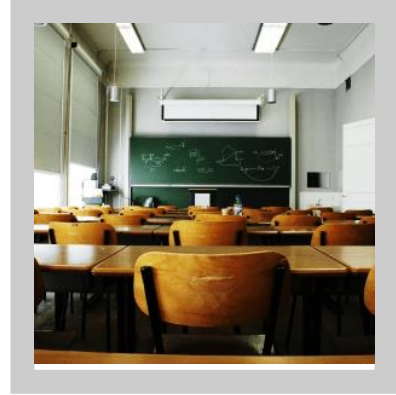


Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## The Best Seat

Caroline Robbins knew that the first day of school was very, very important. Why? Because that was the day when you chose where you would sit for the entire year. Caroline realized that in some classes this choice would be made for her. The teacher would place students in alphabetical order, meaning she would have to sit in front of Zach Rodgers yet again. Zach had a huge crush on Caroline, and would distract her from her work by passing notes and cracking jokes to impress her. In general, being a Robbins was pretty good, but having to sit in front of Zach was definitely a drawback.



In her other classes, though, Caroline would be sure to choose just the right seat. Caroline liked to think of herself as one of the cool kids, but she also did well in school and liked learning. So, Caroline wanted to sit close to the cool kids, but not too close, or she would be more interested in talking than paying attention. She also knew that it was good to be friends with the smart kids, because they could help Caroline with her schoolwork. However, she didn't want to sit too close to the smart kids.

Unfortunately, at Caroline's school, the smart kids and the cool kids were not the same kids.

Caroline had all of this in mind as she walked through the school's front door on the first day. She knew where her first class was, but she didn't want to be the first one there. If you were the first one there, you didn't have any control at all! Other people got to choose how close they sat to you, not the other way around. This simply would not do. So, she took her time walking down the hall, taking a minute to talk to her friend Alma, whom she hadn't seen for the entire summer.

At last she walked through the door of her first class, and there it was, the perfect seat! Two seats away from Jasmine, the smartest girl in her entire grade, and just in front of Marc, who was very cool and totally cute. Caroline quickly imagined all of the cool things that she could do to the back of her hair to make Marc fall in love with her. After all, he would be staring at it for nine whole months!

There was a new guy to the left, which could be a risk, but how bad could a new guy be? So Caroline started toward the seat, being careful not to rush, when Marc's best friend Jason sat down in *her* chair! Sure, there were other seats, but no other perfect ones. Saddened but not discouraged, Caroline sat down in the second-best seat and immediately started planning for lunchtime, when she was determined to get the best seat in the cafeteria.

1) Using the passage as a guide, we can understand that Caroline would be seated in front of Zach in some classes because

- I. of the letters at the beginning of their last names
- II. some teachers assign seats based on alphabetical order
- III. this is how the students were seated last year

- A. I only
- B. I and II only
- C. II and III only
- D. I, II, and III

2) As used in paragraph 1, the word **drawback** most nearly means

- A. disadvantage
- B. benefit
- C. annoyance
- D. withdrawal

3) In paragraph 2, the author writes, "Unfortunately at Caroline's school, the smart kids and the cool kids were not the same kids." What is most likely meant by this statement?

- A. Caroline is really seen as a cool kid, not a smart kid.
- B. Caroline is the only kid who is both cool and smart at her school.
- C. If Caroline is seen as a smart kid, no one will think she is cool.
- D. Caroline's school is unusual in that smart kids cannot also be cool kids.

4) In paragraph 3, the author writes that Caroline "knew where her first class was, but she didn't want to be the first one there. If you were the first one there, you didn't have any control at all!"

Which of the following would cause a similar problem for Caroline as the one described in this quotation?

- A. getting to class last
- B. failing an important test
- C. sitting next to Zach Rodgers
- D. being labeled as a "smart" person

- 5) According to the passage, Caroline makes sure not to get to class too early by
- A. taking time to fix her hair
  - B. going to the wrong class
  - C. slowing down to think about Marc
  - D. stopping to talk to her friend Alma
- 6) Caroline's attitude in the final paragraph can best be described as
- A. *passionate*, because she shows intense or strong emotions
  - B. *melancholy*, because she feels gloomy or depressed
  - C. *resolute*, because she is firm or unyielding
  - D. *despondent*, because she feels hopeless
- 7) Is where you sit in a classroom important to you? What about where you sit in the cafeteria? Explain.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Answers and Explanations

1) B

Core Standard: **Integration of Knowledge**

In paragraph 1, we learn that the main character's name is Caroline Robbins. Later in paragraph 1, the author says, "Caroline realized that in some classes this choice would be made for her. The teacher would place students in alphabetical order, meaning she would have to sit in front of Zach Rodgers yet again." Because some teachers place students in alphabetical order, and because Caroline's last name and Zach's last name both start with the letters "Ro" followed by "b" or "d," we can understand that they would be seated by one another in some classes. This supports **option (I)** and **option (II)**.

Although the author writes that Caroline would have to sit in front of Zach "yet again," this does not mean that the decision to seat them by one another is based on tradition. In other words, the fact that this happened last year is not the reason why it might happen again this year. This eliminates **option (III)**.

Therefore **(B)** is correct.

2) A

Core Standard: **Craft and Structure**

**drawback** (*noun*): a feature that makes something less acceptable; a disadvantage or problem.

In paragraph 1 the author says, "In general, being a Robbins was pretty good, but having to sit in front of Zach Rodgers was definitely a drawback." From this we know that there are many good things about being a Robbins, but having to sit in front of Zach Rodgers is, in contrast, a bad thing, or a disadvantage, about having the last name Robbins. This lets us know that *drawback* means a disadvantage or a problem, so **(A)** is the best choice.

Caroline clearly does not like sitting by Zach Rodgers, so this is not a *benefit*, or an advantage, of being a Robbins. Therefore **(B)** is incorrect.

Caroline does seem to be annoyed with Zach, but the sentence contrasts the good things about being a Robbins with this one bad thing. While a drawback could be annoying, Caroline does not say specifically that sitting in front of Zach is an annoyance. This means disadvantage is a more precise definition than *annoyance*, so **(C)** is incorrect.

Although the word *withdrawal* may sound like drawback, it actually has a different meaning. A withdrawal is a removal or extraction from something, not a disadvantage. This means **(D)** is incorrect.

3) C

Core Standard: **Integration of Knowledge**

To find the answer to this question, it helps to look at the context of the quotation. In paragraph 2, the author writes, “So Caroline wanted to sit close to the cool kids, but not too close, or she would be more interested in talking than paying attention. She also knew that it was good to be friends with the smart kids, because they could help Caroline with her schoolwork. However, she didn’t want to sit too close to the smart kids, because unfortunately at Caroline’s school, the smart kids and the cool kids were not the same kids.” From this we can understand that Caroline is worried about how people will see her if she sits “too close to the smart kids.” She will be seen as smart, but not as cool, because the smart kids and the cool kids are not considered the same kids. So we can understand that this statement likely means that if Caroline is seen as a smart kid, no one will think she is cool. Therefore **(C)** is correct.

Caroline describes herself as both a cool kid and a smart kid, but this quotation suggests that people at Caroline’s school cannot be both. However, we do not know whether this means Caroline is really seen as a cool kid or as a smart kid, so **(A)** is incorrect.

Caroline describes herself as both a cool kid and a smart kid, but this statement does not prove that she is the only kid who has both qualities. Rather, this statement tells us the way people at her school are viewed, as either cool or smart. This means **(B)** is incorrect.

The statement does tell us that at Caroline’s school smart kids cannot also be cool kids, but it does not suggest that this fact makes her school unusual. Therefore **(D)** is incorrect.

4) A

Core Standard: **Integration of Knowledge**

According to the quotation in question, Caroline did not want to be the first one to class because this meant that she did not have any “control” over whom she would sit next to. If Caroline were the last one to get to class, she would be caught in a similar situation—she would not have any control over whom she would sit next to. All of the chairs would be taken, and she would be forced to sit in the last one available. Using this information, we can understand that **(A)** is correct.

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

5) D

Core Standard: **Key Ideas and Details**

In paragraph 3, the author writes, “So she took her time walking down the hall, taking a minute to talk to her friend Alma, whom she hadn’t seen for the entire summer.” This lets us know that Caroline makes sure not to get to class too early by stopping to talk to her friend Alma. This means **(D)** is the correct choice.

Caroline thinks about “all of the cool things that she could do to the back of her hair to make Marc fall in love with her,” but she does not actually stop to fix her hair. She is just using her imagination. This means **(A)** is incorrect.

Caroline does not go to the wrong class, so **(B)** is incorrect.

Although Caroline thinks about Marc once she gets inside the classroom, she does not think about him before she sees him. This means that thinking about Marc did not slow her down on the way to class, so **(C)** is incorrect.

6) C

Core Standard: **Key Ideas and Details**

In the last sentence, the author notes that Caroline was “saddened but not discouraged” about losing the best seat in first period, and she “immediately began planning for lunchtime, when she was determined to get the best seat in the cafeteria.” From this we can understand that Caroline is firmly set or unyielding in her decision to have better luck at lunch. This lets us know that she her attitude in the final paragraph can best be described as resolute. Choice **(C)** is correct.

As explained above, Caroline is firmly set in her mission to get the best seat in the cafeteria. However, this does not necessarily mean that she has intense or strong emotions about it. Moreover, the passage says that she was “saddened but not discouraged” about losing the best seat in first period. Being saddened does not constitute an intense or strong emotion. Rather, if Caroline were devastated, this would constitute an intense or strong emotion. This lets us know that Caroline's attitude in the final paragraph cannot best be described as passionate. This means **(A)** is incorrect.

At the end of the passage, Caroline is “saddened” that she did not get the seat she wanted, but that word indicates a temporary disappointment. There is no sign that she is depressed, which is more serious and drawn out than disappointed. This lets us know that Caroline's attitude in the final paragraph cannot best be described as melancholy. Therefore **(B)** is incorrect.

Although Caroline is “saddened,” the passage does not provide information to suggest that she is feeling hopeless. This lets us know that Caroline's attitude in the final paragraph cannot best be described as despondent. So **(D)** is incorrect.