Summer Camp

1 This summer I'll be working in a small, women's clothing store; it's not incredibly exciting, but I like my work. Still, I remember the years I spent at summer camp and I know I'll never feel that way again.

2 A giggling bunch of girls, aged eight and nine, scurries as a group down the dusty, rutted path to the lake. We have messily braided hair, skinny legs with scabby knees, and dirty sandals and feet. We pass the infirmary,[1] the weathered, ancient dining hall, and the newer lodge.

3 We girls head down the hill, covered in bark chips that get in everyone's shoes, pass through the Senior Boys Unit, cross a small field, and reach the edge of the lake.

4 Earlier today, between noon and three o'clock, we arrived at camp. Fathers hefted our trunks, carried them into our cabins, and set them down at the foot of our bunks. Siblings bestowed upon us wisdom gained from previous years ("Don't eat the gruel." "Shower at least twice a week.") along with contraband candy to hide in said trunks, and mothers kissed us good-bye.

5 Once all ten of us girls made it into our cabin, we met our counselors and C.I.T. (counselor in training) and played a name game. Then we changed into our swimsuits and trooped down to the lake to take the ever-important swim test.

6 Now that we're here, we hang our towels on the rough log fence and remove our shoes, shirts, and shorts. With the dirt and grass tickling our toes, we proceed down onto the dock and pair off. One partner swims while the other counts laps. You have to swim nine laps, or eighteen lengths, to be able to go into the deeper water, an area aspired to by all because it contains the float, which is fun to load with more than the ten-camper limit and try to tip over. Most of the girls in my cabin won't be able to do it. Most of them are first-year campers, and they'll end up relegated to "Beginner's Bay," which doesn't get any deeper than three feet or so. I'm a veteran, and at age nine this is my second year of camp. I'll make all eighteen lengths or die trying.

7 My partner, a small eight-year-old with wispy, dark brown hair, whispers to me that I can go first. Not a problem. My confidence is astronomical and absolutely unshakable. I jump right in with a splash that wets my partner and the other chickens on the dock who want to count first. Then I start to swim: one lap of breaststroke, one lap of backstroke, one lap of freestyle, and six more any way I

[1]**infirmary:** medical clinic

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choose, including the dog paddle or any other method of staying afloat that propels me through the water. I'm glad when I swim to the other dock and back for the last time, diving underwater to cover the last yard or so. Now that I'm done, I relax for a moment, reveling in everything about me.

8 The tips of my toes barely reach the gravelly bottom as I tread water. Moving into shallower depths is always an option, but I prefer proving my endurance to the onlookers I'm sure are watching. Looking up, really looking for the first time since last year, I can see the dock, a light pine color with blue painted edges. I see the rocky shore, the land beyond it covered in pine needles and shade from the immense trees standing guard above me. Behind them I see the mountains, all around me. The lake stretches out for miles, edged by the mountains, and the sun reflects off the water so brightly that I have to look away.

9 The birds sing their tuneless songs from the pines while the lake gurgles and splashes in endlessly breaking waves that never reach the shore. Simultaneously I smell the pines and the water, and the sensations are home, security. This is where I belong.

10 I dog-paddle over to the ladder, feeling water splash and lap against me. Grasping the slippery, blue wood in my small hands, I haul myself up far enough to put my foot on the first rung, feeling the edge of it jabbing my foot, the rough paint mixed with sand for traction. I climb out and stand on the smooth, damp dock, wrapping my terry cloth towel around my shoulders. Everything is dripping: hair, bathing suit, self. The sun warms me.

11 Then I feel that familiar premonitory[2] sensation in my nose. *Ahchoo!* I sneeze violently, and the water is gone, leaving that peculiar empty feeling. It's an affirmation[3] of a sort, that summer is here, and I'm where I should be.

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[2]**premonitory:** warning
[3]**affirmation:** positive statement

Use the passage to answer questions 1 – 9.

1. Which thematic statement best applies to this passage?

   A. Memories make the past seem better than it really was.

   B. Childhood memories can be a source of much pleasure.

   C. Being the best is more important to adults than to children.

   D. Past experiences help people deal with today's challenges.

2. "Fathers **hefted** our trunks, carried them into our cabins, and set them down at the foot of our bunks." (Paragraph 4)

   In the sentence above, what does the word **hefted** mean?

   A. propped up

   B. opened

   C. set up

   D. lifted

3. Identify three examples of sensory details from the passage. Include a detail for sight, a detail for sound and a detail for touch. Then, explain how the use of sensory details contributes to the reader's understanding of the narrator's camp experience.

   Write your answer in the **Answer Document**. (4 points)

4. Which words best describe the way the narrator portrays herself as a child at camp?

   A. bashful and withdrawn

   B. confident and determined

   C. trustworthy and responsible

   D. thoughtful and understanding

5. "Most of the girls in my cabin won't be able to do it. Most of them are first-year campers, and they'll end up **relegated** to 'Beginner's Bay,' which doesn't get any deeper than three feet or so." (Paragraph 6)

   What does **relegated** mean in the second sentence?

   A. carried
   B. assigned
   C. reported
   D. announced

6. How does the narrator act toward the other characters after they are all down at the lake?

   A. The narrator tries to help the shyer campers fit in.
   B. The narrator tries to show off during her swimming test.
   C. The narrator tries to hide the fact that she is a weak swimmer.
   D. The narrator tries to help the younger campers avoid mistakes.

7. "I see the rocky shore, the land beyond it covered in pine needles and shade from the immense trees standing guard above me. Behind them I see the mountains, all around me." (Paragraph 8)

   Why does the narrator use personification to describe the large trees in the sentences above?

   A. to indicate that they make her feel confined to the lake
   B. to demonstrate that they provide relief from the hot sun
   C. to show that they make her feel protected in the camp
   D. to show that they look beautiful against the mountains

8. Which literary technique does the author use to tell the story?

   A. flashback
   B. hyperbole
   C. foreshadowing
   D. onomatopoeia

9. Which word best describes the narrator's attitude toward attending summer camp?

   A. gloomy
   B. regretful
   C. humorous
   D. sentimental