

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!

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- 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.

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- 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.

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Directions

Read this story. Then answer questions 8 through 14.

Yasmeen’s Turn

by Carol Fraser Hagen

- 1 Yasmeen squirmed at her desk. She felt sweat beads forming along her neck.
- 2 Mrs. Cross, Yasmeen’s third grade teacher, announced, “Boys and girls, you have been learning about world customs. Be ready to share one of your family’s customs, tomorrow.”
- 3 After school, Yasmeen dragged her backpack along, thinking about the day’s assignment. “*I’m the only Indian student in my class,*” she thought, “*what will everyone think about my family’s customs?*”
- 4 At home, Yasmeen moped through the kitchen door. Her heart fluttered when she saw her *amma*, her mother, busily crushing henna leaves.
- 5 “How was school today?” her *amma* asked, in her soft Indian accent.
- 6 “Fine,” Yasmeen said. She dropped her backpack and slid into a kitchen chair.
- 7 “Ready for *Eid-ul-Fitr* tonight?” *Amma* smiled.
- 8 Yasmeen shrugged. Normally, she’d be tickled with excitement inside when her aunts, uncles and cousins came to celebrate the end of Ramadan, the ninth month of the Islamic year. This holy month is observed with prayers and fasting during daylight hours.
- 9 Yasmeen slid down further in her seat. She twirled a strand of her long hair around her finger, while *Amma* crushed more leaves into a powder. “*What am I going to share tomorrow?*” Yasmeen wondered.
- 10 Later, Yasmeen explored the house, trying to find an idea for her assignment. She found her *abba*’s Koran. She flipped through the worn pages of her father’s leather-bound book. Maybe I’ll take this to school, she thought.
- 11 But then she shook her head. The Koran isn’t a custom. She carefully laid down the holy book. Anyway, *Abba* would never let me take it to school.
- 12 A beautiful *salwar kameez* hung on *Amma*’s bedroom door. *Salwar kameez* is a long-sleeved shirt and baggy pants, with a thin, silky shawl. All three are ornately decorated with sparkling beads, sequins and colorful embroidery, in a variety of colors. The colorful sequins and beads on *Amma*’s dress and shawl glistened. Tonight, *Amma* would wear her new dress to the party.
- 13 *Maybe I’ll wear my salwar kameez to school. Wrong! Everybody might laugh at me.* Tears filled Yasmeen’s deep brown eyes as she tried to figure out what to share.
- 14 Yasmeen walked into the kitchen. Leaning in the doorway, she wiped a tear from her cheek.

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She watched *Amma* stir henna powder into a smooth paste, adding lemon juice and tamarind water. *Amma* then filled cones with the henna paste, to be used at the party.

15 Yasmeen coiled her hair around her pinkie. *I'll ask Tahira. She'll know what I can share,* she thought.

16 "I have to share a family custom tomorrow," Yasmeen said, peeking into her older sister's bedroom. Her eyes explored the top of Tahira's dresser. It overflowed with sparkling earrings and necklaces. Mixed among the other jewelry, golden bangles shimmered.

17 "Show some jewelry," Tahira suggested, jangling several shiny bangles on her wrist.

18 "I guess," Yasmeen said, tugging at strands of her hair. "Except, everybody wears jewelry."

19 That night at the party the aroma of herbs from the henna filled the living room. All the girls and ladies in their glittering dresses gathered around the sofa to visit and have their hands painted with *mehndi* (henna paste).

20 It was Yasmeen's turn. With a cone of henna paste, *Amma* painted tiny flowers, paisley designs, and intricate patterns on Yasmeen's hands.



21 Seconds later, Yasmeen sat straight up. "That's it," she blurted out, "*Mehndi!*"

22 At school the next day, Yasmeen waited for her turn to share. Her face didn't blush. She didn't even feel hot. *I'm not nervous anymore,* she thought. With a wide smile, Yasmeen stood before the class.

23 "On special Muslim holidays," Yasmeen explained, "it's an Indian tradition to paint women's hands with intricate *mehndi* designs. Last night, my mother painted my hands." Yasmeen proudly displayed the delicate curly cues, tiny flowers, and paisley patterns on her hands. Yasmeen also held up a bowl of crushed henna leaves and a henna-filled cone, for the class to see. Yasmeen then described how her mother prepared henna paste.

24 "Could you paint a *mehndi* design on my hand?" Mrs. Cross asked.

25 Yasmeen felt herself gasp at Mrs. Cross's question. Her mouth opened and stayed open as classmates held out their hands. "Me, too! Will you draw on my hands, too?"

26 "And mine!"

27 "Mine, too!"

28 Yasmeen's feet danced her home, her hands waving in the air to lead the way. The spicy scent of tamarind and henna filled her nose. "*Amma! Amma!* You will never believe what happened today."

8 In paragraph 3, what does the phrase “dragged her backpack along” suggest about Yasmeen?

- A She is nervous about the upcoming holiday.
- B She treats her possessions carelessly.
- C She is in an unhappy mood.
- D She carries heavy books.

9 As her family prepares for the holiday *Eid-ul-Fitr*, how is Yasmeen’s experience this year different from other years?

- A She feels proud of her family this year.
- B She feels worried about school this year.
- C She thinks about getting dressed up this year.
- D She wants to spend time with the other ladies this year.

10 Based on paragraphs 10 and 11, what does Yasmeen understand about her father?

- A He prefers old books over new books.
- B The Koran is very precious to him.
- C Reading is one of his favorite activities.
- D He thinks the Koran is too delicate to take to school.

11 What is the **most** important way that paragraphs 13 and 14 develop the story?

- A They show the process of making henna paste.
- B They provide additional details about the setting.
- C They present a hint about how the problem will be solved.
- D They provide information about the characters’ appearance.

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- 12 In paragraphs 12 and 19, what does the reader learn about how Yasmeen’s family celebrates *Eid-ul-Fitr*?
- A Jewelry is exchanged at the celebration.
 - B Hand painting is done first at the celebration.
 - C Herbs are used for cooking during the celebration.
 - D Dressing in fine clothing is part of the celebration.
- 13 In paragraph 25, the narrator explains that Yasmeen “felt herself gasp” to show that Yasmeen feels
- A surprised by the teacher’s response
 - B nervous about what will happen next
 - C confused by her classmates’ requests
 - D afraid to tell her parents about what happened
- 14 What is the **most** important lesson that Yasmeen learns in the story?
- A Family belongings should be treated with respect.
 - B Sharing family traditions can be rewarding.
 - C Sharing holidays with family is important.
 - D Family traditions change over time.