

ART & D.T. Reading Comprehension – Key Stage 2 – Year 5

The Gallery of Secrets

It was supposed to be a normal school trip. Just a day at the city's art gallery, sketching paintings and writing notes. That's what Miss Nolan had planned — but that's not what happened.

Lara and Jay wandered off from their group while sketching a huge painting of a stormy sea. It had dark waves, a broken ship, and a lighthouse in the distance. As Lara shaded the waves, she noticed something odd. The lighthouse window had a tiny flicker of gold — not painted, but real, like it was glowing.

"Did you see that?" she asked Jay.

"See what?"

"That flash in the lighthouse window."

Jay looked closer. "It's probably just a reflection," he said. But Lara wasn't so sure.

Later, while walking through the sculpture room, Lara noticed a pattern. Every artwork with the artist's name "E. Sparrow" had a hidden gold detail — a tiny sparkle in an eye, a shimmer in a necklace, a golden thread on a jacket. She pointed it out to Jay.

"There's something going on," she whispered.

"Or you just really like gold," he joked.

They continued exploring and finally reached a corner of the gallery that was quieter than the rest. There, on the wall, was a plain wooden door with no sign above it. It looked out of place among all the bright colours and lights. Lara turned the handle.

It was unlocked.

Inside was a small room with shelves of old sketchbooks and tiny paint pots. On one of the pages was a note:

"To those who see beyond the surface — keep searching. Art hides more than beauty."

Lara stared at it, eyes wide.

"Jay... I think this is a secret part of the gallery."

Jay grinned. "Well then," he said, "let's keep exploring."

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1. Why were Lara and Jay visiting the gallery?
2. What was strange about the lighthouse in the stormy sea painting?
3. What was Jay's explanation for the glowing light?
4. What was the artist's name that kept appearing on the artworks with gold details?
5. List three examples of gold that Lara noticed in different artworks.
6. Why do you think Lara kept investigating when Jay didn't believe her?
7. How does the author show that the door was mysterious?
8. What does the message in the sketchbook suggest about the gallery?
9. Why do you think the author included the character of Jay?
10. What do you think Lara and Jay will find if they keep exploring?

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MARK SCHEME

1. They were on a school trip to sketch paintings and write notes.
2. The lighthouse window had a tiny flicker of gold that looked real.
3. He said it was probably just a reflection.
4. E. Sparrow
5. A golden flicker in a lighthouse window, a shimmer in a necklace, a golden thread on a jacket.
6. Because she was curious and noticed a pattern, even when others didn't believe her.
7. It had no sign, was plain, quiet, and out of place in the colourful gallery.
8. That there are hidden messages or secrets in the artwork — not just what's on the surface.
9. To give contrast to Lara's curiosity and to add humour and realism to the story.
10. They might discover more secret rooms, clues, or a hidden story behind the artwork.