

“Coming Back Stronger” by Drew Brees Summer Reading Questions

Directions: Use the aforementioned book to answer the proceeding questions **in the order in which they are asked (respond to each question as you read)**! Print out this document, and write your answers in pencil. Your answers should be in your own words. When possible, writing complete sentences with proper grammar is expected. Your completed assignment should be stapled and submitted to me at the beginning of our second class together. This assignment will be graded for accuracy - not merely completion - so please channel your inner Drew Brees and provide pinpoint accuracy toward that end. If you need additional space to complete an answer, do so on the back of that page, which should be indicated by using an arrow or notation.

Note that this assignment is NOT designed to be completed in one sitting; rather, the best approach is to complete this methodically over several sessions. Questions should be directed to N.Guarisco@stpauls.com. Good luck, gentlemen! I'm excited to meet y'all this fall, and I hope you enjoy this compelling story.

1. As a kid, Drew Brees got teased a lot because of a _____.
2. What was Drew's first major setback in his athletic career?
3. In Chapter Two, Drew mentions that he has an epiphany listening to someone in a particular setting. Where was he, and what was said that moved him?
4. What lie did Drew tell Brittany in order to spend more time with her?
5. What three weak points did Drew admit to having when he discussed how he and Brittany's strengths and weaknesses complement each other well?

6. What do you consider to be your biggest weakness, and what are you doing to improve the area of concern?

7. How did Drew describe the way he felt after participating in the NFL Scouting Combine leading up to the NFL Draft? Hint: He uses a literary device called a *simile* to compare the situation to preparing a type of food.

8. What advice did Doug Flutie reveal to Drew? Provide the FULL quotation.

9. What did Cam Cameron reveal to Drew privately about the Chargers' offseason plans?

10. What was strength trainer Tom House's initial assessment of Drew's physique? Why was Drew "imbalanced," and what were some of the things Drew was ordered to do in order to fix some of his body's deficiencies?

11. Drew had considered himself a relatively healthy eater, and he was surprised to learn that his diet was holding him back. What specifically did the tests reveal? What impact did changing his diet have?

12. When Drew was looking for someone to believe in him, what did he believe was the underlying message the Chargers were sending to him?

13. At the beginning of Chapter Seven, what *metaphor* does Drew use to describe the importance of God and the Christian faith in times of uncertainty or when you are in an unpredictable place? Why is this metaphor so effective?

14. On the next page, Drew uses a *simile* to compare God's refining process to a blacksmith creating a sword. Explain what he means by this and how he applies it to his life.

15. In 2004, what was the one team Drew "least" wanted to play for? Why did he not want to play for that team?

16. Drew recalls that the limo's windows had the darkest tint he had ever seen. What was the point of this?

17. What was Drew pleasantly surprised about in his initial meeting to discuss the offense with Sean Payton? In other words, why was Payton's approach different than other coaches Drew has dealt with?

18. What area of New Orleans did Drew and Brittany immediately fall in love with?

19. Why did Drew NOT want to live on the North Shore?
20. Describe the *imagery* that Drew and Brittany saw when Sean Payton got lost on the way back to the airport. One specific thing that stood out was the X's spray-painted on the doors of homes. What was the significance?
21. What was an unpleasant surprise for Drew on his first morning visiting with the Miami Dolphins? What are some of the reasons this made Drew uncomfortable?
22. "Where some people might look at the city and see disaster, we saw opportunity. Where some people might be deterred by the devastation, we were drawn to it." This quote can be used as *textual evidence* to support a major theme in this book, which is the idea that Drew views adversity as _____.
23. What was the last thing Drew "had to do" before making his final decision to sign a contract with New Orleans?
24. What did the doctors tell Dolphins head coach Nick Saban specifically regarding Drew's chances of coming back and playing at 100%?
25. After Drew pressed Saban about whether he believed the doctors, what did Saban do and/or say that made Drew confirm that he was going to New Orleans?

26. On the second day of Training Camp with New Orleans, Drew's right arm was extremely sore, and he couldn't muster the strength to make routine throws. What simple advice did Sean Payton give Drew, and what did it really mean?

27. One of Drew's favorite quotes is, "Your actions speak so loudly I can't hear what you're saying." In other words, _____ ; _____.

28. How does Drew explain each of the following words in his acronym for FAITH. Please summarize:

- **F**ortitude =
- **A**ttitude =
- **I**ntegrity =
- **T**rust =
- **H**umility =

29. How does the Bible define "faith"? (Drew quotes Hebrews 11:1, NIV).

30. Drew revealed that it took 20 years before the Saints had their first winning season. Moreover, it took the Saints 33 years before the team finally won a game in the playoffs. When the Saints were referred to as the "Aints," many fans wore paper bags over their heads in protest, implying they were ashamed to be seen supporting the team. Do your parents remember this? Do they have any stories about seeing this or going to the games when they were young?

31. According to Drew, what were two misconceptions about the flooding in New Orleans during Hurricane Katrina?
32. What happened to Saints season ticket sales after Hurricane Katrina devastated New Orleans? What is the only possible explanation for this?
33. What was shown to the team privately in the Superdome before its “Homecoming” game against the Falcons that motivated the Saints to win?
34. What crazy events caused Drew to be late for the huge “Homecoming” game against the Falcons?
35. What play did Drew say was the loudest roar he had ever heard in a stadium?
36. What was the main takeaway in the locker room after losing the NFC Championship in Chicago? In other words, “we all shared the same resolve: _____.”

37. What was one commonality among many of the players on the Saints team during the 2007-2009 seasons? For example, what did Drew Brees say made players like Pierre Thomas and Marques Colston more successful than more gifted athletes or many first round draft picks?
38. “This principle that any situation, no matter how bad, can ultimately make you stronger isn’t only true on the football field. It applies to every facet of life...” What facet of your life does this quote apply to? Is there any time you can think of where a setback in your life ended up being a blessing in disguise?
39. Drew mentions that he strives to live with a “healthy fear of God.” What does he mean by this?
40. What are three of the charities that Drew describes in his book, and what is the primary objective of each?
41. What was the inspiration for Drew’s first pre-game chant in 2008?
42. What was Drew’s most meaningful win in the 2008 season? What does he mean when he says it gave him “closure?”
43. What does Drew suggest to readers who don’t believe in God or have reservations about their faith? Hint: He describes this event as a “miracle” and “evidence of his handiwork.”

44. Drew is adamant that he will NEVER disrespect his his wife by telling her to _____ . Ever.
45. Just after Drew and Brittany brought new life into the world, a life was taken from Drew prior to the 2009 season. What happened, and what are two major reasons he struggled with the loss?
46. What was the theme/phrase of the 2009 season (the Saints' Super Bowl season)?
47. What was the inspiration for Drew's second pre-game chant in 2009 (the Saints' Super Bowl season)?
48. "You'd better remember this place and the way you feel right now. We're coming back here in February, and we are going to have this same feeling then." Who said this, and what was the context of the quote?
49. Even at 10-0, Drew harped on the idea that the media had not considered the Saints "for real" until they did what?
50. The Saints started 13-0 but lost their last three regular season games. What was the media narrative heading into the first playoff game?
51. Why does Drew believe that kicker Garrett Hartley made the game-winning field goal in the NFC Championship game against the Vikings that sent the Saints to the Super Bowl?
52. What was Drew doing during Tracy Porter's game-sealing interception that he returned for a touchdown in the Super Bowl? Why did Drew miss the play?

53. Drew estimates that around 355,000 people were living in New Orleans at the time of the Saints' Super Bowl parade. Additionally, the weather was freezing that day. Yet, how many people attended the Super Bowl parade?
54. What happy, life-changing news did Drew receive a few days after winning the Super Bowl?
55. In the Epilogue, Drew breaks down a few bits of life advice that he would tell you in a face-to-face talk. The first one is about finding a mentor. One of the major reasons Drew became so successful after his setbacks (ACL, shoulder/arm injuries) is because he sought out the right experts and listened to them diligently. Evidence from the text provides numerous examples: Drew found the best surgeon and listened to the doctor's orders; he hired a dietician and ran tests to change his nutrition; he worked with an amazing strength coach and followed his rehab plan vigorously; and he inquired for advice from several former players, coaches, and teammates at various times throughout the book. Essentially, Drew's ability to surround himself with good mentors, maintain good relationships with them, and having the courage to contact them when needed, speaks to his desire to win. Do you have mentors whom you trust in certain aspects of life? Who are they, and what is their specialty?
56. The fourth bit of advice says that "dreaming" is not enough. You have to mix the vision with what? _____ and _____.
57. A major theme of this book is welcoming adversity and using it to make you stronger. Specifically, Drew sees adversity as _____.
58. Explain what Drew means by the advice: "Don't spectate—be ready."

WHO DAT!?