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Narrative Diagnostic: Grade 7, Unit 1

Today you will read a passage from a novel. As you read, you will gather information to prepare for writing an original story.

Kevin Pugh's dog, Cromwell, has boundless energy and potential talent. Zach is Kevin's good friend. Read the passage from *The Fast and the Furriest*. Then answer questions 1 through 8.

from The Fast and the Furriest

by Andy Behrens

1. In the days that followed, it became perfectly clear that Cromwell was obsessed with agility. It was not merely a phase, but an addiction. He dropped his leash at Kevin's feet constantly. He ran phantom courses in the backyard. He lodged himself in the tire swing daily. It was mid-June and oppressively hot, but not even a series of 100-degree days could stop the dog. At times, Kevin would simply sit in a lawn chair, spraying himself with the hose, while Cromwell made run after failed run at the tire swing. Zach accompanied them on what Kevin felt were murderously long walks. At Montrose Beach, Cromwell ran through obstacle courses that Kevin constructed from abandoned tin pails and shovels; in Horner Park, the dog routinely broke free of his leash and tore through picnics and volleyball games; on the lakefront path, he chased bikes and terrorized pigeons.) He was an entirely new—and an unrelentingly active—Cromwell Pugh.
2. Kevin knew that they should really commit to Paw Patch. If they were going to keep up the dog agility nonsense, Cromwell needed more direction than Kevin alone could provide. All that remained was to convince his parents, who, Kevin figured, had always wanted him to be sportier anyway.
3. But Howie was a skeptic.
4. "Okay, just so I'm clear," he said over breakfast on Sunday morning, "you want me and your mother to pay for a class for Cromwell . . ."
5. "And me," said Kevin. "I'm in the class, too."

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6. "Sorry. And you," acknowledged his dad. "We pay for a class where Cromwell and you get trained. But it's not sit-stay-fetch-roll over training? Or clean-your-room training? It's jump-through-a-hoop-and-leap-over-tiny-fences training?"
7. "Howie, chewing, stared at his son across a plate of waffles. Each square on each waffle was filled with an equal volume of syrup."
8. "Yup," Kevin said.
9. "Cromwell's not going to start fetching things, though?" Howie continued, a waffle fleck flying from his mouth. "This is like dog show training?"
10. "Um, no." Kevin cleared his throat. "No, we won't be competing or anything. But it would make Cromwell happier."
11. "He's been depressed?" Howie asked before putting a perfect square bite into his mouth.
12. Cromwell was sniffing the floor for breakfast droppings, wagging his tail and occasionally pouncing on a speck of something.
13. "Well, no. Not depressed. But he hasn't really moved for the last few years. Now he's like a brand-new dog." Kevin could sense that his argument was getting thinner.
14. "And without a single class." Howie spoke and chewed simultaneously. "Why can't you two just keep up the walks? Let the dog keep whackin' himself in the head with the tire in the backyard or whatever."
15. Kevin folded his arms across his Cubs jersey. "If Izzy wants to sign up for soccer in Malaysia, it's no problem. We'll get vaccinated against six diseases and book a flight. I want to sign up for dog training in Wrigleyville and you're like, 'No way.'"
16. "Listen, I didn't say 'No way.'" Howie paused. "You know I'm happy to pay for anything you're into—but you, not the dog." He speared a strawberry, swirled it in whipped cream, and then scooped up a waffle chunk and rammed the fork in his mouth. "And c'mon. You can't compare Cromwell jumping over stuff to Izzy's soccer."
17. "Why can't I?" Kevin insisted.
18. "Because soccer's a sport—not a particularly American sport, I'll grant you. It doesn't involve much scoring or violence," Kevin's dad continued. "But there is *some* scoring, and there's fake violence. More importantly, it has a ball."
19. Kevin's eyes widened. "What?"

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20. "Soccer is played with a ball, Kevin," Howie explained. "All sports involve balls. They can be kicked or thrown, doesn't matter."
21. Kevin stared at his dad for a moment, dumbfounded.
22. "So," he said at last, "surfing is not a sport?"
23. "Negatory, Kev. It's an exhibition," Howie declared.
24. "How about fencing? Or bull-riding? Or iceskating?"
25. "Nope, nope, and heck no. Ice-skating? C'mon, Kev. You're gonna make me ill over here." Kevin's dad made wet smacking sounds as he chewed.
26. "What about hockey?" Kevin asked. "That has a puck."
27. "Pucks are like the metric equivalent of balls. So yeah, that's a sport."
28. "How 'bout bingo? That involves balls."
29. Howie lifted his head from his plate and spoke deliberately, as though explaining a fine point of law. "While all sports involve balls," he said, "*not* all things involving balls are sports. Like with juggling and pinball and so forth. That's an important distinction."
30. Kevin pressed on, unsure why he was prolonging the argument. "What about fishing? That's on ESPN all the time."
31. "If one of the two sides doesn't know it's playing," said Howie, "then it's not a sport. And the fishes definitely don't know what's up. So no, not a sport." More chewing.
32. Kevin stared at his father's ruddy face. "So that's it?" he final said. "No interest in classes for Cromwell?"
33. His dad shrugged. "You're not makin' a good case here, Kev."

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1. Part A

In paragraph 1, what information does the setting **mainly** suggest about Cromwell?

- A. how irritating Cromwell is to Kevin
- B. how distracted Cromwell is by Zach
- C. **how determined Cromwell is to stay active**
- D. how upset Cromwell is about being a family pet

Part B

Which detail from the paragraph 1 **best** supports the answer to Part A?

- A. **“. . . not even a series of 100-degree days could stop the dog.”**
- B. “At times, Kevin would simply sit in a lawn chair”
- C. “. . . what Kevin felt were murderously long walks.”
- D. “. . . the dog routinely broke free of his leash”

2. Part A

Based on the passage, what is the **main** reason the author includes Howie as a character in the story?

- A. to lighten Kevin’s seriousness
- B. to call attention to Izzy’s enthusiasm
- C. **to create a conflict that challenges Kevin**
- D. to introduce a surprise for Cromwell

Part B

Which **two** details **best** support the answer to Part A?

- A. “Howie continued, a waffle fleck flying from his mouth.” (paragraph 9)
- B. “Cromwell was sniffing the floor for breakfast droppings, wagging his tail” (paragraph 12)
- C. “Well, no. Not depressed.” (paragraph 13)

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- D. **“If Izzy wants to sign up for soccer in Malaysia, it’s no problem.”**
(paragraph 15)
- E. **“You know I’m happy to pay for anything you’re into”** (paragraph 16)
- F. **“You’re not makin’ a good case here, Kev.”** (paragraph 33)

3. Part A.

What do Kevin’s and Howie’s sarcastic questions **mainly** reveal about their different points of view during their conversation?

- A. The questions show each character’s disrespect for the other’s position.
- B. The questions emphasize the weaknesses each character finds in the other’s argument.**
- C. The questions express the disappointment each character feels as a result of the other’s decision.
- D. The questions provide each character with information missing from the other’s explanation.

Part B

Which **two** details **best** support each character’s point of view? Choose **one** detail for **each** character.

- A. “Or clean-your-room training?”** (paragraph 6)
- B. **“But it would make Cromwell happier.”** (paragraph 10)
- C. **“You can’t compare Cromwell jumping over stuff to Izzy’s soccer.”** (paragraph 16)
- D. **“Why can’t I?”** (paragraph 17)
- E. “Pucks are like the metric equivalent of balls.”** (paragraph 27)
- F. **“How ‘bout bingo?”** (paragraph 28)

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4. Part A.

Which sentence describes a central idea of the passage?

- A. Cromwell has become much more energetic than he was before.
- B. Kevin and Howie have different ideas about what activities are worthwhile.**
- C. Cromwell enjoys exercising on the beach more than playing at the park.
- D. Howie wants Cromwell to participate in different types of dog competitions.

Part B

Which detail from the passage supports the answer to Part A?

- A. "At Montrose Beach, Cromwell ran through obstacle courses that Kevin constructed from abandoned tin pails and shovels" (paragraph 1)
- B. "All that remained was to convince his parents, who, Kevin figured, had always wanted him to be sportier anyway." (paragraph 2)
- C. "'Cromwell's not going to start fetching things, though?'" (paragraph 9)**
- D. "'But it would make Cromwell happier'" (paragraph 10)

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5. At the end of the passage, Howie tells Kevin that he is not making a good case. Write an original story that describes what Kevin does next to try to change Howie's mind about paying for Cromwell's training.