

Passage I

Prose Fiction: This passage is adapted from the novel “*The Painted Drum*” by Louise Erdrich (© 2005 by Louise Erdrich).

I’m home before eleven, like a good teen on a demure date. The light is on in the first-floor living room where Elsie likes to sit and listen to music. She has Satie on. The master of punctuation. When I walk into the room she stiffens in her chair, casts her gaze upon me, and says, in that parental voice even grown children dread to hear, “Sit down, we have something to talk about.”

“Can it wait?” It must be that she has seen the drum, and although I know it is inevitable, I really don’t want to talk about it tonight.

Elsie stares at me, trying not to blink. The music has become the backdrop to a suspense movie. All jagged exclamation points. I turn it off and sit down across from her. She is wearing an old pink chenille bathrobe and elegant turquoise earrings.

“You left these in.” I tap my earlobes.

“On purpose,” she says.

“Oh?”

She pauses in an ominous way before she speaks. “Years ago, I nearly stole these earrings from a client.”

I turn away and busy myself examining the folds and stitches of one of her more complex afghans. She continues.

“I was very tempted. I happened to have recognized the earrings from a little-known Curtis photograph. It wasn’t that the earrings are so valuable, but that they’d lain close the girl’s neck, the subject, and if I had them it seemed, I felt, as though I was part of his work too.”

“I took the drum for similar reasons.”

“Oh, no doubt.” Her voice is dry. After an empty pause, she prompts, “When are you planning to return it?”

“I’m not.”

She throws her hands up, lets them fall to her knees and hang down, limp rags of dismay.

“It would look odd if I just brought it back now. No one knows it’s missing.”

“Nonsense.” You could say you had it repaired.”

“Well, I could. You’re right.”

But you won’t. You don’t want to.”

“No.”

“What are you going to do with it?” she asks, and I respond before I’ve thought out my answer. The resolute note in my voice surprises me.

“For now, keep it. Later we’ll find the rightful owner.”

She shrugs and seems to think aloud. “Well, yes...it’s Ojibwe and the fact that Tatro spent his life as an Indian agent on our home reservation probably makes your guess as to its origin, maybe even your intention, fairly reasonable.” She opens her arms as though surrendering. “Good luck to you, then. Not only do I want no part of it, I’m thinking of bringing it back to the Tatro’s myself. You could purchase it, you know. I bought the earrings.

“Before or after you told the family that they were in a famous photograph?”

I think I’ve got her, but she refuses to be embarrassed.

“Only a fool would have revealed that. Of course I got them for a good price.”

It’s no use, and I hate being at odds with her. Still the idea that she would actually take it upon herself to return the drum makes me regress a little. “Don’t you touch that drum!”

“You exasperate me.” She closes her mouth in that tight, straight line that means we’re finished arguing. This is as angry as we ever get, and we both know it won’t last.

Sure enough, over breakfast, Elsie tells me that she’s decided, upon reflection, that the fact that the drum was stolen from our own people is a piece of synchronicity so disturbing that she now understands how I was motivated. I, on the other hand, am moved to tell her that I am sorry to have possibly compromised her also in the theft, as it is both of our business reputations at stake, and even (now that I know she won’t hold me to it) that I’ll consider returning the drum. But she says that she wouldn’t think of returning it, that she’s always wondered exactly how it was that Jewett Parker Tatro acquired his hoard, and that maybe in discovering more about this particular drum we will find that out. She’s willing to help me, in fact, learn its origins.

Elsie has ideas. She is spilling over with ideas and with lists of people and with plans to see them. “I’m thinking of old Shaawano, gone now” she says, “and Mrs. String. Her first name is Chook and she’s related to the old man and married to Mike String. Lots of the people have passed on, of course, the ones who would know. But to lose or be swindled out a drum like this is no small thing.”

1. The passage suggests that narrator took the drum because she:
- A. believed she could sell it for a high price
 - B. intended to have it repaired
 - C. felt a sense of personal connection to it
 - D. was determined to find its rightful owner
2. Who does the passage indicate owned the drum before the narrator acquired it?
- F. Elsie
 - G. old Shaawano
 - H. Mrs. String
 - J. Jewett Parker Tatro
3. As it is used in line 96, the word *compromised* most nearly means:
- A. condemned
 - B. put at risk
 - C. inquired about
 - D. came to an agreement
- In context of the passage, Elsie's statement that she got the earrings for a good price implies that she:
- E. did not reveal that they had appeared in the Curtis photograph
 - G. wanted to avoid remaining at odds with the narrator
 - H. was unaware of their monetary value
 - J. was embarrassed that she had nearly stolen them
- The passage indicates that arguments between the narrator and Elsie are usually:
- A. violent and unpredictable
 - B. a source of frequent exasperation
 - C. mild and short-lived
 - D. fundamentally irresolvable
- The passage most directly suggests that the narrator will "consider returning the drum" (lines 98-99) because she:
- F. does not want her business reputation to be damaged
 - G. wishes to protect Elsie from the potential consequences of the theft
 - H. wishes to encourage Elsie's curiosity about the drum's origins
 - J. knows that she will not be required to keep her word
7. The passage most directly suggests that Satie is:
- A. a composer whose music Elsie enjoys listening to
 - B. the artist who created the earrings Elsie is wearing
 - C. a writer whose works have influenced the narrator's life
 - D. a photographer renowned for producing images of the Ojibwe
- Which of the following statements best describes the function of the second to last paragraph (lines 91-103) in context of the passage as a whole?
- F. It offers a comparison between the narrator's relationship with Elsie and her relationship with the Tatro family.
 - G. It provides support for an idea introduced at the end of the previous paragraph.
 - H. It outlines the steps taken by the narrator and Elsie during their search for the drum's origins.
 - J. It describes how the narrator came to suspect that the drum had been stolen from the Ojibwe people.
9. Based on the information on the passage as a whole, it is most reasonable to infer that Elsie left her earrings in on purpose because she:
- A. wanted to call attention to the fact that they had been bought rather than stolen
 - B. was unable to remove them with her withered hands
 - C. intended to dissuade the narrator from giving the drum to the Tatro family
 - D. wanted to remind the narrator that they had appeared in the Curtis photograph
- Which of the following best describes the shift in Elsie's attitude, as it occurs over the course of the passage?
- F. irritation to indifference
 - G. dismay to enthusiasm
 - H. curiosity to disbelief
 - J. skepticism to reverence

Passage II

Social Science: This passage is adapted from the book *Thinking in Pictures* by Temple Grandin (© 2006 by Temple Grandin).

The idea that people have different thinking patterns is not new. Francis Galton, in *Inquiries into Human Faculty and Development*, wrote that while some people see vivid mental pictures, for others "the idea is not felt to be mental pictures, but rather symbols of facts. In people with low pictorial imagery, they would remember their breakfast table but they could not see it."

It wasn't until I went to college that I realized some people are completely verbal and think only in words. I first suspected this when I read an article in a science magazine about the development of tools in prehistoric humans. Some renowned scientist speculated that humans had to develop language before they could develop tools. I thought this was ridiculous, and this article gave me the first inkling that my thought processes were truly different from those of many other people. When I invent things, I do not use language. Some other people think in vividly detailed pictures, but most think in a combination of words and vague, generalized pictures.

For example, many people see a generalized generic church rather than specific churches and steeples when they hear or read the word *steeple*. Their thought patterns move from a general concept to specific examples. I used to become very frustrated when a verbal thinker could not understand something I was trying to express because he or she couldn't see the picture that was crystal clear to me. Further, my mind constantly revises general concepts as I add new information to my memory library. It's like getting a new version of software for the computer. My mind readily accepts the new "software," though I have observed that some people often do not readily accept new information.

Unlike those of most people, my thoughts move from video-like, specific images to generalizations and concepts. For example, my concept of dogs is inextricably linked to every dog I've ever known. It's as if I have a card catalogue of dogs I have seen, complete with pictures, which continually grows as I add more examples to my video library. If I think about Great Danes, the first memory that pops into my head is Dansk,

45 the Great Dane owned by the headmaster at my high school. The next Great Dane I visualize is Helga, who was Dansk's replacement. The next is my aunt's dog in Arizona, and my final image comes from an advertisement for Fitwell seat covers that features that kind of dog. My memories usually appear in my imagination in strict chronological order, and the images I visualize are always specific. There is no generic generalized Great Dane.

50 55 However, not all people with autism are highly visual thinkers, nor do they all process information this way. People throughout the world are on a continuum of visualization skills ranging from next to none, to seeing vague generalized pictures, to seeing semi-specific pictures, to seeing, as in my case, in very specific pictures.

60 65 I'm always forming new visual images when I invent new equipment or think of something novel and amusing. I can take images that I have seen, rearrange them, and create new pictures. For example, I can imagine what a dip vat would look like modeled on computer graphics by placing it on my memory of a friend's computer screen. Since his computer is not programmed to do the fancy 3-D rotary graphics, I take computer graphics I have seen on TV or in the movies and superimpose them in my memory. In my visual imagination the dip vat will appear in the kind of high-quality computer graphics shown on *Star Trek*. I can redraw it on the computer screen in my mind. I can even duplicate the cartoonlike, three-dimensional skeletal image on the computer screen or imagine the dip vat as a videotape of the real thing.

70 75 80 Similarly, I learned how to draw engineering designs by closely observing a very talented draftsman when we worked together at the same feed yard construction company. David was able to render the most fabulous drawings effortlessly. After I left the company, I was forced to do all my own drafting. By studying David's drawings for many hours and photographing them in my memory, I was able to emulate David's drawing style. I laid some of his drawings out so I could look at them while I drew my first design. Then I drew my new plan and copied his style. After making three or four drawings, I no longer had to have his drawings out on the table. My video memory was now fully programmed.

11. Based on the information in the passage, which of the following statements best describes how the author thinks?
- A. She begins with broad concepts, then refers to specific images.
B. She primarily uses images but sometimes uses words to help her recall specific events
C. She thinks in a combination of words and vague, generalized images
D. She relies on a series of vivid images from which she eventually creates general concepts.
12. The author indicates that in comparison to David's drawings, her own drawings:
- F. required much more effort
G. were made entirely from memories
H. primarily featured animals
J. included superimposed images
13. The author states that her concept of Great Danes was NOT influenced by:
- A. Helga
B. her aunt's dog
C. computer graphics
D. a media image
14. The author's reaction to the work of "some renowned scientist" (line 13) can best be described as one of:
- F. scorn
G. enthusiasm
H. awe
J. resignation
15. Based on the information in the passage, it is reasonable to infer that the author's idea of a steeple would be based on:
- A. a generalized concept of a steeple
B. an amalgam of all the steeples she had ever seen
C. a combination of words and general pictures
D. computer software
16. The author suggests that among people with autism, the tendency to think exclusively in images:
- F. is a highly unusual trait
G. has become more pronounced since the invention of television
H. is considerably more common than it is in people without autism
J. occurs as frequently as it does in the general population
17. As it is used in line 87, the word *emulate* most nearly means:
- A. mimic
B. praise
C. include
D. comprehend
18. The primary function of the second paragraph (lines 9-21) in context of the passage as a whole is to:
- F. discuss the author's disillusionment with mainstream scientific research
G. explain how the author learned to invent things using detailed pictures
H. describe how the author discovered that her thought process was very different from that of many other people
J. compare and contrast the author's work with that of a renowned scientist
19. The quotation by Francis Galton suggests that people with low pictorial imagery:
- A. have a limited perception of color
B. do not see vivid mental pictures
C. recall images rather than facts
D. can only visualize generic images
20. The author states that events in her memories occur:
- F. less vividly than the actual events
B. at a distance, as if she were watching a computer screen
C. in a random and disjoined manner
D. in chronological order