Bleachers

by John Grisham

Use your own paper. Answer with complete sentences.

***Tuesday***

*pages 1-12*

Vocabulary

1. hallowed (1)
2. revered (3)
3. swagger (5)
4. clout (5)
5. raucous (8)

Questions:

1. Describe the town of Messina’s relationship with its high school football team.
2. Describe Neely Crenshaw’s experiences playing football for the Messina Spartans.
3. How are the “country people” characterized?
4. What had Neely promised himself he would never do?
5. Who is Eddie Rake? Why is he so important to the town of Messina? How do we know he is important to Messina? How does Neely feel about Eddie Rake?

*pages12-35*

Vocabulary

1. fraternity (18)
2. entrepreneur (21)
3. silo (23)
4. naïve (27)

Questions:

1. Who is Paul Curry? What does the author mean by “so his future had been sealed at birth” (13)?
2. What is implied by “Neely’s left knee was twice the size of his right” (14)?
3. Why does Neely’s comment “I wish I’d never seen a football” (14) seem paradoxical?
4. What is the “hurt” that Paul discusses with Neely? How is Neely different than Paul?
5. Describe Silo Mooney. (Include what he says, how he looks, what other people say about him and how they react to him.) What is his relationship with Coach Rake like?
6. What does Neely confess to Paul?
7. What does Silo mean by “It just seems like the place to be right now” (35)? Is there proof that others may feel this way too?

*pages 35-60*

Vocabulary

1. repertoire (36)
2. termination (39)
3. conceded (46)
4. materialized (47)

Questions

1. Describe the Spartan Marathon. What was its purpose? What were the rules?
2. What is implied by “Overtime, he (Neely) had heard some of the details, though he had tried to convince himself he didn’t care what happened to Eddie Rake”(39)?
3. How did Coach Rake react to Jaeger running 83 laps? Jaeger says this was “Typical Rake” (40). What does that tell us about Rake?
4. Who is Rabbit? What importance does he play in Messina football history?
5. Describe Rake’s reaction to Rabbit’s interference during a game against Greene County.
6. The conflict between Rake and Neely is repeated alluded to but no concrete details are given. What information do we know?
7. The reason behind Rake’s firing is also alluded to without concrete details. What information do we know about this so far?
8. How is the fraternity of Spartan football characterized with the image of these men sitting on the bleachers? How do they react to each other? Grisham has described each man. Why are they such an unlikely group?
9. Why is it so difficult for Neely to recount his collegiate injury with the people in Messina? He has a difficult time accepting their sympathy and repeatedly remarks he should have stayed in the pocket. Why do you think he reacts this way?
10. As Neely walks away for the night, his knee bothers him but he kept “walking as if everything was normal” (60). What else could Grisham mean by this?