



**NEW ENGLAND
COMMON ASSESSMENT PROGRAM**

**Released Items
2010**

**Grade 11
Reading**

Reading

1 The root *bio* in the words biography and antibiotic means

- A. self.
- B. value.
- C. study.
- D. life.

2 Which word **most** clearly shows that Lee disliked spiders?

Because Lee hated and feared bugs so much, he thought that spiders were _____.

- A. distasteful
- B. objectionable
- C. repulsive
- D. terrible

Tina McElroy Ansa is a novelist and journalist. Read this passage to learn how her experiences growing up in Georgia in the 1950s shaped her life. Then answer the questions that follow.

Storytelling

Tina McElroy Ansa

1 I am a southern child, so I grew up knowing I wanted to be a storyteller. The first time I heard a story, before I could even read, I knew that I wanted to tell stories. I come from a family where you turned the TV off when stories were being told on the porch. Storytelling was something you got attention for. At the dinner table, there were five of us kids, my mother and father, and my grandfather lived with us for a while, so you can imagine that everyone was vying for attention. I knew that if I could tell an interesting story, I could hold court. Stories were important in my family because knowledge was important. Not just book knowledge, although my family was a family of readers, but just *knowing* things. Reading was very respected in my home. My mother would always be reading in this big pink chair that she had, and the one thing we could not do was to disturb her when she was sitting in that big pink chair reading a hardback book. We're not talkin' magazines, here, no, *hardback* books. And I was the baby of the family, so I was always running around saying, "Gotta love me, gotta love me!" I would think, "What in the world could Mama be doing that was so important that it could keep her from *me*?" When she got up and left the book on the chair, I would pick it up and look through it. There were never any pictures, just words. And I thought, "Oh God, there's magic here."

I don't really remember asking anyone if there was such a thing as a writer. I think probably the written word became important to my generation because our parents were so tied to education, and so sure that education was our way up and our way out. So my interest in writing probably started out in my home with the stories, and then just naturally went on to books. My stories come to me now in all kinds of ways. My first novel, *Baby of the Family*, came to me in parts. It started as a short story about a little black girl in a small southern town who goes up the dusty street to get her hair done at the beauty shop. She goes regularly because she's tender-headed, and her mother and her grandmother can't stand to see her cry so they send her to the beauty shop to get her hair done. So she walks into the shop, and sees this beautiful dark-skinned black woman whom she had never seen there before. When the dark woman opened her mouth to speak, she spoke with an accent because she was from the Sea Islands. Later on, the dark woman takes the little girl under her wing and teaches her how to be a real woman—how to be nosy, to know things, to ask questions.

When I sent this story out, and got rejection after rejection, I would cry, work some more on it, send it out again, and get another rejection. Finally I realized that it was not a short story. I needed to know who this little girl was, where she lived, what happened when she got home, what her parents were like, where she went to school. As soon as I knew there were things to find out about this little girl, the story just got bigger and bigger. I knew this little girl was special, and I knew I had to write a novel.

- 3 In the first paragraph, the word vying means
- A. hiding.
 - B. competing.
 - C. whispering.
 - D. traveling.

- 4 Based on the first paragraph, what did the author believe about hardback books when she was a child?
- A. They were a privilege reserved only for adults.
 - B. They were boring because they had no pictures.
 - C. They deserved more respect than other reading materials.
 - D. They provided a good source of inspiration for family stories.

- 5 What did the author learn from the rejections she received for her short story?
- A. The story dealt with a subject she knew little about.
 - B. Stories about little girls are not popular among adults.
 - C. The story was not complete as she had first written it.
 - D. Short stories are more difficult to write than novels.

- 6 What did the author **most likely** do to turn the short story into a novel?
- A. changed the setting
 - B. developed the character
 - C. added descriptive language
 - D. created a more focused plot

- 7 Describe how the author's childhood influenced her decision to be a writer. Use details from the passage to support your answer.

Read this article about two men who shared a vision and formed a partnership. Then answer the questions that follow.

Two Bright Guys, One Vision

Michael Brown, Alan Khazei: Social Entrepreneurs

Linda L. Creighton

On a hot July night in 1969, 8-year-old Michael Brown was awakened by his parents and led sleepy-eyed in front of the television. Sitting in their pajamas, he and his four brothers and sisters watched as men walked on the moon for the first time. Other nights, Brown watched his favorite show, *Star Trek*, with the Russian, Chinese-American, Vulcan, and African-American crew all working together on the *Starship Enterprise*. “I really associated with the idealism and everything that was happening in the ’60s,” he recalls.

About an hour from Brown’s home in Boston, Alan Khazei was in the same grade. His mother was a nurse, his father a surgeon who told stories about his native Iran but imbued his son with a fierce love for his adopted country. The boys, from middle-class homes, finally met when they were assigned the same dorm room as freshmen at Harvard. It was the beginning of a lasting friendship and a powerful partnership. “When people ask us for advice about how to found an organization, we always tell them the same thing,” Khazei says. “First, find a partner. Then you immediately have a team.”

3 Today, Brown and Khazei are leading social entrepreneurs. Their creation, City Year, is a national-service program enlisting youths between 17 and 24 to commit to a year of work helping their communities. With more than 1,000 members serving in 15 U.S. cities and in South Africa, City Year has outpaced even Khazei’s and Brown’s brash dreams for it. “We just said we’re going to change the world,” Khazei recalls, “and, damn it, people should just help us.”

Tall, dark, and intense, Khazei says City Year looks for leaders in unlikely places, among “young people who might otherwise be dismissed.” Smart and self-deprecating, Brown has incorporated leadership lessons from the military, business, and education. But the key to developing leaders among City Year volunteers, he says, is to give them opportunity—then get out of the way.

5 Brown and Khazei live by example. Brown is married to a doctor who treats kids with AIDS. Khazei’s wife has established three philanthropic organizations. “They live and breathe this job,” says 27-year-old Andrea Eaton, director of special projects who came to City Year three years ago after hearing Brown speak at Cornell University. “I don’t think leaders are born,” says Khazei. “Our belief is that anybody can be a leader. It’s a skill set that people can learn and develop.”

Brown and Khazei draw inspiration from Robert F. Kennedy, Martin Luther King Jr., and Gandhi for the leadership skills they’ve taught the 9,500 current and former members of City Year. Brown first encountered the concept of national service when he took a year off from college to work for then Rep. Leon Panetta, the California Democrat who would go on to become President Clinton’s chief of staff. Just 20, he saw how volunteering could “turn young people into active citizens.” After graduation, Brown went to New York to work for the City Volunteer Corps founded by Mayor Ed Koch.

Khazei put off law school to work on Sen. Gary Hart’s 1984 presidential campaign because the Colorado Democrat was the only candidate to name national service a priority for the White House.

Joining the Circus

At Harvard Law, Brown and Khazei continued to think about national service, but opportunity beckoned. Brown was awarded a prestigious clerkship with a federal judge but eventually turned it down. “It was almost like I had a foot on two different boards: One foot was my passion for the national service idea, and the other foot was on the board for a more traditional career with the usual notions of success. I realized I had to find the courage to jump from one to the other,” he says. “Starting City Year was a little bit like running off to join the circus.”

The judge for whom Brown clerked, Stephen Breyer, would go on to become a Supreme Court justice. He and Brown remain friends, and when City Year held its annual conference in Washington, D.C., almost 15 years after Brown gave up the clerkship, Breyer invited the volunteers into his Supreme Court chambers and later, in Boston, administered their oath of service.

Brown and Khazei have remained best friends for the 27 years they have known each other. They have weathered professional and personal crises together, consult with each other on virtually everything, and all but finish each other's sentences.

Compromise

Events have, at times, illuminated some differences between the two partners, however. When Hurricane Katrina hit last year, Brown called Khazei at midnight, telling him he wanted to send the entire 1,000-member City Year corps to Louisiana and Mississippi to help, calling the disaster “the moral challenge of our generation.” But Khazei was reluctant to send everyone, citing commitments to other communities. The two stayed on the phone until 3 a.m., arguing back and forth before finally finding a compromise: creating a 16th City Year program, in Louisiana, within 90 days of the disaster—a process that usually takes two years. The new program was up and running three months later.

Khazei has just left City Year to work on a book about national service and is serving as a fellow at the John F. Kennedy School of Government's Institute of Politics at Harvard. Brown is staying with City Year. Both have high hopes for its future. “We never wanted this to be about us,” says Khazei. “We're frankly more ambitious than that—we wanted to build an institution that lasts way beyond us.”

Bill Shore, the founder of the Share Our Strength organization and a member of the board of City Year, says Brown and Khazei have had a profound effect on public policy as a result of their “authentic belief in the power of ideas in the hands of young idealists,” adding: “They have been more purposeful about codifying and institutionalizing what works than any other nonprofit leaders I know.”

14 Someone who knows that lesson well is Stephen Spaloss. Now 37 and the director of the office of site leadership at City Year, he first heard of the organization when he was 21—and a wise judge allowed him to spend a year in Brown and Khazei's volunteer program instead of two years in jail for a serious crime. Spaloss quickly adopted the life of hard work and dedication that Brown and Khazei set as a standard, and he came to embrace its ethos as fervently as its two founders. A father, trusted employee, and respected leader in his own right, Spaloss credits Khazei and Brown with turning his life around. “Alan and Michael are the truest kind of leaders,” he says. “They backed what they said—that 17-to-24-year-olds can change the world.”

- 8 In paragraph 3, entrepreneurs are people who
- A. act independently.
 - B. establish an organization.
 - C. support politicians.
 - D. seek government funds.

- 9 According to the article, what is the primary purpose of the City Year program?
- A. to teach young people to form partnerships
 - B. to enable young people to perform community service
 - C. to provide an alternative to jailing young offenders
 - D. to influence public policies affecting young citizens

- 10 What is the **main** idea of paragraph 5?
- A. The two men influenced the people around them.
 - B. The two men's lives are consistent with their beliefs.
 - C. The two men have chosen a demanding career.
 - D. The two men received support from their families.

- 11 What was similar about the two men's experiences before Harvard Law?
- A. They both spent time studying leadership skills.
 - B. They both created service organizations.
 - C. They both ran for a national political office.
 - D. They both took time off to pursue their ideals.

- 12 Explain how Brown's and Khazei's personal qualities have contributed to their success. Use information from the article to support your answer.

- 13 Why did Khazei disagree with Brown about sending all their volunteers to deal with the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina?
- A. Khazei thought that aiding hurricane victims was outside the scope of City Year's mission.
 - B. Khazei did not believe that the volunteer corps could organize a rapid enough response.
 - C. Khazei was unwilling to suspend the other projects that City Year was running.
 - D. Khazei wanted the volunteers to have an opportunity to participate in the decision.

- 14 According to the article, why did Khazei leave the City Year organization?
- A. He wanted to pursue other interests.
 - B. He disagreed strongly with Brown about the approach to Hurricane Katrina.
 - C. He felt the organization was depending on him too much.
 - D. He thought he could support the organization's goals from outside.

- 15 In paragraph 14, the word ethos means
- A. leadership.
 - B. strictness.
 - C. philosophy.
 - D. relationship.

- 16 What is the **main** purpose of the article?
- A. to persuade the reader to support City Year
 - B. to provide information about the founders of City Year
 - C. to explain the qualities that are necessary for leadership
 - D. to convince the reader of the importance of national service

- 17 Describe the author's attitude toward Brown and Khazei and analyze how she communicates this attitude to the reader. Use examples from the article to support your answer.

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