

## UNIT ONE

### Chapters 1 and 2

#### COMPREHENSION SKILL QUESTIONS

##### A. Vocabulary in Context

1. In the following excerpt, what does the word *incredible* mean?

*This can't be real*, Roylin thought. He must be asleep in his run-down apartment having an incredible dream about a fantasy girl who actually treated him like a winner instead of the loser he really was.

- a. horrible  
b. forgotten  
c. unbelievable  
d. ordinary

2. In the following excerpt, what does the word *delirious* mean?

Korie agreeably wrapped her arms around Roylin's neck and kissed him back. They stumbled apart then, laughing and nearly delirious from excitement.

- a. dizzy  
b. angry  
c. terrified  
d. worried

##### B. Supporting Details

3. The following words were said by

- a. Darcy Wills.  
b. Amberlynn Bailey.  
c. Korie Archer.  
d. Tarah Carson.

"Everybody is so nice here. I love Bluford already, and this is only my first day!"

4. The following words were said by

- a. Amberlynn Bailey.  
b. Korie Archer.  
c. Hakeem Randall.  
d. Tarah Carson.

"You can call me all the names you want, but you don't scare me no more. You're just a wannabe, and that's why you have to bribe some girl into dating you, 'cause she never would want you otherwise!"

##### C. Main Idea

5. What is the central point of the following selection?

- a. Roylin and his sister Amberlynn do not get along.  
b. Roylin does not want to be like his father, who was an abusive, dangerous man.  
c. Mrs. Bailey divorced Mr. Bailey because he was abusive.

Roylin turned sharply and glared at his sister. "Don't you *ever* say I'm like him! You hear me? I'm nothin' like him, nothin'!" Roylin's father used to beat him regularly, using a heavy leather strap to turn Roylin's back into a mass of tender bruises. The slightest offense was enough to enrage the muscular man. . . . That was why Roylin's mother finally divorced him. Even being alone with five children was not as frightening to her as living with a man whose wrath was dangerous and unpredictable. Nobody ever knew whose turn it would be to be beaten.

6. The sentence that best expresses the main idea of the following excerpt is that
- Roylin thinks Korie Archer is too good to be true.
  - Roylin has a hard time paying attention in class.
  - Korie Archer should be a model on the cover of a magazine.

Roylin paid no attention to Ms. Eckerly's lecture on Civil War battles. He kept staring at Korie, at the way she tilted her head when she was puzzled, at how her smooth hand rubbed her neck when she grew tired of looking at the chalkboard. Roylin had dated other girls, and some of them were pretty, but no girl he had ever seen measured up to Korie. She was somebody he expected to see on the cover of a magazine, not sitting in his classroom. She had one of those incredible faces and bodies that do not seem to belong in the real world, especially the world Roylin Bailey lived in.

7. The sentence that best expresses the main idea of the following excerpt is that
- Roylin's near-death experience has made him appreciate the new friendships he has formed.
  - even though people have been nice to Roylin since the shooting, he still doesn't trust anyone.
  - Roylin doesn't like it when people are nice to him.

Since the day Roylin was grazed by a bullet at Tarah's party, people had been treating him differently. . . . It was hard to be mean when everyone was being so nice, but Roylin knew better than to trust what was happening. He figured Cooper and Hakeem felt sorry for him, that being nice to him was just a form of charity.

#### D. Conclusions

8. From the excerpt below, you can conclude that
- Tuttle, the building manager, takes pride in his work and in his appearance.
  - Mrs. Bailey has a bad temper and complains a lot.
  - Tuttle, the building manager, doesn't do his job very well.

"[T]hat man don't do nothin' around here. All he wants is to go to that racetrack and bet on horses. He'd keep gamblin' even if the ceiling fell down on us! Yesterday I had to wash the baby in water I heated on the stove 'cause we don't have enough hot water to fill a teacup!" Mrs. Bailey called back. She had complained many times, but Tuttle, the building manager, was a sour-tempered little man who always had several days' stubble on his face and a greasy Dodgers cap on his head. Requests from the tenants fell on deaf ears. But with five children, Mrs. Bailey had few choices of where to live in this neighborhood.

9. From the following excerpt, you can infer that
- Roylin doesn't think he's good enough for a girl like Korie Archer.
  - Hakeem wants to date Korie Archer.
  - Korie Archer should date Hakeem Randall because he plays guitar.

*This can't be real*, Roylin thought. He must be asleep in his run-down apartment having an incredible dream about a fantasy girl who actually treated him like a winner instead of the loser he really was. A guy like Hakeem Randall who could sing and play the guitar—who could make students cheer because they liked and respected him—that is the kind of guy a girl like Korie would date. Nice, pretty girls like Korie never had anything to do with the Roylins of the world.

10. You can infer from the following selection that
- Roylin enjoys being mean to his sister and his brothers.
  - even though he tries not to, Roylin sometimes acts just like his father.
  - Roylin's brothers and sister enjoy spending time with him.

Roylin felt sick as he sat at his desk. He never planned to treat people like Dad treated Mom and the kids. A few times Roylin shoved Amberlynn in anger, and once he even spanked the boys, but he made up his mind right then that he would not do that again. He did not want to be like his father. He hated that man so much he could taste it, the way you taste onions long after you have had them.

### SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS

1. Describe Roylin Bailey's living situation. What is his home like? How does he get along with the members of his family?

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2. Who are Bobby Wallace and Londell James? What does Roylin reveal they did to him?

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3. Who is Ambrose Miller? What is his relationship to Roylin?

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4. What does Roylin plan to give Korie Archer? When he sees the price of the gift, what is his reaction? What does he tell Korie?

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5. Who does Roylin ask to lend him money? What are their answers to his request?

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## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. When Amberlynn accuses Roylin of behaving like their father, he becomes very upset. Why do you think Roylin reacts this way? In general, why do you think some children repeat the negative behavior of their parents?
2. Unlike Korie, many students who transfer to a new school have great difficulty making friends. What, in your opinion, are some things that a new student can do to make friends more quickly?
3. Do you think that if Roylin buys Korie the expensive gift, Korie owes it to him to be his girlfriend? Why or why not?

## WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

1. Have you ever been new to a school, a neighborhood, a team, or other activity? Write about a time when you were the "new kid on the block," so to speak. How did you feel? Compare the way you were treated with the way Korie Archer is treated by the students at Bluford High School. Were people friendly, helpful, and welcoming? If not, what were they like? If this has never happened to you, write about a time when a new kid came to your school or entered your group. How did you treat the person? How did other people treat him or her?
2. Pretend that you are either Mrs. Bailey or Amberlynn. Write a letter to Roylin explaining to him how you feel about his behavior, especially his abusive tendencies and his desire to spend so much money on a new girlfriend. Be sure in your letter to suggest how Roylin might behave differently in the future.
3. Roylin all but promises Korie he will get her the unaffordable gift she requests. Write about a time when you made a promise—to someone else, or to yourself—that you weren't sure you could follow through on. Did you manage to fulfill the promise, or did you fail to do so? What were the consequences? Would you make a promise like that again?