A Reader’s Theater Script for
*Athlete vs. Mathlete*
Written by W. C. Mack
Script Adaptation by Mary Pettit, TBA Committee Member

Readers:

Owen 1 (what he says out loud)              Coach Baxter
Owen 2 (his thoughts and actions)           Chris
Russell                                    Narrator

(Note: Two Owens standing together, Owen 2 standing slightly behind Owen 1.)

Owen 2: Seventh grade basketball started out all wrong, and it only got worse.

Chris: He wants us to try out?

Owen 1: Unbelievable.

Owen 2: Try out for our own team. We were undefeated in sixth grade.

Owen 1: This is nuts.

Chris: Yea, but what can we do about it?

Owen 1: Talk to the coach.

Owen 1 and 2: [make knocking sound]

Coach: [with deep, booming voice] Come in.


Coach: [with growly voice] The clock is ticking.
Owen 1: Uh … it’s about the tryouts.

Coach: Next Wednesday at three.

Owen 1: Yeah. I saw the sign, but I wanted to talk to you about it because-

Coach: You can’t make it? Tough break. It’s Wednesday at three. No exceptions.

Chris: Let’s go.

Owen 1: I can make it. I just don’t think I need to.

Coach: [crossing arms over chest] And why is that?

Owen 1: Because I was on the team last year, and--

Coach: It’s a new year.

Owen: I know, but Coach Miller--

Coach: I’m the new coach.

Owen 1: I get that, but--

Coach: I don’t think you do. What’s your name?

Chris: [whispering] Uh-oh.

Owen 1: Owen Evans.

Coach: Listen, Owen. I’m in charge, and I’ll pick my team the way I want to. Nobody gets a jersey just because they played last year. I’m sorry if you don’t like it, but that’s the way it is. Any questions?

Owen 2: Chris and I both gulped.

Coach: Okay, then I’ll see you next Wednesday, ready to work.
Owen 1: Sure.

Owen 2: Chris pushed me out the door. Once we were back in the hallway, I groaned.

Owen 1: [groaning] This totally stinks.

Owen 2: I saw my brother, Russell, coming our way. He was carrying more books than any other kid in the hallway and his glasses were sliding down his nose, like they always did. He stopped to fix the top book on his stack and ended up dropping the whole pile on the floor.

Chris: [shaking his head] I can’t believe you guys are related.

Owen 2: No one could. We were twins, but nobody ever believed it, even when we said we were fraternal, not identical. Russell and I are totally different. He’s almost five inches taller than I am and has arms like wet spaghetti.

Owen 1: Hey, Russ,

Owen 2: I said, picking up a couple of books and handing them to him.

Russell: [smiling] Thanks.

Owen 2: That was another difference between us. Russ never let stuff bug him, and I got mad a couple of times a day, minimum.

Coach: [with booming voice] Hey, you!

Owen 2: Everyone was looking around, trying to see who he was yelling at.

Coach: [shouting] Tall kid!

Owen 1: [confused] Do you mean Russell?

Coach: Who’s Russell?

Owen 1: [pointing] That skinny kid over there. He’s my twin.

Owen 2: Coach turned to stare at me.
Owen 1: [to coach] Fraternal. [to Russell] Hey Russ!

Owen 2: That stopped him. My brother turned around, and I waved him over.

Owen 1: Coach wants to talk to you.

Russell: He does?

Coach: You play?

Russell: Play what?

Coach: Basketball.

Owen 1 and Chris: [laugh]

Coach: [snapping at Owen 1 and Chris] What’s so funny? [to Russell] I want you to come to tryouts next week.

Russell: Are you talking about basketball tryouts?

Coach: [growling] No, ballet.

Russell: I’m sorry. I don’t--

Coach: Of course I mean basketball.

Russell: Uh ….

Owen 2: Russell looked at me as if I knew what was happening, but I had no idea. Russell? Basketball? It had to be a joke.

Coach: I think I’m going to need someone your height.

Russell: My height?

Coach: Yes. You’re the tallest kid at this school, and you’d be perfect at center.
Russell: But I'm on the honor roll.

Coach: And athletes can’t be good students?

Russell: No.

Coach: I disagree. And I want to see you there next Wednesday.

Russell: But I--

Coach: This isn’t a request, uh … what’s your name again?

Russell: Russell Evans.

Owen 2: I watched Coach disappear into his office and wondered if he was totally nuts. My brother was seriously the worst athlete on the planet. He couldn’t even dribble!

Russell: [frowning] So, I guess I’ll be making a complete fool of myself next Wednesday. Everyone knows I’m smart, not sporty.

Owen 1: [with a groan] Athletic. No one says “sporty.”

Russell: But you understand what I’m saying, don’t you? Everyone knows you’re the jock and I’m the brains. I’ll feel like a joke if I go.

Owen 2: The fact was, he would be a joke. Would the guys make fun of me, too, knowing Russ and I shared DNA? Probably. And that was the last thing I wanted to deal with.

Owen1: Don’t worry about it, Russ. We’ll practice this weekend so you’ll be ready.

Russell: Cool beans.

Owen 1: No, it’s just cool, Russ.

Russell: [smiling] Okay, cool.

Owen 2: As usual, there was something brown and gooey stuck in his braces.

Owen 1: Look. There’s no way you’ll make the team.
Chris: No way.

Russell: [laughing] Not a chance.

Owen 1: But I promise to make tryouts as painless as possible.

Owen 2: For him and for me.

Russell: Thanks, Owen,

Owen 2: he said, lifting his hand to give me a high five. He missed.

Narrator: Does Russell have a chance to make the basketball team? If he does, how will his brother Owen react? How will his family and friends react? Read Athlete vs. Mathlete by W. C. Mack to find out what happens when Russell, the school mathlete, attempts to become an athlete.

THE END

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