

VIII. JOHNNY MNEMONIC – WILLIAM GIBSON

A) COMPREHENSION (1–13)

1. How is Ralfi's awareness of his fate described?
2. What imagery is used for the method of Ralfi's death?
3. How does the "yo-yo trick" metaphor function?
4. Why is there a delay in blood flow after slicing?
5. How is the moment of death characterized in sound?
6. What reaction does the narrator experience with the gym bag?
7. What does environmental description add to tone?
8. Where do the narrator and Molly take cover?
9. What is the significance of the Volks module?
10. What is implied by "asking questions"?
11. Why is the gym bag "scorched white fluff"?
12. What does Molly's explanation suggest about augmentation?
13. How does Molly's reaction contrast with the narrator's?

B) VOCABULARY (14–20)

14. What does "dark crescents of sweat" imply?
15. What does "geodesic" mean here?
16. What does "convulsed" suggest?
17. What does "jacked-up nervous system" imply?
18. What does "factory custom" mean?
19. What does "snicked out" describe?
20. What does "Nighttown" suggest?

IX. MOZART IN MIRRORSHADES – STERLING & SHINER

A) COMPREHENSION (1–13)

1. How is Mozart's invitation framed?

2. What does Rice suggest for the evening?

3. How is Rice prepared for security?
4. What does Rice carry and what does it imply?
5. Why does Rice feel conspicuous?
6. How is club environment described?
7. What does audience behavior suggest?
8. How is Mozart's music characterized?
9. What does drug use suggest socially?
10. What question does Mozart ask Rice?
11. How does Rice describe his future society?
12. What is Mozart's reaction?
13. What contradiction does Mozart perceive?

B) VOCABULARY (14–20)

14. What does "sachertorte" indicate?
15. What does "mesh body armor" suggest?
16. What are "giveaway consumer goods"?
17. What is an "aristo's townhouse"?
18. What are "sequenced choral motifs"?
19. What does "Realtime" mean?
20. What does "portal" mean?

X. INTERVIEW WITH THE CRAB – JONATHAN LETHEM

A) COMPREHENSION (1–13)

1. How does the crab respond to influence accusations?
2. What does the crab reject?
3. How is public perception described?

4. What does the crab claim about struggle duration?
5. How are early venues described?
6. What emotional emphasis is used?
7. How is “overnight success” reinterpreted?

8. What is attitude toward critics?
9. How are gestures used?
10. What tension appears between myth and reality?
11. How does narrator frame legacy?
12. How does crab resist classification?
13. What tone shift occurs?

B) VOCABULARY (14–20)

14. What does “slugging it out on the circuit” imply?
15. What does “paying my dues” mean?
16. What does “fershlugginer” express?
17. What do “state fairs and lodge dinners” suggest?
18. What does “overnight success” imply?
19. What does “coming up” mean?
20. What does “circuit” mean?

XI. EL PEPENADOR – BENJAMIN PARZYBOK

A) COMPREHENSION (1–13)

1. Retell the synopsis of Pico’s encounter with the nacker.
2. What is Pico’s self-image after the fight?
3. Why does Pico hesitate to secure the nacker?
4. What object is taken as a trophy?
5. How does Pico address Mouse?

6. What contradiction appears in apology?
7. How is the dump described?
8. What objects exist in debris?
9. What time transition occurs?
10. What are Pico's concerns about discovery?
11. How is family perception shown?
12. What hope does Pico maintain?

13. What is his reaction to heartbeat search?

B) VOCABULARY (14–20)

14. What does “nacker killer” imply?
15. What does “roto” mean?
16. What does “sweetwine” signify?
17. What does “dirt port” suggest?
18. What does “kek” mean?
19. What does “decomposition of generations” imply?
20. What does “buzzing” suggest?

XII. DAVID MARUSEK – “GETTING TO KNOW YOU”

A) VOCABULARY (1–7)

1. What is “Subterranean 40”?
2. What is “depot level”?
3. What is “crush hour”?
4. What is “Applied People livery”?
5. What is a “pedway”?
6. What is a “Dixon consensus lift”?
7. What is “consensual ascent acceleration”?

B) COMPREHENSION (8–20)

8. Why is Zoranna traveling?
9. What elevator problem occurs?
10. Why are subfloor elevators offline?
11. What does Bug confirm?
12. Why enter crowded elevator?
13. What is a “consensus elevator”?
14. Why is destination reshuffling frustrating?
15. What causes delay in Dixon lift?
16. Why is she alone going to subfloors?

17. What is acceleration’s effect?
18. Why does Zoranna manipulate Bug?
19. Why does Bug refuse falsification?
20. What does Bug’s restriction show?

XIII. KIM STANLEY ROBINSON – “DOWN AND OUT IN THE YEAR 2000”

A) COMPREHENSION (1–13)

1. Retell the synopsis of the passage.
2. What is Debra’s condition?
3. Describe Lee’s morning routine.
4. What is the significance of the Washington Monument?
5. How are paint balloons used?
6. What is protest reaction to hits?
7. How does Lee participate economically?
8. What does interaction with Delmont show?
9. Why does Lee go to Dupont Circle?

10. What is Fish Park?
11. How does Lee prepare cigarettes?
12. What is “no-man’s-land”?
13. How does abandoned zone contrast with city?

B) VOCABULARY (14–20)

14. What does “finger baggie” mean?
15. What does “dickered” mean?
16. What does “fended them off” mean?
17. What does “cement whale” symbolize?
18. What does “refilled cigarette papers” imply?
19. What does “going rate” mean?
20. What does “khaki tanks dominated” suggest?

XIV. DAVID MARUSEK – “BUG” SEGMENT

A) COMPREHENSION (1–13)

1. Retell the synopsis (Zoranna, Bug, Ted, field test).
2. What is Bug?
3. Why repetition of questions?
4. How does Zoranna respond to Bug?
5. What does Bug’s system show?
6. What interruption occurs?
7. Who is Ted Chalmers?
8. How is Ted presented?
9. What is Zoranna’s attitude toward Ted?
10. What is “Inquisition”?
11. Why abort test?
12. Why is test terminated?
13. Zoranna’s reaction?

B) VOCABULARY (14–20)

14. What is “timbre of voice”?
15. What are “spousals”?
16. What does “retrieved color libraries” imply?
17. What does “squelch the vid” mean?
18. What does “pull the plug” mean?
19. What does “liaison” mean?
20. What does “field test” imply?

XV. BRUCE STERLING – “USER-CENTRIC”

A) COMPREHENSION (1–13)

1. Retell synopsis of “User-Centric”.
2. Attitude toward product launch?
3. What is ultrasonic cleanser debacle?

4. What about muscle-gel sales?
5. Why is MEMS important?
6. What does MEMS represent?
7. Development budget situation?
8. Critique of past approach?
9. Meaning of “technology for tech’s sake”?
10. Why challenge “If you build it...”?
11. Why does success still fail?
12. Role of patents/licenses?
13. Core competitiveness argument?

B) VOCABULARY (14–20)

14. What does “dullsville” mean?
15. What does “buzz” mean?
16. What does “nerd-burned” mean?
17. What does “breakeven” mean?
18. What is “impulse buy”?
19. What does “deep-fried” metaphor mean?
20. What does “grind out code” mean?

XVI. CAT RAMBO – “MEMORIES OF MOMENTS, BRIGHT AS FALLING STARS”

A) COMPREHENSION (1–13)

1. Retell synopsis (dock, memory boxes, Grizz, wire).
2. Why “jackpot”?
3. Why fence difficult?
4. What is inside boxes?
5. Why memory hard to sell?
6. What do they do after looting?
7. What is “doing Grizz’s back”?
8. Origin of spiral pattern?

9. What does spiral cover?
10. Grizz’s condition?
11. Significance of recycling yard?
12. What is done with memory wire?
13. Reaction to wire application?

B) VOCABULARY (14–20)

14. What is “med complex”?
15. What is “razor wire fence”?

16. What does “lootable” mean?
17. What are “snipped wires”?
18. What does “slunk along” mean?
19. What is “alcohol in cool swipes”?
- 20. What is “felt-tip pen” usage?**

COMPREHENSION + VOCABULARY TEST (PAT CADIGAN – “ROCK ON” CONT.)

A. COMPREHENSION (1–13)

1. Retell the synopsis of the story “Rock on”.
2. What does the narrator mean by “broken heart all day long”?
3. Why does she avoid looking at pedestrians?
4. What impulse does she describe toward strangers?
5. Why does Tremont Street matter to her?
6. What kind of place does she choose for breakfast and why?
7. What details show that the diner has strict rules and structure?
8. How is technology integrated into the diner experience (retinas, credit check)?
9. How does the narrator react to the food and service?
10. What does the narrator think about modern food systems?
11. Who enters the diner and how are they described?
12. Why does the narrator become “visible” to the group?
13. What happens at the end of the passage when the word “reward” is whispered?

Vocabulary question

14. What does “schlepped” mean in this context?
15. What does “uncrowded breakfast bar” suggest about her state of mind?
16. What does “take it or shake it” mean in reference to the diner?
17. What does “quaint old buildings” imply about Newbury Street?
18. What does “primal” mean in the phrase “primal but I tap into that amazing well
19. What does “forked tongue” suggest about the boy’s appearance?

20. What does “sinner” mean in the social or symbolic context of the story?

MARK TEPPO, THE LAST TECHNIQUE OF BLACKMAIL

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS (

1. What does the narrator imply about the employee’s nod and its possible meaning beyond politeness?
2. Why does the narrator decide to order ice cream despite his suspicion about the situation?
3. What does the narrator mean by “baseline paranoia,” and how does it influence his thinking?
4. What suspicion does the narrator develop about the person who used the station earlier?
5. Why does the narrator consider the Visual Monitor again, even though he dismisses the thought?
6. What does the description of Depot 12-B4 suggest about its technological state?
7. Why does the narrator believe responsibility for the situation might be shifted to another department?
8. What internal conflict does the narrator express about relying on corporate systems?
9. Why does the narrator think “trusting the corporate chain” is risky?
10. What does the narrator’s handling of the ICID and biometric verification show about system security?
11. Why is the absence of surveillance data significant to the narrator’s investigation?
12. What does the narrator imply by going back through logs spanning multiple cycles?
13. How does the narrator’s attitude toward institutions change throughout this passage?

VOCABULARY / MEANING QUESTIONS

14. What does “**fraction**” mean in the context of time in this world?
15. What does “**courtesy**” mean in the phrase “professional courtesy”?
16. What does “**wrinkle**” mean in “new wrinkle in the situation”?
17. What does “**baseline**” mean in “baseline paranoia”?
18. What does “**modded**” mean in “modded the LMP”?
19. What does “**archiac**” suggest when describing Depot 12-B4?
20. What does “**suspicion**” mean in the narrator’s reasoning process?

