to the outfield wall. I was sixteen years old and scrawny, but sure of at least one thing: however this kid got his job, I could play catch better than he could.

Before leaving the Stadium, I scanned the bleachers and found a discarded program. I then purposefully tore out the page that listed all the executives in the Yankees organization. On the train ride home that night, I circled names and job titles that I thought might be responsible for bat boy hiring.

I didn't tell friends, or my brother or sister, or ask my parents' permission. It seemed premature to do so, given how improbable it was that the experiment might be successful. Or maybe it was the early independent streak that had been tapped and nurtured by my daily train and subway rides to and from Manhattan. In any case, I pursued the position secretly.

Over the following week, I composed a job application letter as best as I knew how. Once I was satisfied with it, I wrote out twelve copies by hand, one to each of the dozen executives whose names I'd circled on my list, including Gene Michael, the Yankees general manager; Stump Merrill, the field manager; and George Steinbrenner, the then-unpopular owner of the Yankees.

“Dear Mr. Steinbrenner,” I wrote in my most businesslike penmanship:

With a naive faith and earnestness, I mailed them off. After a long week passed without a reply, I barricaded myself inside my bedroom with the phone and dialed the number listed on the roster of team

executives.

“New York Yankees,” a woman answered.

“Hi, this is Matt McGough,” I said into the telephone.

The operator who manned the Yankees switchboard evidently had neither heard of me nor seen my letter.

“I sent a letter in last week inquiring about a bat boy position for next season,” I reminded her as professionally and politely as possible.

“Okay,” she said.

“And I haven't heard anything back,” I said.

“Okay?” she said.

“Okay,” I said, hoping to confirm that we were both on the same page.

“Okay,” she repeated again.

In my bedroom at home, confused at the stalemate we seemed to have reached, I cocked my head to the side.

“Hello?” she said.

“I'm here,” I stammered. “I'm just following up like I said I would.”

“Well, I'm sorry,” she said. “I don't know anything about it. But I'll have someone get back to you.”

“Great,” I said. "Thanks,”

She had hung up the phone before I realized she hadn't even asked me for my phone number or address.

I dialed the same number again a week later. I repeated my introduction and explained why I was calling.

“Didn't we speak last week?” she asked me. She seemed amused to hear from me again. She wanted to know how old I was and laughed when I told her. At the end of our conversation, she took down my name and address.

Days later, three weeks after the '91 season ended, the mailman delivered me a letter on Yankees letterhead. It was signed by Brian Cashman, then the Yankees “Major League Administrative Assistant”(and within a few years, the team's general manager himself). Cashman's letter instructed me to call Nick Priore, the Yankees equipment manager, to schedule an interview.

My friend the switchboard operator put me through to Nick the next day. Nick didn't make much conversation but told me to come up to the Stadium Friday after school.

From *Bat Boy: My True Life Adventures Coming of Age with the New York Yankees* by Matthew McGough. Copyright © 2005 by Matthew McGough. Used by permission of Doubleday, a division of Random House, Inc.

**Comprehension**

**Directions**

Answer the following questions about the excerpt from *Bat Boy*.

1. It is ironic that the bat boy cannot catch or throw because you would expect him to
2. teach others to catch and throw.

b. pitch to the opposing team.

c. join the team eventually .

d. show athletic ability.

1. Based on the tone of the description of the bat boy, how do you think McGough feels about the boy?

a. McGough thinks that the boy is helpful to the team members.

b. He believes that the bat boy is lazy and undeserving of his job.

c. McGough thinks that the boy is ridiculous and underqualified.

d. He believes that the bat boy is a good model of job dedication.

1. The author most likely shares the letter with the reader in order to 

a. be realistic.

b. add some suspense.

c. make the text appear longer.

d. share more information about himself.

1. The description of McGough’s actions in lines 12-14 best shows

a. a skill for detective work.

b. his ability to think quickly.

c. a desire to play baseball .

d. his wish to meet the Yankees.

1. McGough’s personal style shows through in his letter when he 

a. mixes long and short sentences to emphasize his intelligence.

b. uses detailed imagery to describe himself to the executives.

c. chooses difficult words to appear older than he is.

d. uses humorous anecdotes to make himself seem interesting.

1. Which example of word choice shows an informal style?

a. the use of “businesslike penmanship”

b. a list of Yankees executives’ titles

c. McGough’s use of “stalemate”

d. the repetition of “Okay”

1. The genre of “Batboy” indicates its focus is to

a. recall an event.

b. teach me a lesson.

c. exaggerate a truth.

d. tell a person’s whole life.

1. Which detail from the excerpt shows a sarcastic voice?

a. “She had hung up the phone”

b. “I dialed the same number again”

c. “It was signed by Brian Cashman”

d. “My friend the switchboard operator.”

1. The main text structure of this passage is –
2. process.
3. cause-effect.
4. chronological.
5. problem-solution.

10. The author included a sound device in lines 50- 51 to –

1. include humor.
2. emphasize a point.
3. add a rhyming element.
4. draw attention to the rhythm.

D**irections**

Read the following poem. Then answer the questions that follow.

**The Heron**

**Theodore Roethke**

The heron stands in water where the swamp

Has deepened to the blackness of a pool,

Or balances with one leg on a hump

Of marsh grass heaped above a musk-rat hole.

**5** He walks the shallow with an antic grace.

The great feet break the ridges of the sand,

The long eye notes the minnow's hiding place.

His beak is quicker than a human hand.

He jerks a frog across his bony lip,

**10** Then points his heavy bill above the wood.

The wide wings flap but once to lift him up.

A single ripple starts from where he stood.

“The Heron,” from *Collected Poems of Theodore Roethke* by Theodore Roethke. Copyright 1937 by Theodore Roethke. Used by permission of Doubleday, a division of Random House, Inc.

**Comprehension**

**Directions**

Answer the following questions about “The Heron.”

11. Which sound devices occur in line 1?

a. alliteration and assonance

b. repetition and assonance

c. rhyme and repetition

d. alliteration and rhyme

12. Line 12 contains an example of –

a. pun.

b. imagery.

c. metaphor.

d. personification.

13. What is the rhyme scheme of the poem?

a. *abcd efgh igih*

b. *abcb efgf hiji*

c. *abcd efef ghih*

d. *abba effe ghhg*

14. Why do you think the author chose to end the poem with the heron leaving?

a. to show the cycle of life

b. to satisfy the reader’s curiosity

c. to highlight the heron’s hunting skills

d. to illustrate the gracefulness of the heron

**Directions:** Read the passage and answer the questions that follow.

No two people are alike. This statement is especially true of my older siblings, Garrett and Heidi. Each one prefers different hobbies or pastimes. Despite their differences, both Garrett and Heidi positively affect my life by teaching me important lessons.

Garrett loves to cook. He’s always trying to think of interesting ways to prepare gourmet meals on the grill. I often sit outside with him as he turns the vegetables over carefully, making sure that each side is evenly cooked. When I first started observing him, I got bored. It seemed to take forever for the food to be ready. Garrett, however, taught me the importance of patience. He said to me, “Patience is a virtue.” The more time we spent together by the grill, the more I understood him. He once gave me a carrot that was not fully cooked. It was hard and difficult to chew. Then he gave me a thoroughly cooked carrot. I could quickly tell the difference between the two. Garrett showed me that it’s crucial to have patience when you cook!

Unlike Garrett, Heidi despises cooking. She would much rather be cultivating her garden. Every year, she begins the process inside with seeds for various plants and flowers. She nurtures the seeds indoors until the outdoor season is upon us. She transplants her seedlings cautiously in the garden. Heidi enjoys caring for her plants by watering them and pulling out weeds that could possibly harm them. Last spring, I helped Heidi with this ardurous task. It took us several hours to clear them all out of her garden. It was exhausting work, but the payoff was sure to be a bounty of gorgeous flowers. I did not know how Heidi could do this much work every year. However, after her flowers started to bloom and their faces stretched to the sky, I could see why she thought the work was worth it. Heidi showed me that you really do reap what you sow.

Whether through cooking or gardening, both of my siblings inspire me. Their dedication, hard work, and patience are lessons that I can apply to every aspect of my life. I hope that someday, I will be able to teach my younger brother lessons from my favorite hobbies.

15. The writer organized the essay by

a. illustrating several hobbies of the siblings in individual paragraphs.

b. describing each sibling and his or her hobby in a separate paragraph.

c. offereing a list of each sibling’s hobbies and then explaining each one.

d. comparing and contrasting the difference between the siblings in alternating sentences.

16. The phrase “... reap what you sow” in line 18 means

a. you get what you give.

b. you earn what you pay.

c. you achieve what you try.

d. you benefit what you gain.

**Short Response**: Answer **either A OR B** on a separate piece of paper.

17**. A** Why might McGough have chosen to write his ideas in the genre of a memoir? Use information from the passage in your explanation.

17. **B** How effective is the imagery in “The Heron”? Use information from the poem to support your explanation.

**Extended Response**: Answer on a separate piece of paper.

18. Which of the three texts has more literary merit? Use information from the text in your explanation.