Boxing Terms

1) **Break** = lean to pull out of a clinch/hold and move away from an opponent.

2) **Clinch** = the act of holding an opponent’s body with one arm to prevent him from punching.

3) **Combination** = two or more fast punches.

4) **Cross** = a blow/punch thrown across the body at shoulder level.

5) **Footwork** = the way in which a boxer maneuvers his feet.

6) **Hook** = a short, swinging blow delivered with a crooked arm.

7) **Jab** = a quick punch made by extending the arm straight from the shoulder.

8) **Medicine Ball** = a heavy, stuffed ball used in exercises to strengthen a boxer’s stomach muscles.

9) **Peanut Bag** = a speed bag or small punching bag.

10) **Shadowboxing** = practice boxing against an imaginary opponent.

11) **Slip** = to move one’s head aside quickly to avoid a blow, letting the opponent’s fist slip over one’s shoulder.

12) **Spar** = to box in a practice match against a real opponent.

13) **Stick** = to flick out quick blows/punches.

14) **Stick and Run** = to flick out repeated jabs and dance out of reach.

15) **Uppercut** = a swinging blow directed upward, such as to an opponent’s chin.
1) Page 3 – Describe the Harlem neighborhood. _____________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________

2) Page 4- Who are the 4 members of the gang? On the chart below, list each person and describe him.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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</table>

3) Page 5 – Who does Alfred work for? What is his job? _____________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________

4) Page 5- What secret does Alfred reveal to the gang by accident? What does the gang decide to do with this information? _____________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________

5) Page 7 & 8 - Who comes to the clubroom after the gang leaves? Where does this person invite Alfred to go? _____________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________

6) Page 8 – What does Alfred remember about the store? How does this make him feel? _____________
_____________________________________________________________________________________

7) Page 10 – Describe the cave. _____________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________


8) Page 11- Describe James’ childhood. What issue do you think broke up his family? ______________

9) Page 11 – What happened to Alfred’s parents? Who does he live with now? ______________

10) Page 12 – What did Alfred and James plan to do when they grew up? Why does Alfred think that this will not happen? ______________

11) Page 13 – What happens to Alfred when he reaches his street? ______________

12) Page 13 – How come Alfred does not ask the police officers for help? ______________

13) Prediction – What do you think is going to happen to James and Alfred? ______________

Part II Directions: On a separate piece of paper, draw one of the important people, places or events from chapter one. Include a quote and a page number to describe the person, place or event with your picture.
Directions: Answer one of the questions below in a complete paragraph. Brainstorm on this sheet and write your final paragraph on a separate piece of paper in blue or black ink pen. Be sure to include: a proper heading, a topic sentence, supporting sentences and a concluding sentence.

1) Alfred feels guilty in this chapter.
   ➢ What does he feel guilty about?
   ➢ Have you ever felt guilty for something you did?
   ➢ Compare your situation to Alfred’s problem.
   ➢ How was your crisis similar or different than Alfred’s circumstances?

2) Alfred enters Donatelli’s Gym and says, “I want to be a fighter.”
   ❖ What does he want to “fight” in his life?
   ❖ Describe his problems that he is trying to overcome.
   ❖ Do you think that sports can help a person conquer a problem? Why or why not?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page #</th>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>How tall is Alfred?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>How much does he weigh?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-22</td>
<td>According to Donatelli, “A man must have some fear…” in his life.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Why does a man need fear in his life?</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>How can Alfred get in the ring to fight?</td>
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<tr>
<td>23 - 24</td>
<td>Describe the training schedule that Donatelli says Alfred must follow.</td>
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<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Why does Alfred want to be a boxer?</td>
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<td>25</td>
<td>According to Donatelli, what is a contender?</td>
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</table>
## Chapter 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page #</th>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>What kind of rally do Alfred, Aunt Pearl and the girls pass by?</td>
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<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>Who appears in church? Why?</td>
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<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>Where do Alfred, Aunt Pearl and the girls go after church? What do they do there?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>Describe Alfred’s conversation with Uncle Wilson. (Hint: What statement does Uncle Wilson repeat?)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Prediction:** In the space below, make a prediction about something you think will happen to Alfred, his family or friends. Give a reason for your prediction.
### Vocabulary – *Words to Know*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Page #</th>
<th>Definition in your own words.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1)</td>
<td>page #</td>
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<td>2)</td>
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<td>3)</td>
<td>page #</td>
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</table>

### Important Facts

Three important events, details, pieces of information revealed in this chapter.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1)</td>
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<td>2)</td>
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<td>3)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Prediction

Make a guess about something that you think will happen in the next chapter or coming chapters. Be sure to tell why you think it will happen.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Guess</th>
<th>Why</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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### Discussion Notes

Leave this square blank until you receive further directions.
**Vocabulary – Words to Know**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Page #</th>
<th>Definition in your own words.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) ______________</td>
<td>__________</td>
<td>___________________________</td>
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<tr>
<td>2) ______________</td>
<td>__________</td>
<td>___________________________</td>
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<tr>
<td>3) ______________</td>
<td>__________</td>
<td>___________________________</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Important Facts**

Three important events, details, pieces of information revealed in this chapter.

| 1) __________________________ | |
| 2) __________________________ | |
| 3) __________________________ | |

**Response**

In this chapter, Bud humiliates Red. What lesson do you think Red is supposed to learn? How can you apply this lesson to your own life?

____________________________________

____________________________________

____________________________________

____________________________________

**Discussion Notes**

Simile = two unlike objects are compared using the words *like* or *as*.

But by the fourth, his muscles began to get warm, like a car engine heating up on a cold morning.

What is being compared?

____________________________________

____________________________________

Why is this a good comparison?

____________________________________

____________________________________
### Vocabulary – Words to Know

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Page #</th>
<th>Definition in your own words.</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SCOWL</td>
<td>52</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>SHOWED SOME DOG</td>
<td>59</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Characters

Alfred meets three new characters in this chapter. Write a brief description of each character.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Character</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>JELLY BELLY</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WILLIE STREETER</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPOON</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How are these new characters different than the gang members?

---

### Important Facts

Three important events, details or pieces of information revealed in this chapter.

1) _______________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

2) _______________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

3) _______________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
Directions: Answer one of the questions below in a complete paragraph. Brainstorm on this sheet and write your final paragraph on a separate piece of paper in blue or black ink pen. Be sure to include: a proper heading, a topic sentence, supporting sentences and a concluding sentence.

1) How does Alfred stand up to Major?
   ✓ Why do you think he is able to do this?
   ✓ Describe the motivating force behind his new courage.

3) Alfred seems to be experiencing a transformation.
   ✓ Describe his physical and mental changes.
**Metaphor** = comparison of two unlike objects *without* using the words “like” or “as.”

Example:

The first week was all pain, steel claws ripping at his shoulder muscles, raking his arms.

What is being compared?

___________________________________________

___________________________________________

What is the effect of this comparison?

___________________________________________

___________________________________________

___________________________________________

___________________________________________

**Simile** = two unlike objects are compared using the words “like” or “as.”

Find the 3 similes on page 70 & 71. Write the quote from book. For each comparison, state what is being compared *and* if it is a good comparison.

1) ________________________________

___________________________________________

___________________________________________

___________________________________________

2) ________________________________

___________________________________________

___________________________________________

___________________________________________

3) ________________________________

___________________________________________

___________________________________________

___________________________________________

**Response:**

Alfred begins to feel frustrated in this chapter. List the ways he displays his frustration.

___________________________________________

___________________________________________

___________________________________________

___________________________________________

___________________________________________

**Prediction:**

What do you think will happen when Alfred goes to the clubroom?

___________________________________________

___________________________________________

___________________________________________

___________________________________________

___________________________________________

**T-Chart:**

Alfred is given advice about boxing from Reverend Price and Lou Epstein. *On a separate piece of paper, draw a T-chart* to compare and contrast the advice each man gives Alfred.
**Chapter 11**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) Alfred succumbs (gives in) to peer pressure in this chapter. Describe the negative influences that he allows to enter his life.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2) Alfred finally talks to James in this chapter. What has happened to James in the last three weeks since Alfred has started training?</td>
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<tr>
<td>3) Describe James’ appearance.</td>
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</table>

**Chapter 12**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) How does Alfred feel the day after the party? Describe his symptoms.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2) What crime does Major commit in this chapter? Describe the item he was “loaned.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>3) Where do the boys go in the car? Describe the scene.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>4)</strong> How does Alfred injure his ankle? (Hint: What is he doing when he is injured?)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>5)</strong> On page 92, Alfred says, “The last time Major used his fists to bust me up. This time he…” How did Major manipulate Alfred? Who is really to blame for Alfred’s actions?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>6)</strong> On page 93, where has Alfred walked to without realizing it?</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>7)</strong> Alfred makes several statements when he is feeling sorry for himself. List some of those statements.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>8)</strong> What question does Alfred ask Donatelli when he returns to the gym to clean out his locker?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>9)</strong> What is Donatelli’s answer to Alfred’s question?</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Extra Credit:**
In this chapter, Alfred is feeling very depressed. Write one organized paragraph pretending you are Alfred. Describe how you feel and what is making you feel this way.
The Contender  Chapter 14

104  1) Why is this *not* “just another day” for Alfred? ____________________________________________

105  2) Why is Alfred resting? ______________________________________________________________

107  3) What does Alfred take out of his wallet? ________________________________________________

107  4) Define *amateur*. __________________________________________________________________

108  5) Where do Alfred and Henry go? Why? Where is this place? ________________________________

109  6) What is Alfred experiencing for the first time? ___________________________________________

109  7) What disease crippled Henry’s leg? (*Bonus Points: Using a dictionary, the internet or other resource, describe the disease.*) _____________________________________________

109-110  8) Describe Spoon’s apartment. _______________________________________________________

110  9) Describe the incident Alfred once witnessed at James’ home. What does this tell you about James’ family life? __________________________________________________________

110  10) What happened at the clubroom a few weeks ago? ______________________________________

112  11) What does Spoon encourage Alfred to do? _____________________________________________

113  12) Spoon describes his community as an “integrated neighborhood.” What does *integrate* mean?

115  13) How much does Alfred weigh? In four months, how much weight has he gained by training?
116 14) Why is it significant that Henry is “working the corner” tonight? _________________________

117 15) How do you think Alfred feels when he receives the robe? Why? _________________________

118 16) How does Alfred describe his nerves? _________________________

120-123 17) Describe Alfred’s fight against Rivera. _________________________

123 18) What does Donatelli mean when he says, “That’s not enough?” _________________________

Directions: Reading the following poem “The Seventh Round. ” Compare and contrast the speaker’s experience in the poem, to Alfred’s fight in chapter 14.

“The Seventh Round”
by James Merrill

Give it to him!
To you, they mean,
As always (mezzanine
Gone dazzling dim,
A crown at stake)
Before you stands
The giver with clenched hands.
Drop your own. Take.

Questions:
1. What is happening to the speaker?

2. What do you predict will happen to the speaker? Why?

3. Do you think the speaker and Alfred experienced the same emotions? Why? Describe what you think each fighter was thinking/feeling during his match?

Mezzanine= area around the ring.
Directions: Answer one of the questions below in a complete paragraph. Brainstorm on this sheet and write your final paragraph on a separate piece of paper in blue or black ink pen. Be sure to include: a proper heading, a topic sentence, supporting sentences and a concluding sentence.

A) Aunt Pearl shares her *dream for advancement* with Alfred.
   ❖ What was Aunt Pearl’s dream? Why did Aunt Pearl not fulfill her dream?
   ❖ Why does Aunt Pearl not stop Alfred from boxing?
   ❖ What is one of your dreams?

B) Alfred wins his second fight; however, he fills a very strong emotion after winning.
   ✓ What emotion does Alfred feel?
   ✓ Describe Alfred’s thoughts because of this overwhelming emotion.
   ✓ Have you or someone you know ever experienced this emotion? Describe the situation.
**Chapter 16**

1) Alfred wins his second fight; however, he feels a very strong emotion after winning. What emotion does Alfred feel?

2) Describe Alfred’s thoughts because of this overwhelming emotion.

**Chapter 17**

p132 1) Uncle Wilson approves of Alfred’s boxing and says that Alfred is showing “progress”? However, when Jeff says that he tried boxing Uncle Wilson has a different reaction. What does Uncle Wilson say to Jeff? Why is his reaction different for each boy?

p135 2) What does Alfred share about his plans for the future?

p136 3) Jeff tells Alfred that he sees the changes Alfred has made in his life the last few months. How did Alfred act before? How has he changed?


p138 5) What does James want from Alfred? Why?

p138 6) What does Alfred regret not doing?

**Chapter 18**

p140 1) What does Donatelli want Alfred to do? Why?

p141 2) Why does Alfred want to continue boxing?
Chapter 19

p143 1) What has happened to Henry’s leg? Why?

p144 2) Who bought Alfred’s robe?
   What is this significant for the buyer and for Alfred?

p145 3) How does Alfred describe the cold spot in his stomach?

p145 4) Spoon has helped Alfred.
   How does Spoon offer to help James?

p147 5) Why does Donatelli turn down the fight against Elston Hubbard?
   How does Alfred convince him to let the fight happen?

p148-151 6) Describe the fight between Alfred and Elston Hubbard.

p152 7) What does Donatelli mean when he says, “Now you know, Alfred. Now you know, too?”

Chapter 20

p153 1) What news does Aunt Pearl give Alfred about James?

p154 2) Where does Alfred find James?
   Why is this place important?

p155-157 3) How does Alfred convince James to come with him?
   Describe their conversation.

Alternative Ending:
Robert Lipsyte leaves the reader wondering what happens to Alfred and James at the conclusion of the book. On a separate piece of paper, write 2-3 paragraphs describing what you think happens to each character. Be creative!