

Chapter 7 “ROTC Triumph” (pg. 61-70)

Summary:

Ben thinks he wants to go into psychology so his brother gets him a subscription to *Psychology Today* magazine. Ben practices his skills on his friends by having them share with him their problems. Ben also decides to follow in his brother’s footsteps and join the ROTC the second semester of his Sophomore year. Also he is positively influenced by an English teacher that took special interest in him. Also the biology and band teachers helped Ben on the right track. Ben was promoted to be a student sergeant when he was able to control 5th hour ROTC class by rewarding them with fancy drills that they liked when they did well and “capping” them when they didn’t cooperate. Because of Ben’s success, he was given special attention and ended up with the highest score on the field examination and became a lieutenant colonel. That gave him the opportunity to take the exam, which he scored highest of all the competitors, and realize his dream of becoming a colonel. He marched in a parade and met two soldiers that had won congressional medals of honor and was offered a full scholarship to West Point, which he turned down. The success was overwhelming for him. He did well on his SAT test because of his desire to be on a quiz show on TV, so he developed his knowledge of the arts and classical music. As a result, he began to enjoy classical music.

Vocabulary Words:

emulate (pg. 62)- to try to equal or excel; imitate with effort to equal or surpass

subtle (pg. 63)- requiring mental acuteness, penetration, or discernment

rambunctious (pg. 65)- difficult to control or handle; wildly boisterous

feat (pg. 67)- a noteworthy or extraordinary act or achievement, usually displaying boldness, skill, etc.:

precluding (pg. 68)- to prevent the presence, existence, or occurrence of; make impossible

cite (pg. 69)- to quote (a passage, book, author, etc.), especially as an authority

Discussion/Quiz Questions:

1. What part of the medical field did Ben first want to go in to? (pg. 61)

He wanted to go from being a general practice doctor to a psychiatrist.

2. Why did Ben join the ROTC his Sophomore year? (pg. 62)

He joined because he admired his brother, Curtis, who was a Senior.

3. What teachers influenced Ben to get good grades in high school and do his best? (pg. 64-65)

His English teacher, biology teacher, and music teacher influenced him the most.

4. What challenge did Ben take on in order to become a sergeant in the ROTC? (pg. 65-66)

He was put in charge of a rowdy class (5th hour ROTC) that none of the other student-sergeants could handle.

5. What two ways did Ben use to control the 5th hour ROTC class? (pg. 65-66)

He got to know the guys and what interested them, then structured exercises accordingly. He rewarded them with fancy drill routines that they liked when they did well. He also used his “capping” skills to make them look bad if they didn’t cooperate.

6. What ultimate goal did Ben finally achieve in the ROTC? (pg. 67)

He became a colonel.

7. Why didn’t Ben accept his full ride to West Point? (pg. 68)

He wanted to become a doctor and go into medical school, not go into the military.

8. How did Ben learn to enjoy classical music? (pg. 69-70)

He started out trying to learn about it so that he could know the answers to a quiz show on TV. Then his brother influenced him to listen to it.

Journal Questions:

Ben’s mother often quoted from a poem entitled, “You Have Yourself to Blame.” Why do you think she wanted Ben to hear this poem? Do you agree with its philosophy? Why do we have ourselves to blame if we don’t succeed in life?