

Spies on the Tracks

Ivy and Rose boarded the train. It would be a five-hour trip to Grandma's, and the girls were worried that they would be bored. They had loaded their backpacks with books and games, but one hour into the trip they had read and played them all. Rose sighed and Ivy kicked the back of the seat. It was going to be a long four hours. That's when they heard the scream.

The cry came from a woman who had been sleeping in the next row. She was wide-awake now, clutching her throat and looking upset. "My necklace is missing!" she said.

Rose leapt to her feet and pointed down the aisle. "There!" she said. Ivy followed her finger and saw a boy about their age darting into the next train car. "After him!" she bellowed.

The girls ran down the train aisle and passed through to the next car. But when they looked around, the boy had disappeared. Was he hiding somewhere? Rose and Ivy signaled to each other. Rose started looking up high. Could he fit on the luggage racks above the seats? Ivy looked low. Maybe he was crouching between the rows? There was no sign of him anywhere.

They passed through to the next train car. It was the dining car. "Look," whispered Ivy. The boy was sitting at one of the tables talking with another

passenger. “Shh,” whispered Rose. “Let’s see if we can hear what they are saying.”

Rose and Ivy sat at the next table. They held menus in front of their faces. They listened hard, but they only heard snatches of the conversation.

“...before she wakes up,” said the boy.

“leave it to me...,” said the other passenger. He looked like a grandpa.

The boy and the older man both got up at the same time. The grandpa headed towards the bathroom while the boy got in the bar line for a soda. There was a bag left at the table.

“Should we...?” asked Rose.

“Definitely,” said Ivy.

Rose crept over to table, trying to stay hidden behind her menu. She grabbed the bag and returned to Ivy. When they unzipped it, they saw a necklace snuggled in a handkerchief. “Aha!” they said together.

But now what? Should they confront the boy? Take the necklace and run? They decided to run. Ivy took the necklace and Rose threw the bag, minus the jewelry, back over to the other table.

They ran without looking back. When they reached the woman, they held out the necklace triumphantly. “We found it for you!” they said.

The woman took the necklace and turned it carefully in her hand. “Thanks for trying, but this isn’t mine,” she said.



The girls exchanged looks. Uh-oh. Would they be able to sneak the necklace back into the bag without anyone noticing? Hopefully. Either way, this trip was turning into quite an adventure. At least they were no longer worried about being bored.



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NAME: _____ DATE: _____

1. How long is the trip to Grandma's?
 - a. Five hours
 - b. Four hours
 - c. One hour
 - d. Ten hours

2. Where do they find the boy?
 - a. In the luggage racks
 - b. In the bathroom
 - c. Between the rows
 - d. In the dining car

3. Which of the following is NOT a reason that the girls suspected the boy?
 - a. He was leaving the car when the missing necklace was discovered
 - b. He mentioned a sleeping woman
 - c. He bought a soda
 - d. There was a necklace in his bag

4. Why do you think the girls cover their faces with the menus?
 - a. They want to order lunch
 - b. They don't want to be seen
 - c. They are embarrassed
 - d. They are bored

Instructions for teachers:

These questions can be used to assess understanding of the reading passage.

The item in bold is the correct answer for each question.

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