

Directions

Read this passage. Then answer questions 1 through 7.

Talking with Artists: David Wiesner

compiled and edited by Pat Cummings

MY STORY

- 1 I think that I always knew I wanted to become an artist. I can't remember a time when I wasn't drawing and painting pictures. My oldest sister and my brother were artistic, and watching them draw fascinated me. They had many different art supplies around the house. There was, and still is, something very appealing about art materials: Boxes of pastels, with incredibly colored, thin, square sticks, fitting snugly into the slots in their trays. Little ink bottles with rubber stoppers and pens with interchangeable metal tips. The look, smell, and feel of rich black ink going onto bright white paper in broad, flat strokes or thin, sharp lines. I found this captivating.
- 2 In our town, the housepaint and wallpaper store also sold art supplies. I loved looking at all the exotic things they had for sale. Sandpaper blocks to sharpen pencils. Rows of numbered pencils, and erasers that could be pulled like taffy. Thin drawers full of tubes of paint that seemed so much more grown up than the kind we used at school. Complicated easels and wooden boxes to hold everything.
- 3 My parents and friends soon saw that I had more than a passing interest in art. It came to define much of my image. Relatives gave me art-related birthday gifts. At school I became "the kid who could draw," a unique distinction, like "brainiest" or "best athlete"—but somehow different. A little weird, actually. I like that.
- 4 In my kindergarten class, we had an "art corner." There was an easel with a large pad of paper and poster paints. One day I was painting a picture of a red house. I can vividly recall my intense frustration because this picture just didn't look like I wanted it to.
- 5 As I got a little older, I began copying pictures: cartoons, comic books, and magazine illustrations. But mostly dinosaurs. I loved them. The *World Book Encyclopedia* published a book about the history of the earth, full of very realistic dinosaur pictures that I drew over and over again. They were in black and white and had a hazy quality to them (bad printing, I think). For a long time, even after I should have known better, I thought they were photographs of dinosaurs.
- 6 I found out a few years ago that these particular paintings are murals in the Chicago Field Museum. I've since seen them in person. They were painted by Charles Knight, the first and most famous painter of dinosaurs. They are still impressive, and they are in color!

GO ON

- 7 My third-grade class wrote essays on what we wanted to be when we grew up. To me it was obvious. We read them aloud, and I told about the types of paintings I would some day try. I'd have turtles with paintbrushes tied to their backs walking around on a big sheet of paper (I got chuckles from the class and the teacher). Or I'd fill squirt guns with different colored paints and shoot at the canvas. I actually tried this with friends! Well, it *sounded* like a good idea.
- 8 One of the only discouraging childhood experiences about my artwork happened in the fourth grade. During study time I was drawing a picture. My teacher took it away and wrote an angry note home to my mother. "David would rather be drawing pictures than doing his work!!!" I couldn't believe it, *three* exclamation points. We didn't get along well for the rest of the year. School "art classes" were pretty uninspiring. I did my best work on textbook covers I made. Art never seemed to be taken as seriously as other subjects.
- 9 In the eighth grade, a big career day was held. Months before, we wrote suggestions for careers we wanted to hear about. On the big day, guest speakers from many fields came to talk. We each chose two sessions to attend, but there wasn't one that came close to an art-related field. I saw some guy talk about oceanography.
- 10 In high school it actually sank in that I was going to be an artist. My friends read catalogs and saw guidance counselors to pick what they'd study in college. I felt something was wrong. I already knew. I'd always known. I half expected to hear, "No, put away those paints and choose a *real* career." My parents were excited about my choice, too. As I looked into art schools, I felt like doors were being thrown wide open. Until then my art was a private thing, but at art school I found a place where everyone was "the kid who could draw."

1

Why did Wiesner become interested in art?

- A He enjoyed watching family members draw.
- B He experimented with the birthday gifts he received.
- C He found fun pictures in comic books and magazines.
- D He browsed the supplies at the housepaint and wallpaper store.

2

Which quote **best** expresses the main idea of paragraphs 1 and 2?

- A “They had many different art supplies around the house.” (paragraph 1)
- B “There was, and still is, something very appealing about art materials . . .” (paragraph 1)
- C “I loved looking at all the exotic things they had for sale.” (paragraph 2)
- D “. . . paint that seemed so much more grown up than the kind we used at school.” (paragraph 2)

3

Read this sentence from paragraph 7.

Well, it *sounded* like a good idea.

What does the sentence suggest?

- A The teacher did not approve of Wiesner’s future painting plans.
- B The class was curious about the paintings Wiesner hoped to create.
- C Wiesner and his friends liked painting a canvas with squirt guns.
- D Painting with squirt guns did not turn out the way Wiesner expected.

GO ON

- 4 Which statement describes how Wiesner’s parents felt about his college and career plans?
- A His parents encouraged him to go to art school, yet they worried about his future career choices.
 - B His parents allowed him to choose his career, and they were glad he decided to go to art school.
 - C His parents knew he would rather do art than school work, and they accepted his choices.
 - D His parents raised him to be an artist, so they expected him to choose the right school.

- 5 Read this sentence from paragraph 10.

As I looked into art schools, I felt like doors were being thrown wide open.

What does the phrase “doors were being thrown wide open” suggest?

- A Wiesner had always known that he would go to art school.
 - B Wiesner’s parents decided to allow him to attend art school.
 - C Wiesner found that art school offered many possibilities.
 - D Wiesner was invited by a large number of art schools.
- 6 Paragraphs 10 and 3 are connected because
- A paragraph 10 confirms how surprised Wiesner felt about the label he was given as a child
 - B paragraph 10 shows how Wiesner’s friends responded to his childhood interest
 - C paragraph 10 tells how Wiesner finally found others who shared his creativity
 - D paragraph 10 describes how Wiesner’s image had changed
- 7 Which statement is **most** important to include in a summary of the passage?
- A Wiesner was always interested in drawing and painting pictures.
 - B Wiesner was entertained by the process of drawing with black ink on white paper.
 - C Wiesner was always pleased to receive art-related gifts for his birthday.
 - D Wiesner was disappointed because no speaker came to talk about art-related fields.