

TEXT 1 — STORY

Questions 1–5

The Cartographer

Odalys had been drawing maps since the age of six, when her father, a surveyor with ink-stained cuffs and a distant look, had put a pencil in her hand and told her that every place deserved to be remembered. By fifteen, she could draw the coastline of the whole county from memory. What she could not do was make sense of the new boy's map, which he had pinned to the classroom wall that morning with an air of mild defiance.

It showed their town, but not as she knew it. The streets were there, and the river, and the clock tower. Yet the boy, whose name was Idris, had marked other things as well: the bench where an old man fed pigeons every morning, the culvert where kids went to be alone, the rooftop where you could watch the whole sky wheel. In the margin, in tidy capitals, he had written: THE TOWN AS IT IS FELT. Odalys stared at it for a long time. Her own maps, she realised, were accurate and empty.

"It's not a proper map," she said at lunch, with more edge than she intended. Idris, who was eating an apple, shrugged. "It's the only kind I can make," he said. "I've moved six times. Distances don't mean much when you never stay. What matters is where you were happy." He said it lightly, as though the words cost nothing, but she caught the flicker in his face, the brief shadow of a boy who had learned to travel without unpacking.

That weekend, she walked the town with him. She noticed that she had always drawn from above, the way a bird sees, and had never paused at ground level to notice the cracked mosaic outside the bakery or the way the light slanted through the viaduct at four o'clock. Idris stopped at each one, writing a word in a small notebook: warm, safe, wonder, home. She felt something stir in her, like the first shiver of a long-frozen river.

When they finished, she took her pencil to a clean sheet and, to her father's evident astonishment, drew the town from the ground up. She did not erase the old lines. She simply added the new ones, in a different colour, until the two layers lay over each other, the accurate and the felt. "It's better," her father said, when he saw it, and his voice was thick. Odalys nodded. She had understood, at last, that a map was not merely a record of where things are. It was an argument about what matters.

1. What had Odalys's father told her when she was six?

- A that every place deserved to be remembered
- B that maps should always be accurate
- C that she must follow his career
- D that coastlines never change

2. The phrase “accurate and empty” in the second paragraph suggests that Odalys’s maps

- A contained many errors
- B lacked human feeling
- C were too large for display
- D looked messy and rushed

3. What does the narrator mean by “a boy who had learned to travel without unpacking”?

- A He avoided forming attachments.
- B He disliked carrying luggage.
- C He enjoyed flying in aeroplanes.
- D He forgot his belongings often.

THE WORKED ANSWERS TO THOSE 3 QUESTIONS

1. What had Odalys’s father told her when she was six? [Detail]

Correct answer: A — that every place deserved to be remembered

- What is the question asking? It asks for a fact that the text states.
- Go back to the text and find the evidence: “every place deserved to be remembered”
- The first paragraph gives his words.
- So the correct answer is A (that every place deserved to be remembered).
- Why the other options are wrong:
 - B (that maps should always be accurate): It is tempting because Odalys is the one who values accuracy, but that is her own habit. Her father’s words, when she was six, were that every place deserved to be remembered.
 - C (that she must follow his career): Her father is a surveyor, so following his career seems natural. But the text only says he put a pencil in her hand and spoke about remembering places, not about any career.
 - D (that coastlines never change): She can draw the county coastline from memory, which might suggest the idea of coastlines. Her father’s words were about places deserving to be remembered, not about coastlines staying the same.
- Check it against the evidence. Check the detail: “every place deserved to be remembered” points to ‘that every place deserved to be remembered’, so the other choices do not fit.

LOS: EN5-RVL-01: uses a range of personal, creative and critical strategies to interpret complex texts

KEY TAKEAWAY

Go back to the text and find the exact words that answer the question, then match them to an option.

2. The phrase “accurate and empty” in the second paragraph suggests that Odalys’s maps [Feature]

Correct answer: B — lacked human feeling

- What is the question asking? It asks what a language or text feature does for the reader.
- Go back to the text and find the evidence: “Her own maps, she realised, were accurate and empty.”
- The paradox shows precision without meaning.

- So the correct answer is B (lacked human feeling).
- Why the other options are wrong:
 - A (contained many errors): 'Accurate' says the maps were correct, so errors cannot be the problem. 'Empty' is the weakness: they recorded streets and rivers but nothing about how the town felt.
 - C (were too large for display): Idris pinned his map on the wall, so size might come to mind. But 'empty' describes what Odalys's maps leave out, namely feeling and memory, not how big they were.
 - D (looked messy and rushed): Idris writes in 'tidy capitals', so messiness is not even a detail of his work. 'Accurate' tells us her maps were careful; what they lacked was the human feeling of the town.
- Check it against the evidence. Think about the effect on the reader: "Her own maps, she realised, were accurate and empty." points to 'lacked human feeling', so the other choices do not fit.

LOS: EN5-URA-01: analyses how meaning is created through increasingly complex language forms, features and structures

KEY TAKEAWAY

Name the feature first (simile, hyperbole, contrast, repetition), then ask what effect it has on the reader.

3. What does the narrator mean by “a boy who had learned to travel without unpacking”? [Inference]

Correct answer: A — He avoided forming attachments.

- What is the question asking? It asks what the clues in the text show.
- Go back to the text and find the evidence: “a boy who had learned to travel without unpacking”
- Moving often taught him not to settle.
- So the correct answer is A (He avoided forming attachments).
- Why the other options are wrong:
 - B (He disliked carrying luggage.): This reads the phrase literally. The sentence follows Idris saying he has moved six times, so 'without unpacking' means he never settled or let himself become attached.
 - C (He enjoyed flying in aeroplanes.): Taking 'travel' literally leads to flying, but nothing in the text mentions aeroplanes. His six moves are why he has learned not to put down roots.
 - D (He forgot his belongings often.): 'Unpacking' tempts a literal reading about belongings, yet the text never says he loses things. The image describes his habit of moving on without settling in or forming attachments.
- Check it against the evidence. Look for the clue: “a boy who had learned to travel without unpacking” points to 'He avoided forming attachments', so the other choices do not fit.

LOS: EN5-RVL-01: uses a range of personal, creative and critical strategies to interpret complex texts

KEY TAKEAWAY

When the text does not say it directly, use the clues it gives, then ask: what must be true?

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