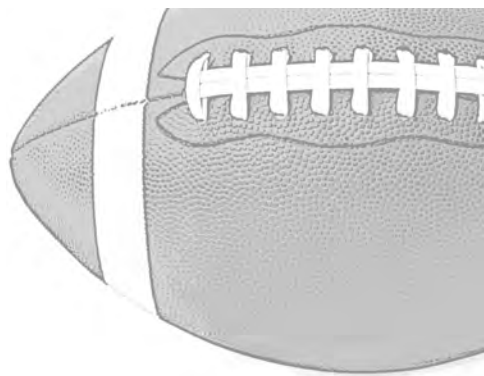


Fred Bowen

QUARTERBACK SEASON

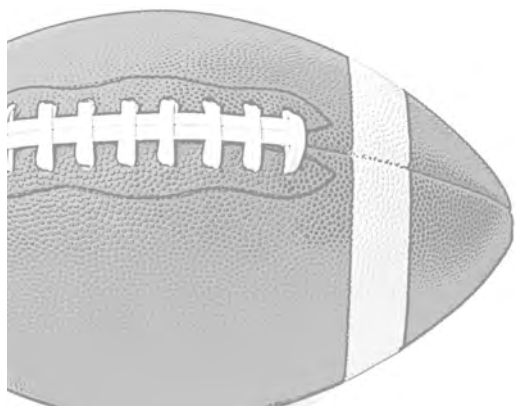


AFRED BOWEN
SPORTS STORY



QUARTERBACK SEASON

THE BOWEN SPORTS
SPORTS STORY



FRED BOWEN series
SPORTS STORY

QUARTERBACK SEASON

FRED BOWEN

Ω
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Summary: As a school assignment, eighth-grader Matt Monroe keeps a journal about his team's football season.

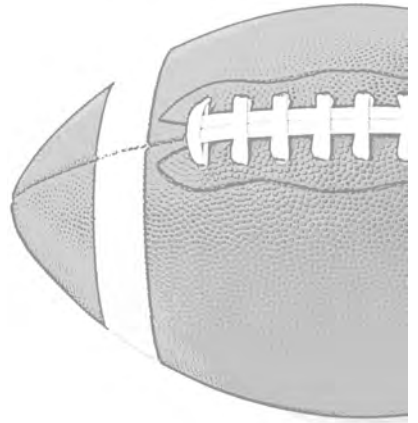
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*To the memory of my father,
Thomas J. Bowen,
who taught me to appreciate good writing.*



—
—

WEEK 1

Tuesday

First day of school. Im glad I'm finally in 8th grade bc its fun being in the oldest class at Parkside middle. But I can't believe it. We already have homework in english class. We have to keep a journal. 3 entries a week. For the whole semester! I don't even like writing thank you notes to my grandparents. Now I have to write something 3 times a week and im not even getting a gift.

Okay, thats my first entry.

Wednesday

After school today I went to North Park to practice throwing passes to my best freind, Brandon Gonzalez. Tryouts for the

Parkside football team are next week! Im sure Coach Mack is going to pick me to be the starting QB bc I was the backup last year. Brandon will definately start at wide receiver. We are totally pumped about football!!!

Friday

I dont know what I should write about today. Nothing really happened except my dog Elway threw up on my dads shoes this morning and my dad yelled at me for giving Elway mashed potatos last night at dinner. How could I know the potatos were going to come out of the wrong end?

OK, that's 3 entries.



From: Ignacio.S@ParksideMS.WCPS.gov

Date: Sunday, September 5

To: MattQB7@Monroe37family.com

Matt—

Get serious! You can do so much better than this. Your journal entries are much too short and have several careless errors, including misspelled words. You will be marked down for both. Each entry should be at least two paragraphs. Next time, include the dates, don't take shortcuts, and pay more attention to spellcheck! It also wouldn't hurt to check over your entries before you send them.

I can tell that you love football because you talk about it with such enthusiasm. I think football is a great subject for your journal. Why don't you begin with tryouts and then describe the season as it goes along?

If you can talk about football with enthusiasm, you can write about football with enthusiasm.

Ms. Samantha Ignacio
English Department
Parkside Middle School

Write what makes you happy.

—O. Henry

A decorative graphic at the top of the page. It features the word "WEEK" in a bold, black, sans-serif font, slanted upwards to the right. To its right is a large, stylized number "2" that has a grey, textured appearance. The entire graphic is set against a background of several parallel lines that also slant upwards to the right, creating a sense of motion or a timeline.

WEEK

2


Tuesday 9/7

Paragraph 1.

Okay, my journal can be all about football. That should be more fun than writing thank you notes, but it's still writing. It will be all about football, but without the misspellings and stuff. (Really, Ms. Ig.)

Paragraph 2.

Today was the first day of tryouts. Coach Mack made everybody run a mile around the track and timed us. I came in seventh out of fifty kids. That's pretty good. Brandon was better. He came in second. That's okay, though. He *should* be faster



than me. He's a wide receiver. The fastest kid on the team was a seventh grader named Devro. Some kids think he might be the starting quarterback this season. Give me a break! If he's so fast, he should be a running back or a wide receiver. Or run really fast to some other school that needs a quarterback.

Wednesday 9/8

Paragraph 1.

Second day of tryouts. Coach Mack says nobody is going to get cut from the team, so we're just trying out for positions. Lots of kids want to be the quarterback, but most of them stink. Some of those guys couldn't throw a wad of paper into a recycling bin if they were standing right next to it.

Paragraph 2.

I was awesome during quarterback drills. I hit all the receivers right in the hands, even on the long fly patterns. Coach decided to keep four players at quarterback. Of course, I'm one of them. Two others—

Andre Wilson and Russell Parker—are eighth graders like me. The last one is that new kid, Devro. I'm not worried. I can beat out all those guys.

Thursday 9/9

Paragraph 1.

We had practice again today. We did a bunch of exercises and stuff.

Paragraph 2.

Coach still hasn't decided who's going to be the starting quarterback. Devro is getting annoying. He's always clapping his hands and trying to pump everybody up. He acts like he's already the starting quarterback. Maybe he doesn't understand that I'm going to be the starting QB.



From: Ignacio.S@ParksideMS.WCPS.gov

Date: Thursday, September 9

To: MattQB7@Monroe37family.com

Matt—

You are a very good student; your journal should be much better. Remember, the journal is an important part (25%) of the first-quarter grade. I'm sure I don't need to remind you that you can't play football unless you pass all your subjects.

Please rewrite your journal entries for the first two days of tryouts and send them to me tomorrow. Please include more details this time. Keep in mind that I am not a football fan. You'll need to explain football terms such as "fly pattern."

I told you earlier that journal entries must be at least two paragraphs, but I expect a good student like you to write more. Do not number your paragraphs and please spell out the date of each entry.

Talk to me after class if you have any questions.

Ms. Samantha Ignacio
English Department
Parkside Middle School

The best writing is rewriting.
—E. B. White



Tuesday, September 7 (AGAIN!)

Football tryouts have started and Coach Mack is working us hard.

First, he made everybody run a mile—that's four laps around the track—and timed us. The mile wasn't that tough because we were wearing sweatpants and T-shirts, not full football gear. Brandon and I have been running all summer. My buddy, Colby Johnson, has been running with us too. So we were ready. Colby is our best offensive lineman, but he's not as fast as Brandon or me.

Our times for the mile were:

Brandon—5:54 (5 minutes and 54 seconds)

Me (Matt)—6:15

Colby—6:58

I came in seventh out of fifty kids trying out. Brandon came in second and Greg

finished in the middle of the pack. The kid who came in first is some seventh grader named Devro Beech. He's really fast. And really annoying.

Next, Coach made us do a bunch of calisthenics—jumping jacks, push-ups, toe touches, and all sorts of sprints. We were sweating like pigs. The hardest things were the leg lifts. They were brutal. We had to lift our legs up, spread them, put them back together, and then let them down slowly. Leg lifts are supposed to toughen up your stomach muscles, but I thought my legs were going to fall off.

Wednesday, September 8 (AGAIN!)

During practice today Coach let us go to the positions we wanted to play. Lots of kids want to play quarterback. So the assistant coach, Mr. Shortall, had us take a hike from center, drop back, and throw passes to receivers who were running patterns.

Some of the kids were pathetic. They couldn't throw the ball more than 15 yards. The other kids were teasing them, saying

they threw like girls...or worse, like linemen. No way they'll get to play quarterback.

After all my practice with Brandon, I was awesome. I hit all the receivers right in the hands, even on the long fly patterns. (Ms. Ig: That's when the receiver runs straight downfield, about 25 yards or more.) After everybody threw a bunch of passes, Coach Shortall chose four guys to keep at quarterback—me, two other eighth graders, Andre Wilson and Russell Parker, and that seventh-grade kid, Devro.

Later, Coach Shortall told Andre Wilson the team needed him to play defense. Yeah, right. He just wasn't very good at quarterback.

So now there are just three of us. I'm not that worried about Russell and I don't worry about seventh graders. And, like I said, Devro is a seventh grader.



From: Ignacio.S@ParksideMS.WCPS.gov

Date: Sunday, September 12

To: MattQB7@Monroe37family.com

Matt—

Your revisions were much better. The details you included gave me a clearer picture of what it is like to be at practice and part of the team.

You say you are certain you will be the starting quarterback and that Devro is not a threat to you. Is that what you are really thinking? Try to be honest about your feelings.

Keep up the good work. And remember to include a lot of interesting details in your writing.

Ms. Samantha Ignacio
English Department
Parkside Middle School

*I write in order to understand what I am thinking.
—Abraham Verghese*