

The Mind Map by David Morrison

Eva was thinking hard. She looked past Lucho. He turned and saw that she was looking at a little yellow bird which had landed on the grass behind him.

'I've seen this bird a lot recently,' he said. 'Maybe it's trying to help me.'

Eva corrected him, 'Maybe it's trying to help us, Lucho.'

Lucho smiled.

'Come on,' he said. 'Let's follow it.'

Lucho pulled Eva up by the hand and they followed the little bird over the grass, towards the door to the school building. When they reached the door, Mr Parra, the history teacher, was walking out of the building.

'How is your mind map going, you two?' Mr Parra asked.

Lucho was not sure what to say. They couldn't tell Mr Parra that the mind map seemed to be alive.

'It's going well, sir,' said Eva, 'but we've got a question to ask you. Do you know what 'Ichua' means?'

Mr Parra smiled.

'Ichua is the name of the most important place in the world for the Kogi,' he explained. 'Their most important chiefs are buried there. The Kogi say it is a secret underground place full of gold, but historians don't believe that it's a real place. I see you have spent your time well in the library.'

It was Lucho's turn to ask a question. 'Mr Parra, do you know if there is a hotel in Santa Marta called the Hotel Continental?'

'Why?' Mr Parra was laughing. 'Are you planning a holiday?'

'No, sir,' answered Lucho, feeling a little stupid.

'Well, there was a hotel called the Hotel Continental in Santa Marta, near the port. But it closed a few years ago,' Mr Parra explained.

Eva watched the little yellow bird fly up to the roof of the library.

'Any more questions?' Mr Parra asked.

'Yes,' said Eva. 'Are birds important in Kogi stories?'

'Oh yes, Eva. There is a bird in every Kogi story. A bird brings a message to the jaguar or it helps the jaguar in its work. The jaguar, of course, is the most important animal for the Kogi and for many other tribes. The jaguar looks after the Kogi. Without the help of the jaguar, the Kogi believe, the sun would not rise, plants would not grow and rain would not fall.'

Mr Parra smiled.

'I must say I am very pleased that you have been working so well. Don't forget to put all the information on your mind map and bring it to class on Monday.'

Eva and Lucho watched Mr Parra as he walked away from the school building. Lucho's head was full of questions. Had he dreamed that the mind map had grown? Had he added new words in his sleep? But then, why had the message 'TAKE IT BACK' appeared on the computer screen and on Eva's mobile phone? What did the pendant want? Did he have to take it back to Ichua? But how could he? Mr Parra had said that Ichua probably wasn't a real place.

- 1 Eva corrects Lucho about the bird because ...
 - A he doesn't know what kind of bird it is.
 - B she wants to let him know that she's decided to help him.
 - C he misunderstands how the bird is trying to help them.
 - D she thinks they should follow it.
- 2 Which of these statements is not true about Mr Parra?
 - A He teaches history at the school.
 - B He gave Lucho and Eva the mind map homework.
 - C He is happy that the children are taking their homework seriously.
 - D He was walking in the same direction as the children when they met him.
- 3 What do we learn about the Kogi from their stories?
 - A They are the only tribe for whom the jaguar is an important animal.
 - B They like birds.
 - C They put jaguars in all their stories.
 - D Nature is very important to them.
- 4 What does the final paragraph suggest about Lucho?
 - A He thinks he might be doing things in his sleep.
 - B He wanted to ask Mr Parra more questions.
 - C He's sure he's started to imagine things.
 - D He's really confused about the whole mind map mystery.