



TWO PAINTERS

STIMULUS

Many years ago in Greece they held a competition to find the best painter. The people of Greece loved beauty in all its forms and tried to find the best in all things. Everyone agreed that there were 2 wonderful painters in the city of Athens, but nobody could decide which of the 2 painters was the better artist. Some people preferred one artist, some preferred the other. So they decided to have a painting competition in order to decide who the best painter was.

They asked an old man who was an esteemed painter in his youth to be the judge, and he set the two painters the task of painting something that was real to life - the one that painted the most realistic painting would be the winner and crowned the best artist in Athens.

Both painters went away and were not seen by anyone for 3 months, then on the day of the competition both of them brought their paintings to the stage in front of everyone, with a curtain covering their paintings. The judge asked the first painter to reveal his work, and when he pulled back the curtain there was a cheer from the audience - the artist had painted a bowl of grapes, glistening in sun: ripe and juicy and ready to eat. They looked delicious, and life-like. Some birds that had been flying nearby suddenly swooped down and tried to peck at the grapes - the artist had fooled the birds into thinking they were real. The crowd cheered once more - if it was good enough to fool birds this painting must be the winner. The judge turned to the second artist and asked him to reveal his painting. The artist stood smiling at the judge but did not move. "Let us see your painting" the judge demanded, and still the artist did not move. The judge angrily walked over to the painting to reveal it himself, but when he reached out his hand only touched thin air. He gasped and tried again, and to his amazement he suddenly realised that the painting itself was of the curtains - the painting had fooled him. He now had to decide who was the best artist - the one who fooled the birds, or the one who had fooled him?

Task Question:

- ✓ Who do you think should be crowned the best artist?

Nested Questions

- ✓ Do you think the winner has painted the most beautiful painting?
- ✓ Do you think the competition proved which was the better painter?
- ✓ What's the difference between an ordinary painting and a beautiful one?
- ✓ What is beauty?
- ✓ Does good art have to be beautiful?
- ✓ Is it possible to judge art?