

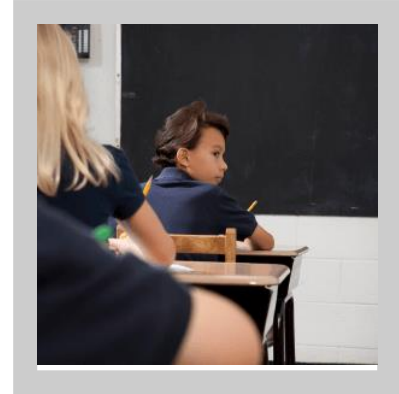
Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Diligence and Perseverance

Elizabeth was brooding in her room. She had sought asylum there since spurious gossip about her began circulating at Seagrove Academy last week.

Not that Elizabeth had ever been considered a social butterfly; she had always had a rather reserved personality. Elizabeth preferred to live vicariously through the stories of her more brazen friends: late night partying, fraternizing with boys, childish pranks. Still, she had taken to being more by herself than usual since the allegations surfaced. You see, a student had given headmaster Billings an anonymous "tip" that Elizabeth had cheated on several tests this year. What made this allegation especially damaging was that Elizabeth had recently been nominated to receive the highly coveted Blauvelt Award, a scholarship recognizing "academic integrity and promise."



The accusations were laughable. Elizabeth had long been a stellar student at Seagrove. She lacked a natural intelligence—this was true. However, she compensated for this deficit through diligence and perseverance; she was very thorough in her studies and exhibited an almost relentless determination.

Still, the accusations had given the recommendation committee pause. On Friday Elizabeth had been called to Mr. Billings's office, where she was questioned about her performance on recent exams. The experience was quite traumatic.

Seagrove was an elite school; most of its students came from privileged backgrounds. But this was not the case for Elizabeth. Her family had little money. She attended Seagrove on a full scholarship. The Blauvelt Award would help Elizabeth's family pay for her college.

So it was with the same diligence that she applied to her studies that Elizabeth planned to expose her accuser. She opened the school directory on her bed and began combing through the names.

Seagrove was such a small and insular community. A mere twenty-one kids would be in her graduating class. Elizabeth knew it was inevitable that the person spreading rumors about her would come to light. It was just a matter of time.

1) As used in paragraph 1, which is the best synonym for **spurious**?

- A. hurtful
- B. terrible
- C. serious
- D. untrue

- 2) It can be inferred that Elizabeth would have likely been disqualified from receiving the Blauvelt Award if caught cheating because
- A. Mr. Billings said this was the case
  - B. awards are never given to cheaters
  - C. the Blauvelt Award is based on academic integrity
  - D. cheating would have made the award ineligible for college use
- 3) According to the passage, how is Elizabeth different than many of her classmates?
- A. She is diligent.
  - B. She is dishonest.
  - C. She is not wealthy.
  - D. She is anti-social.
- 4) As used in the final paragraph, which is the best antonym for **inevitable**?
- A. unlikely
  - B. unmistakable
  - C. possibly
  - D. unclear
- 5) Which of the following words best describes how Elizabeth feels after being accused of cheating?
- A. frustrated
  - B. removed
  - C. discouraged
  - D. enraged
- 6) A character in a story who is opposed to, struggles against, or competes with another is called the antagonist. Using this information, it can be understood that the antagonist in this passage is
- A. Elizabeth
  - B. Mr. Billings
  - C. Elizabeth's accuser
  - D. the recommendation committee

7) According to the passage, the Blauvelt Award is important to Elizabeth because it will

- A. demonstrate her natural intelligence
- B. help her pay for college
- C. make her parents proud
- D. prove her innocence

8) What would you do if you were in Elizabeth's position? Would you react in the same way she does? Why or why not?

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## Answers and Explanations

1) D

Core Standard: **Craft and Structure**

**spurious** (*adjective*): lacking authenticity or validity; not genuine; false.

In paragraph 1, we learn that Elizabeth was "brooding in her room" and that "She had sought asylum there since spurious gossip about her began circulating at Seagrove Academy last week." In paragraph 2, we learn that someone had told the school headmaster that Elizabeth had been cheating. In paragraph 3, the accusation is described as "laughable," because Elizabeth is "thorough in her studies" and relentlessly determined. We can infer from this that Elizabeth did not cheat, since she is hardworking and so upset by the allegations. Therefore, we can understand that *spurious* gossip is *untrue* gossip. This means **(D)** is correct.

The passage does not provide information to support choices **(A)**, **(B)**, and **(C)**. Therefore they are incorrect.

2) C

Core Standard: **Integration of Knowledge**

In paragraph 2, the passage states that the Blauvelt Award recognizes "academic integrity and promise." Integrity is honesty, or an adherence to a moral or ethical code. Cheating is a mark of dishonesty. It can be understood that an award for academic integrity would not be presented to a dishonest person. Therefore **(C)** is correct.

The passage does not provide information to support choice **(A)**. Therefore it is incorrect.

While it's probably true that known cheaters win few awards, it is not necessarily true that awards are never given to cheaters. Although it is unfair, sometimes cheaters get awards. Therefore **(B)** is incorrect.

The passage does not provide information to support choice **(D)**. Therefore it is incorrect.

3) C

Core Standard: **Key Ideas and Details**

In paragraph 5, we learn that “Seagrove was an elite school; most of its students came from privileged backgrounds. But this was not the case for Elizabeth. Her family had little money.” This lets us know that Elizabeth is not wealthy like many of her peers. Choice **(C)** is correct.

The passage does provide information to suggest that Elizabeth's classmates are not diligent. Therefore **(A)** is incorrect.

The passage does not provide information to support the idea that Elizabeth's peers are honest. Moreover, the author suggests that Elizabeth herself is innocent of the charges, and is therefore honest. Therefore **(B)** is incorrect.

While paragraph 2 tells us that Elizabeth had friends who liked "late night partying" and "fraternizing with boys," the passage does not provide information to suggest that many of Elizabeth's classmates were particularly social or outgoing. Moreover, the passage states only that Elizabeth is not considered “a social butterfly,” not that she is anti-social, which is a stronger description. Therefore **(D)** is incorrect.

4) A

Core Standard: **Craft and Structure**

**inevitable** (*adjective*): certain; sure to happen.

In the final paragraph, we learn that Seagrove Academy is "very small and insular." The passage says, “Elizabeth knew it was inevitable that the person spreading rumors about her would come to light. It was just a matter of time.” We can infer that because of the small number of students and close community, Elizabeth believed that she could surely find out who made the accusations.

*Unlikely* means not likely to happen, so this is a good antonym for inevitable. Choice **(A)** is correct.

The passage does not provide information to support choices **(B)**, **(C)**, and **(D)**. Therefore they are incorrect.

5) B

Core Standard: **Key Ideas and Details**

The passage opens with the following line: "Elizabeth was brooding in her room." In paragraph 2, we learn that Elizabeth "has taken to being more by herself than usual since the allegations surfaced." In paragraph 6, the author writes, "She opened the school directory on her bed and began combing through the names." Using this information as a guide, we can infer that after being accused of cheating, Elizabeth reacts by becoming reclusive and anti-social. We can understand that this is a result of her feeling removed, or detached from, society. Therefore **(B)** is correct.

Although it makes sense that someone would feel frustrated after being wrongly accused of cheating, the passage does not provide information to suggest that she feels this way in particular, or more so than she feels removed. This means **(A)** is incorrect.

In paragraph 6, the author writes, "So it was with the same diligence that she applied to her studies that Elizabeth planned to expose her accuser." This lets us know that Elizabeth does not feel discouraged. On the contrary, we can understand that she feels motivated to expose her accuser. Therefore **(C)** is incorrect. While Elizabeth is certainly not happy that someone has accused her of cheating, enraged is too strongly negative a term to accurately describe how she feels. This makes **(D)** incorrect.

6) C

Core Standard: **Integration of Knowledge**

The antagonist is the student who accused Elizabeth of cheating, because that person is clearly working in opposition to Elizabeth, or struggling against her. Therefore **(C)** is correct.

Elizabeth is the hero, or leading character in this passage. Therefore she is the protagonist, not an antagonist. Therefore **(A)** is incorrect.

Mr. Billings is acting in response to information he has received. Although he may make the recommendation to deny Elizabeth the Blauvelt Award, this is not because he is actively, or consciously, working in opposition to her. Therefore **(B)** is incorrect.

The job of the recommendation committee is to determine who deserves the scholarship. While their determination means a lot to Elizabeth, the committee is not actively, or consciously, working against Elizabeth. So **(D)** is incorrect.

7) B

Core Standard: **Key Ideas and Details**

In paragraph 5, we learn that Elizabeth's "family had little money." We also learn that "the Blauvelt Award would help her family pay for college." Since Elizabeth works so hard at her studies, going to college is probably important to her. Since Elizabeth doesn't have much money, we can reasonably conclude that she needs the money in order to attend college. Therefore **(B)** is correct.

The passage tells the reader in paragraph 3 that Elizabeth does not have a natural intelligence, so it does not make sense that Elizabeth would use an award to demonstrate something untrue. Therefore **(A)** is incorrect.

While winning the award might make Elizabeth's parents proud, the passage does not indicate that this is important to Elizabeth. Therefore **(C)** is incorrect.

Elizabeth's problem is that she will not get the award if the committee believes that she has cheated. Therefore, she is not trying to use the award to prove her innocence. Therefore **(D)** is incorrect.