Story Structure

Grade 5 Reading Worksheet

Name _____ Date _____

Circle the answer.

READ THIS FIRST

The Last Runner

Chapter 1: Station Six

Oluwaseun had never been awake this early on a Sunday. At six-thirty, she stood behind a long folding table at Mile 18 of the Lakeshore Marathon. Rows of paper cups waited in front of her, half filled with water and half with a green sports drink.

"Hold the cup out low and steady," said Mrs. Brennan, the station leader. "Runners grab without stopping. Let go the moment you feel them take it."

By nine o'clock, thousands of runners had streamed past. Oluwaseun's sneakers were soaked, and her arm ached. Then the crowd thinned. The other volunteers began stacking empty cups.

Far down the road, one runner was still coming. She was barely jogging. Her number said 4127.

Chapter 2: The School Mile

Last spring, Oluwaseun had run the school mile. It was four laps around the track. On the third lap, she was so far behind that she could hear only her own breathing. Some kids were already sitting on the grass.

She slowed to a walk. Then she stepped off the track and sat down, pretending her shoe was untied. No one said anything. That was almost worse. Afterward, she told herself she just wasn't a runner. She hadn't run anywhere since.

Chapter 3: Mile 18

Oluwaseun grabbed a full cup and ran down the road toward runner 4127. Up close, the woman was older than she had expected, with gray braids and a face shining with sweat.

"You're almost there!" Oluwaseun called, jogging beside her. "Well, eight more miles. But you're doing it!"

The woman laughed and took the cup. "Last year," she said between breaths, "I quit at Mile 12. This year I promised myself I'd finish. Even if I'm the last one."

Oluwaseun jogged with her as far as the next corner. Her legs felt light.

When she came back, Mrs. Brennan raised an eyebrow. "Where did you learn to run like that?"

Oluwaseun thought of the track, of the third lap, of the grass where she had sat down.

"I'm still learning," she said. "There's a school mile in April. I think I'll try it again."

1. What does Chapter 1 mainly do?
   - It shows Oluwaseun deciding to race again in April.
   - It sets the scene at the water table and ends on a lone runner.
   - It describes the runner's promise to finish the race.
   - It explains why Oluwaseun quit the school mile.

2. How is Chapter 2 different in time from Chapters 1 and 3?
   - It goes back to an event from the spring before.
   - It happens later on the same Sunday morning.
   - It happens at the same moment, in a different place.
   - It jumps ahead to the school mile in April.

3. Why does the author place Chapter 2 between the other two chapters?
   - It introduces Mrs. Brennan as an important character.
   - It explains how the marathon water tables work.
   - It describes the route of the Lakeshore Marathon.
   - It shows why the last runner matters so much to Oluwaseun.

4. Which detail at the end of Chapter 1 builds suspense for Chapter 3?
   - Mrs. Brennan told her how to hold the cups.
   - Rows of paper cups waited on the table.
   - The other volunteers began stacking cups.
   - One runner was still coming, barely jogging.

5. How does the runner's story in Chapter 3 connect to Chapter 2?
   - Like Oluwaseun, she once quit a race partway through.
   - Like Oluwaseun, she is running her very first race.
   - She watched Oluwaseun run the school mile last spring.
   - She was the coach who timed the school mile.

6. Which event is the turning point for Oluwaseun?
   - stepping off the track during the school mile
   - running down the road with a cup for the last runner
   - watching thousands of runners stream past
   - learning to hold a cup out low and steady

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Answer Key - Grade 5 Reading Worksheet

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