

Name: Answer Key

29 pts.

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Unit 4 – Test Alert

Read the three short articles about Richie Parker, and then watch the video about him. The video can be found in the resources tab on my website. Try to limit yourself to only two viewings of the video, as this is how it will be on the district assessment. Use these resources to answer the questions below. For multiple choice questions, circle the letter of the correct answer. Some questions will ask you to select more than once answer choice. For constructed response questions, use RACE format.

Selection 1—The Life of This Armless NASCAR Engineer Will Inspire You

Meet Richie Parker. He likes to fix up old cars in his spare time. He drives a very sweet 1964 Chevrolet Impala SS. At his day job, he's an engineer for NASCAR's Hendrick Motorsports. Oh, and did I mention that he doesn't have arms?

It turns out that living without arms is just a minor detail for 30-year-old Parker, who was recently the subject of a profile story ESPN2. From driving to doing computer design work, Parker does it all with his feet. With the help of his very awesome parents, Parker spent his whole life coming up with solutions to this problem and proving people wrong when they tell him he can't do something. In some ways, it's almost natural that this would lead to a career in engineering.

But Parker is a car guy, so his dream was not only to drive (which he does regularly) and work on cars (that too) but to design race cars, which he does as a chassis and body component designer for NASCAR's Hendrick Motorsports. He turned a 10-month internship there into a career that has so far spanned eight years and five championships. It just goes to show you that when willpower and ingenuity are put together, there aren't many obstacles that can't be overcome.

1. What is the central idea of selection 1? (2 pts.)
 - a. Richie Parker has struggled to lead a productive life because he doesn't have arms.
 - b. Richie Parker does everything with his feet because he doesn't have arms.
 - c. Richie Parker doesn't allow his disability to get in the way of having a successful life.
 - d. Richie Parker is enthusiastic about cars and racing.

He is able to work at a difficult job & drive despite the fact that he does not have arms! (see highlights)

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2. How does paragraph 3 of selection 1 contribute to the development of the passage? (2 pts)

Even though he has no arms, his work has led to him being extremely successful is a NASCAR engineer.

- a. It gives a specific example of how Richie has been able to be extremely successful despite his disability.
- b. It explains what Richie does at his job at NASCAR.
- c. It argues that Richie is one of the most successful vehicle engineers at NASCAR.
- d. It reveals that Richie has won several championship races in eight years, even though he doesn't have arms.

Selection 2 – Richie Parker, Star NASCAR Engineer at Hendrick Motorsports, Doesn't Have Arms

The fact that Richie Parker can ride a bike doesn't sound impressive — until you see him do it. Same goes for the car repairs he makes using power tools.

Parker was born without arms, a disability he's overcome time and time again, ultimately leading him to his job engineering chassis and body components for Hendrick Motorsports, NASCAR's most winning organization.

"Based on his resume, I knew he could do the things that I needed him to do, it was more a question of how," Rex Stump, engineering manager at Hendrick, said of Parker in a segment that aired on ESPN Sunday.

Just like every other hurdle in his life, Parker found a way, placing the keyboard and mouse on the floor, then operating both with his feet to build custom high-performance automotive parts. The entirety of the ESPN segment traces the evolution of Parker's can-do attitude for accomplishing a wide-range of tasks, including opening a refrigerator door to creating a system to help him drive a car.

More than that, his story has also inspired countless others, not the least of which is Magic Johnson. After watching the ESPN segment, the retired NBA star tweeted, "Richie Parker's story proves that you can do anything you set your mind to. We should all stop complaining and giving excuses."

Or, as Parker says, "I don't know there's a lot in life ... that I'd say I can't do. Just things I haven't done yet."

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3. In selection 1, the author says that Parker's story shows that "when willpower and **ingenuity** are put together, there aren't many obstacles that can't be overcome." **Ingenuity** means that a person is resourceful and clever. Which details from selection 2 demonstrate Parker's **ingenuity**? Circle all that apply. (3 pts.) - Can get partial credit!

- All three samples show richie actually overcoming the obstacles in his life.
- ☒ a. "...to creating a system to help him drive a car."
 - ☐ b. "More than that, his story has also inspired countless others..."
 - ☐ c. "Parker was born without arms..."
 - ☒ d. "...operating both with his feet to build custom high performance..."
 - ☒ e. "Just like every other hurdle in his life, Parker found a way..."

4. **Part A:** Which of the following **best** describes the author's purpose for writing Selection 2? (2 pts.)

- ☐ a. To explain to readers how to use a keyboard with your feet
- ☐ b. To entertain readers with a story about a Parker's life
- ☐ c. To persuade readers to buy car parts designed by Parker
- ☒ d. To inform others about how Parker succeeded despite having no arms

Part B: Which of the following sentences from Selection 2 **best** supports your answer choice in part A? (2 pts.)

- shows that Richie is overcoming the obstacles in his life to become a successful person
- ☐ a. "...to build custom high-performance automotive parts."
 - ☐ b. "...placing the mouse and keyboard on the floor, then operating both with his feet."
 - ☒ c. "Parker was born without arms, a disability he's overcome time and time again..."
 - ☐ d. "The fact that Richie Parker can ride a bike doesn't sound impressive..."

5. How does the author convey his point of view of Richie Parker in selection 2? (2 pts.)

- ☐ a. Through a story of his childhood and growing up with his disability
- ☒ b. By explaining how he doesn't let his disability get in the way of his life
- ☐ c. Through an interview with Magic Johnson, a friend of Richie Parker
- ☐ d. By explaining how Richie Parker uses a computer

We learn that Richie can drive, work on cars, open a refrigerator, & work on a computer... without arms!

Selection 3—Man Born Without Hands Is Engineer for NASCAR's Most Winning Organization

Richie Parker, 30, grew up with a chorus of doubters telling him what he couldn't do without hands - ride a bike, drive a car or find a good job. But Parker never listened, and today he drives his own car and is a respected engineer for NASCAR's most winning organization, Hendrick Motorsports.

"Every step of the way in life there have been people who say I can't do things. Said that I couldn't ride a bicycle, there have been people who said that I couldn't live on my own. Couldn't get a good job and support myself or I couldn't go to college and graduate," the inspiring engineer told ESPN in a recent interview.

"I don't listen too much to people when they tell me I can't do something. There's not a whole lot that's gonna stand in my way," says the man who takes pleasure in solving engineering challenges.

Young Parker told ESPN that he isn't sure where he got his relentless drive to achieve, but if you listen to his parents tell their side of Richie's story, you would probably get a hunch.

In May 1983 when Richie Parker was born in Beaufort, S.C., doctors told his parents, Tracy and Lottie Parker, that their son had been born with a non-genetic birth defect called bilateral amelia that left him without arms.

Richie's father, Tracy, said he was surprised for all of five minutes.

"I was just sort of dumbfounded, like 'what do you mean?'" said Tracy Parker.

But that was before he saw his son.

"He was the cutest baby," said Richie's father. "He was the cutest little boy. After about five minutes it was 'when can I take my kid home? Just gimme my kid.'"

Richie's mother didn't waste a lot of time focusing on what her son was missing, either. She had already began problem solving in her mind when she got the news.

"I'm thinking, how we gonna get through this? How would he eat? How would he open doors. How would he do just the normal day-to-day things? But when I saw Richie, there was no question after that," said Lottie.

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"We wanted his childhood to be as close to any other child's childhood as possible. That's always been our attitude. We are going to make it work. We might do it differently but it will work," she added.

"There were always things around the house that made it so that I didn't need to ask somebody else for help to do it and that was always important to me," he noted. "I had two parents that from day one tried to make it so that my life was, I guess you could say that my life was as normal as possible. Whatever that is," he added.

Richie's parent's efforts, including designing a way for him to independently ride a bicycle infused him with a sense of independence that inspired him to start focusing on cars as he grew up.

"I always wanted to drive," said young Richie. "I was told by a few different people well, 'if there's a bus in your area or if there are taxicabs, that's all you need to do. You should use that as your transportation'. But that just wasn't me," he said.

When he was 15, Richie saw his dream car – a 1964 Chevy Impala SS and his parents convinced the driver to sell it. Today, the young engineer still drives it.

"If the bicycle gave him a certain degree of freedom, the car I think gave him a greater amount of independence and pride," said his father. "When using that car. Everybody is on the same level."

Eight years ago, Richie's drive and love for cars led him to apply for an internship at Hendrick Motorsports and a thoughtful decision by Hendrick engineering manager Rex Stump gave Richie the opportunity of a lifetime.

"I think I had about 20 resumes that I went through before I settled on Richie's," said Stump. "I knew he could do the things that I needed him to do it was more a question of how."

He said they sat down together and Richie showed him how he worked on the computer. "I write with my right hand you write with your left hand, he happens to write with his feet," said Stump.

Richie's internship was supposed to have lasted 10 months but eight years and five organization championships later he is still with the company. He currently

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works as a vehicle engineer designing chassis and body components for all four of the organization's race teams. And it isn't an easy job, he explained.

"It's very demanding. When you have someone like Chad Knaus comes from the race track and he says he needs something next week that's gonna help him win a race then 'no' is never the answer," said Richie.

His transition into the job was also by no means easy as well.

"There were a lot of people that when I first started at Hendrick Motorsports, they had no idea what I could do and what I was going to do there. I have some guys that I am good friends with now and they told me that when they heard I was coming and when I first got there, their biggest thing was 'what is he going to do?'" explained Richie.

In the meantime, though, the high-achieving engineer said he is always looking to achieve even more. "I'm just never satisfied," said Richie. "It's what drives me. I don't know where it comes from. And sometimes it kinda drives me crazy but that's how I live my life."

6. Read the following excerpt from Selection 3.

Richie Parker, 30, grew up with a chorus of doubters telling him what he couldn't do without hands – ride a bike, drive a car or find a good job. But Parker never listened, and today he drive his own car and is a respected engineer for NASCAR's most winning organization, Hendrick Motorsports. "Every step of the way in life there have been people who say I can't do things."

Which of the following best describes the meaning of the word chorus as it is used in the text? (2 pts.)

- a. a part of the song that is repeated after each verse
- ☒ b. a group of people saying the same thing
- c. a group of people who sing songs together
- d. an enrichment class that teaches vocal music

These people aren't singing,
they're just all saying "what
he couldn't do without hands"

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7. Read the following excerpt from Selection 3.

In the meantime, though, the high-achieving engineer said he is always looking to achieve even more. "I'm just never satisfied," said Richie. "It's what drives me. I don't know where it comes from. And sometimes it kinda drives me crazy but that's how I live my life."

Which of the following describe Richie Parker's point of view about living with his disability of having no arms? (2 pts.)

- a. He feels like giving up because his life is very difficult without arms.
b. He feels like others judge him a lot because of his appearance.
c. He feels that it drives him crazy because everything is hard to do.
d. He feels that he can do anything he wants to do despite his disability.

8. Read the following quote from Selection 3.

"I write with my right hand, you write with your left hand, he happens to write with his feet," said Stump.

How does Richie Parker's boss, Mr. Stump, view Richie? (2 pts.)

- a. He is just like everyone else. - he "happens" to write with his feet, he thinks he's like everyone else; he just does things differently
b. He is not a good worker.
c. He is strange because he doesn't have arms.
d. He has terrible handwriting.

9. Read the following excerpt from selection 3.

"Richie's father, Tracy, said he was surprised for all of five minutes. "I was just sort of dumbfounded, like 'what do you mean?'" said Tracy Parker. But that was before he saw his son.

What is the meaning of the word dumbfounded? Explain what you think it means on the lines below. Then, explain how you came up with your meaning using evidence from the excerpt of text. (4 pts.)

Shocked - he says that he was surprised & he was like "what do you mean?" These words demonstrate that Mr. Tracy was totally shocked & caught off guard when he found out Richie had no arms.

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10. In the video and in Selection 3, it is shown that Richie Parker didn't want to rely on others to do things for him. Which of the following answer choices demonstrates this? Circle all that apply. (2 pts.)

- a. "I was thinking, how we gonna get through this? How would he eat? How would he open doors? How would he do the normal day-to-day things?"
- ☒ b. "... designing a way for him to independently ride a bicycle infused him with a sense of independence..." *on his own, relying on himself*
- ☒ c. "There were always things around the house that made it so I didn't need to ask somebody else for help to do it and that was always important to me." *It was important to Richie that he could be independent*
- d. "...their son had been born with a non-genetic defect called bilateral amelia that left him without arms."
- e. "There were a lot of people that when I first started at Hendrick Motorsports, they had no idea what I could do and what I was going to do there."

11. How does the video contribute to the idea that Richie Parker has spent his life overcoming the obstacle of having no arms? Provide two specific pieces of evidence from the video and explain how they demonstrate this idea. (4 pts.)

- There are lots of different examples! Make sure you have fully explained your answers! You must have 2!*
- *Richie drives a car.*
 - *Richie operates power tools & works on his car.*
 - *Richie opens the appliances in the kitchen.*
 - *Richie fixes a snack for himself.*
 - *Richie uses a mouse & computer at work.*
 - *Richie writes on paper at work.*

** Your explanation should be in RACE format, & should say something about how the video demonstrates exactly how Richie overcomes obstacles.*