

HECTOR'S BIKE

"Keep the front wheel up, Barry!" But Hector's words were lost. Barry was picking up speed down the steep slope heading for the final burst up to the little ridge before take-off. This area of the park was their favourite for jumping. The steep slope gave the riders plenty of momentum so that when they came to the ridge they could really fly.

Barry's own bike was temporarily out of action. With reluctance Hector had given in to Barry's begging. "But just this once, okay?"

Barry hit the ridge awkwardly and disappeared from view. Hector felt a wave of anxiety. He raced to the ridge. What he saw below confirmed his worst fears. A knot of onlookers had gathered round something on the ground. With his heart pounding, Hector raced down the slope. By the time he arrived the throng had grown.

With a feeling of dread, he pushed his way through. Someone asked, "Is he your friend?" "Yeah, yeah," muttered Hector. A woman with a mobile phone told him an ambulance was on its way. But Hector was carefully examining his bike and sighing with relief.

QUESTIONS

1. Why were Hector's words 'lost'?
2. "...gave the riders plenty of *momentum*..."
3. What does *momentum* mean?
4. Why do you think Barry wasn't on his own bike?
5. Was Hector happy to lend Barry his bike? How do you know that?
6. Why did Hector feel a wave of anxiety?
7. What were Hector's 'worst fears'?
8. "... the *throng* had grown." What does *throng* mean?
9. What do you think had happened to Barry? Why do you think that?
10. What do you think people might have thought of Hector when they saw him examining his bike?

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Noun count

Average noun frequency level: 6.53

Approximate age range: 15 years and over

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