Juwan Johnson Finishes Saints' Overtime Escape From Cleveland

NFL WEEK 9 · 2026 | GRADES 7–8 | CLE @ NO · NO 23 – CLE 22

NAME _____	DATE _____	SCORE _____ / 11

STORY Read the story, then answer the questions.

A Chance Slips Away

With 4:17 left in overtime, Juwan Johnson found the open space that New Orleans had needed all afternoon. The tight end, a player who blocks and catches passes, grabbed Tyler Shough's 15-yard touchdown throw to give the Saints a 23-22 win over Cleveland in the Superdome.

That final catch mattered because New Orleans had entered at 2-5 and needed proof it could finish close games. Cleveland arrived at 5-3, but the first half became a battle of missed chances. Audric Estime powered an early Saints drive, and Shough's 19-yard pass to Johnson helped set up a 3-0 lead. Then rookie receiver Jordyn Tyson caught a pass at the 2-yard line but lost the ball, allowing Cleveland to recover at its own 1.

Defense Holds the Line

Cleveland's defense continued to impede the Saints near the goal line, while its offense slowly found a rhythm. Shedeur Sanders completed a 16-yard pass to Dylan Sampson and used Harold Fannin Jr. for an important first down before Cleveland tied the game with a field goal.

The Browns later recovered a fumble on a Saints punt return and reached the 1-yard line. Yet New Orleans stopped two short runs, holding the score at 3-3 through halftime. After the break, Sanders fired a 60-yard pass to Denzel Boston, putting Cleveland at the 3. The Browns again stalled close to the end zone, but their field goal created a 6-3 lead. Shough answered with a long drive of his own, using both passing and running to tie it again.

Overtime Ends in Air

The fourth quarter finally broke open. Charlie Smyth hit a 48-yard field goal for a 9-6 Saints lead with 5:38 remaining, but Sanders quickly answered. His 64-yard touchdown pass to KC Concepcion pushed Cleveland ahead 13-9 and gave the Browns control late.

Shough did not let the game end there. With 1:16 left, he connected with Chris Olave for 33 yards, moving New Orleans to the Cleveland 10-yard line. Estime then scored from 2 yards out with 58 seconds left. Sanders answered by finding Jerry Jeudy twice, setting up a 51-yard field goal at the buzzer and forcing overtime, the extra period used after a tie.

In that extra period, Shough used Olave, Alvin Kamara, and Devaughn Vele to move downfield before finding Johnson for the winning score. Sanders responded with a 39-yard touchdown pass to Fannin, but Cleveland could not complete its two-point try to tie the score. The Saints rose to 3-5, while the Browns fell to 5-4 after a finish decided by one last throw.

WORDS TO KNOW

From the story.

impede (v.): To slow down or make progress more difficult.

READING

Fill in the bubble for the best answer. Write full sentences.

1 **Which detail most strongly supports the idea that the Saints missed an early scoring opportunity?**

- (A) Cleveland recovered the ball at its own 1-yard line.
- (B) Tyson lost the ball after catching a pass at the 2-yard line.
- (C) Johnson caught a 19-yard pass to help create a 3-0 lead.
- (D) Estime powered the Saints during their opening drive.

2 **As used in section 2, what does the word "impede" most nearly mean?**

(A) To predict a result
(B) To encourage progress
(C) To change direction
(D) To block progress

3 **Which statement best expresses a central idea of the article?**

(A) The Saints overcame missed opportunities and late Cleveland scores to earn an overtime victory.
(B) Field goals were more important than touchdowns throughout the game.
(C) New Orleans built a large early lead and protected it until the end.
(D) Cleveland's offense controlled every quarter by completing deep passes.

4 **How did New Orleans' goal-line defense before halftime affect the game?**

(A) It moved the Saints into Cleveland territory.
(B) It gave the Saints a touchdown lead at halftime.
(C) It forced Cleveland to attempt a two-point try.
(D) It kept Cleveland from taking the lead before halftime.

5 **Which event directly caused the game to continue into overtime?**

(A) Smyth made a 48-yard field goal for New Orleans.
(B) Sanders completed a 64-yard touchdown pass to Concepcion.
(C) Estime scored from 2 yards out for New Orleans.
(D) Cleveland made a 51-yard field goal at the buzzer.

6 **Explain how the Saints' early missed opportunities, their defensive stops, and the late scoring sequence connect to their overtime victory. Use at least three details from across the article to support your response.**

MATH

Use the game stats. Show your work.

1 **Mia's week 9 stat sheet models Tyler Shough's passing-yard adjustment as -80 - (-345). Evaluate the expression.**

(A) -265
(B) -425
(C) 265
(D) 425

SHOW YOUR WORK

2 **In week 9, Tyler Shough averaged 7.6 yards per pass attempt. Suppose his practice average is 3.0 yards higher. What is his practice average?**

(A) 4.6
(B) 7.9
(C) 10.6
(D) 3.0

SHOW YOUR WORK

3 **In week 9, Tyler Shough had 35 passing attempts. His practice total is 40% lower. Find it. Round to the nearest whole number.**

(A) 21
(B) 210
(C) 60
(D) 49

SHOW YOUR WORK

4 **On Mia's stat sheet, in a week 9 game, Tyler Shough had an average of -6.1 - (-13.7) yards per passing attempt. Evaluate the expression.**

(A) 19.8
(B) -7.6
(C) 7.6
(D) -19.8

SHOW YOUR WORK

5 **On Mia's stat sheet, in a week 9 game, Quinshon Judkins had an average of -1.7 + 4.6 yards per rushing attempt. Evaluate the expression.**

(A) -6.3
(B) 2.9
(C) -2.9
(D) 6.3

SHOW YOUR WORK

PLAYER SPOTLIGHT · Tyler Shough (NO)

Passing yards: 265 | Passing TD: 1 | Rushing yards: 51

6 **Tyler Shough's stats from this game (NO): 265 passing yards, 1 passing touchdown, 51 rushing yards. Use the Player Spotlight above. Scoring: each passing yard = 0.04 point; each passing touchdown = 4 points; each rushing yard = 0.1 point. How many fantasy points did Tyler Shough score?**

(A) 19.7
(B) 15.7
(C) 21.7
(D) 35.6

SHOW YOUR WORK

ANSWER KEY

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About 20 minutes

Separate these pages before giving the worksheet to students.

Standards: RI.8.1 · RI.8.2 · RI.8.4 · 7.NS.A.3 · 7.RP.A.3

READING

Correct answers are filled in.

1 **B** Tyson lost the ball after catching a pass at the 2-yard line.

Tyson had caught the pass at the 2-yard line, placing the Saints close to scoring, but losing the ball ended that opportunity.

2 **D** To block progress

Cleveland's defense impeded the Saints near the goal line by preventing them from moving forward and scoring.

3 **A** The Saints overcame missed opportunities and late Cleveland scores to earn an overtime victory.

The article begins with missed Saints opportunities, describes several lead changes late in the game, and ends with New Orleans winning in overtime.

4 **D** It kept Cleveland from taking the lead before halftime.

Cleveland reached the 1-yard line after recovering a fumble, but the Saints stopped two short runs, leaving the score tied 3-3 at halftime.

5 **D** Cleveland made a 51-yard field goal at the buzzer.

Cleveland's field goal at the buzzer tied the score and forced the extra period.

6 What a good answer includes:

A strong response explains that New Orleans lost an early scoring opportunity when Tyson lost the ball, held Cleveland to a 3-3 halftime tie with goal-line stops, and responded to late Cleveland scoring with key plays by Shough, Olave, Estime, and Johnson. It should show how these connected events led to the overtime win.

MATH

Correct answers are filled in.

1	C	265
2	C	10.6
3	A	21
4	C	7.6
5	B	2.9
6	A	19.7

265 passing yards × 0.04 = 10.6
1 passing touchdown × 4 = 4
51 rushing yards × 0.1 = 5.1
Total: 10.6 + 4 + 5.1 = 19.7