



# ***New York State Testing Program***

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**English**

**Language Arts**

**Listening Selection**

Grade

**7**

**Sample Test 2005**

This listening selection is to be used in administering Book 2 of the English Language Arts Test. The entire selection is to be read aloud twice to the students. For complete directions, please follow the instructions in the *Teacher's Directions*.

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## ***The Greatest Runner of All Time***

*by Joel Edward Stein*

First one person stood up and then another and another. Someone in the crowd began to applaud and soon everyone else joined in as Glenn Cunningham made his final lap around the track. He was about to break a world record in the mile. As he made his victory lap around the track, you might wonder how he could walk, no less run. It was hard to ignore Glenn's scarred legs.

When Glenn was six years old, his legs were so badly burned in a schoolhouse fire that his doctor never thought he would walk again. But Glenn thought otherwise. After spending weeks in bed, he got up and started using crutches to get around. When his legs got stronger, he tried walking without the crutches, but it was very painful. Glenn would say later, "It hurt like thunder to walk, but it didn't hurt at all when I ran. So for five or six years, about all I did was run."

With all the practice he had running, it was natural for Glenn to join his school's track team. By the time he got to high school, he became a track star and set record times in the mile run.

After he graduated from high school, he went to the University of Kansas. Glenn Cunningham became known as "The Kansas Flyer," and he won the National College Amateur Track championships in 1931 and 1932.

Glenn went on to run on the U.S. Olympic Team in 1932, received the Sullivan Award for outstanding amateur athletes in 1933, and won a silver medal in the 1936 Olympic games. The boy who never was supposed to walk again won two National College Amateur Athlete titles in track, was named the outstanding track performer in the 100-year history of Madison Square Garden, and was inducted into the National Track and Field Hall of Fame.

It was never easy for Glenn. It took him nearly an hour to prepare for a race and the smoke-filled indoor stadium made it hard for him to breathe. But he never let that stop him or slow him down. He just ran as hard as he could with his bruised lungs and scarred legs, and he won.

If determination and spirit can drive a runner to greatness, it might be said that Glenn Cunningham was the greatest runner of all time.

**STOP**



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