

Name:

Date:

The Missing Painting

The Grade 5 class had been looking forward to their museum trip for weeks. Their favourite exhibit was a small painting called *The Red Forest*, which was worth thousands of dollars. After lunch, an alarm suddenly rang through the museum.

The painting was gone.

Everyone was asked to remain inside while museum staff searched the building. Mia looked around the gallery. The glass case had been opened, but it was not broken.

Three people had been nearby. A cleaner had been mopping the hallway. His shoes and trousers were still wet from the water. A museum guide had been speaking to another class. She carried a ring of keys that opened several display cases.

Mr Parker, Mia's teacher, had also been nearby. He had spent most of the morning taking photographs with his large camera bag. Mia noticed something strange.

The cleaner's wet footprints stopped well before the painting. The guide was surrounded by students when the alarm sounded. But Mr Parker's camera bag looked much larger than it had that morning. As everyone waited, Mr Parker quietly moved towards an exit.

"Where are you going?" Mia asked.

Mr Parker froze. A museum guard walked over and opened the camera bag. Inside, beneath a folded jacket, was *The Red Forest*. Mia couldn't believe it. The person responsible had been standing beside them all day.



1. What was missing from the museum?

2. Where was the painting eventually found?

3. Why did Mia decide the cleaner was probably not responsible?

4. What clues made Mr Parker seem suspicious?

5. What can you infer about Mia from her actions in the story?



Answers

1. A valuable painting called *The Red Forest*.
2. Inside Mr Parker's camera bag, beneath a folded jacket.
3. The cleaner's wet footprints stopped well before the painting.
4. His camera bag looked larger than before, and he quietly moved towards the exit.
5. Mia was observant and clever because she noticed important clues that others had missed.