Teacher's Key

Formula One History: From Silverstone to the McLaren F1 (Level C2)

Vocabulary Matching

1 hurtled = **N**
2 windswept = **A**
3 unorthodox = **H**
4 lucrative = **L**
5 pioneered = **G**
6 brainchild = **M**
7 uncompromising = **I**
8 hallmark = **E**
9 pared down = **D**
10 unveiled = **O**
11 reluctantly = **J**
12 underdogs = **K**
13 sweeping = **B**
14 overhaul = **C**
15 provenance = **F**

Fill in the Blank

1 hurtled
2 unorthodox
3 lucrative
4 pioneered
5 brainchild
6 uncompromising
7 hallmark
8 pared down
9 unveiled
10 reluctantly
11 underdogs
12 sweeping
13 overhaul
14 provenance

True or False

1 **True.** The reading gives a two-way average of 240.1 miles an hour.

2 **True.** The reading calls it a former Royal Air Force base.

3 **True.** The reading says he would go on to win five titles in all.

4 **True.** He died there in 1970, aged 32.

5 **True.** He was leading with two laps to go when he collided with a slower car.

6 **False.** The reading says the record is for naturally aspirated engines, which have no turbocharger.

7 **False.** One of the seven races was the Indianapolis 500 in the United States.

8 **False.** The reading says the cars were less powerful than some rivals.

9 **False.** The reading says it had no ABS, no traction control, and no power steering.

10 **False.** They were a Frenchman, a Japanese driver, and a Finn.

Language Focus: Future in the Past: would, would go on to, and was to

Example answer: In 1988, McLaren's bosses discussed a road car that **would be unveiled** in Monaco four years later.

Comprehension Questions: Model Answers

1 A driver, Andy Wallace, took a McLaren F1 to a two-way average of 240.1 miles an hour on a German test track with the rev limiter raised. It is notable because it is a road car and, as far as published records show, no naturally aspirated production car has beaten the figure.

2 It joined separate national Grand Prix races into one championship. The writer names Giuseppe Farina, who won the first race and became the first champion, and Juan Manuel Fangio, who went on to win five titles.

3 John Cooper said it was the practical thing to do. The cars were less powerful than some rivals, but Jack Brabham won the title in one in 1959 and 1960, and by 1961 every team had copied the layout.

4 Bernie Ecclestone persuaded the teams to bargain as a group and television helped make the sport a billion-dollar business. The money paid for engineering, and McLaren is credited with pioneering the carbon-fiber chassis in 1981.

5 Senna, leading with two laps to go, collided with a slower car and Ferrari finished first and second, McLaren's only defeat of 1988. Afterward McLaren's chairman, technical director, and two colleagues discussed a road car in an airport lounge, and Murray sketched a three-seater that became the F1.

6 Open answer. Strong answers choose three of: the central driving seat, the carbon-fiber shell, the gold foil, no ABS, no traction control, no power steering, the naturally aspirated V12, and the low weight. They explain that each served lightness, driver control, or heat management, in line with Murray's uncompromising brief.

7 They were road-based cars racing against purpose-built prototypes, and few expected them to win. The victory is surprising because it came at McLaren's first attempt, in heavy rain, in a car that Murray had never intended for racing.

8 Open answer. The writer contrasts the simple, unassisted F1 road car with the heavily electrified 2026 rules and then ends on the auction price, which shows that collectors prize the history and character of the old car. A strong answer notes that the writer does not say which approach is better.

9 Open answer. A strong answer notes that opening with a vivid speed run gives readers a concrete image of the car, and going back to 1950 explains where the sport and the company came from. The chronological middle gives readers with little background a clear line to follow, and the return to the present closes the loop.

10 Not Given. The reading says Murray designed the F1 road car, but it does not say who designed the 1988 race car, so the statement cannot be confirmed from the text.

11 Not Given. The writer reports that the 2026 rules were an overhaul and that power units draw nearly half their power from electricity, but gives no view on whether this improves the sport.

12 Open answer. A strong answer says the opening gives a vivid image that links the road car to racing from the start, so that the history that follows has a clear destination. Impressing the reader with a number is part of this, but the stronger purpose is to connect the road car with the sport.

Notes on the Evidence

- No source draft was supplied. The reading was written from the topic request and checked by search. Main sources: Hagerty and McLaren's own video material (the 1998 run: 31 March 1998, XP5 prototype, Ehra-Lessien, two-way average 240.1 mph or 386.4 km/h, one-way peak 243 mph, limiter raised to 8,300 rpm); Formula1.com, Pirelli, and Hagerty (the 1950 race: 13 May, Silverstone, seven championship races including the Indianapolis 500, Farina first champion, Formula One created in 1946); Wikipedia and Cooper histories (John Cooper said the rear engine was the practical choice; Brabham titles 1959 and 1960; ESPN says all teams used rear engines by 1961). Fangio's five titles are 1951 and 1954 to 1957.
- Bruce McLaren: the company was founded in 1963 (Bruce McLaren Motor Racing Ltd), the first Formula One start was Monaco 1966, the first win was the 1968 Belgian Grand Prix, and he died on 2 June 1970 aged 32. Sources disagree on the founding date (1963, 1965, and 1966 all appear), so the reading says only that he founded a team of his own in 1963 and gives the 1968 win. He was a teammate of Brabham at Cooper from 1959. Ecclestone bought Brabham in 1971 and became FOCA president in 1978. FOCA ceded television rights to Formula One Management in 1987. The phrase billion-dollar is from ESPN's brief history.
- 1988: McLaren-Honda won 15 of 16 races (Monza was the exception, with a Senna and Schlesser collision on lap 49 of 51; Enzo Ferrari died on 14 August 1988). The airport lounge story is told by McLaren, Motor Sport, and Wikipedia: Dennis, Ojjeh, Murray, and Creighton Brown at Milan, after the 1988 Italian Grand Prix. Sources differ on whether the sketch was drawn in the lounge or on a legal pad, so the reading says only that Murray sketched a three-seater. One source claims 34 months from sketch to first prototype, which does not match the dates, so it is not used.
- McLaren F1 facts: BMW S70/2 6.1-liter V12, 618 hp (SAE) or 627 PS or 461 kW (sources use both units, so the reading says roughly 620 horsepower); weight about 1,138 kg; no ABS, traction control, or power steering; gold foil engine bay (one source gives 16 grams, not used); unveiled in Monaco in May 1992. The claim that it was the first road car with a carbon-fiber monocoque is widely repeated but hedged as reportedly, because the 1990 Jaguar XJR-15, a thinly disguised race car, is sometimes cited as an earlier carbon road-going car. The 1981 MP4/1 is described by WhichCar as pioneering the carbon-fiber chassis in Formula One, so the reading says widely credited. Total production: 106 cars of all types; the breakdown differs by source (64 road cars, five LM, three GT, 28 GTR, plus prototypes), so only the total is given. Price at launch is quoted as 540,000 pounds in one McLaren-sourced account and 634,500 pounds in a 1997 Motor Sport article; not used. That McLaren lost money on each road car is reported by Motor Sport (Frankel, 1997); the reading says widely reported.
- Le Mans 1995: 17 to 18 June; car number 59, entered by Kokusai Kaihatsu Racing and run by Lanzante; drivers Yannick Dalmas (France), Masanori Sekiya (Japan, the first Japanese winner), and JJ Lehto (Finland); McLaren finished 1-3-4-5; first win at Le Mans for McLaren as a manufacturer. Murray agreed reluctantly to a racing program in January 1995 after customer pressure (Automobilist; Petrolicious; Classic and Sports Car). Safety: Senna and Ratzenberger died at Imola in 1994 and the FIA introduced sweeping reforms (several sources). The halo was introduced for 2018 and has been credited with protecting drivers in several crashes (for example Spa 2018 and Silverstone 2022, per Reuters and other reports), so the reading says credited, not saved.
- Dated figures: 2025 drivers' title won by Norris with 423 points to Verstappen's 421 (FIA, 7 December 2025). 2026 rules: close to a 50-50 split between engine and electrical power (Formula1.com summaries and trade press), so the reading says nearly half. Auction: RM Sotheby's Monterey, August 2026, 1996 F1 GTR chassis 10R sold for 34,655,000 US dollars including fees, the most for a McLaren and for a British car at auction (RM Sotheby's press release; Motor1). The previous record for a road-going F1 at auction was 20.465 million dollars (Gooding, 2021). Private sales may have been higher. Check these figures again before publishing.