

Reading

The Secret Boat Ride

Read the text below, choose the correct answers (A, B, C, D).

A Day in the Life of Marco, a Teen in Venice



Marco wakes up at 7:00 a.m. to the soft sound of water lapping against the sides of his family's house, which sits right on one of Venice's famous canals. But today isn't just any day—Marco has a secret plan.

He gets ready for school, grabs a quick breakfast of coffee and a croissant, and by 7:45 a.m., he's out the door. Instead of a bus, Marco takes a vaporetto, a waterbus. Today his school backpack is noticeably larger than usual, packed with a few extra secret items he's planning to use. The ride along the canal takes about 20 minutes, giving Marco time to review his plan.

By 8:15 a.m., Marco arrives at school, where classes start at 8:30 a.m. But today, he can't focus. He's too excited about what's going to happen later. School ends at 1:00 p.m., and by 1:15 p.m., Marco meets his best friend Luca at their usual spot near the pizzeria. They grab a quick slice of pizza, but instead of exploring the narrow streets and squares of Venice, Marco leads Luca to a secluded part of the city.

They arrive at a small, old dock, where a tiny, neglected boat is tied up. Marco reveals his plan: he found this boat last week and fixed it up in secret. Today, in his backpack, he's also got a map of Venice's hidden canals, a small camera to document their adventure, a blanket for comfort, and a flashlight in case they decide to explore any dark, mysterious corners along the way. Luca is hesitant at first, but Marco convinces him, saying it'll be the adventure of a lifetime.

At 2:00 p.m., they set off. As they navigate through the quiet, narrow canals, they feel like they're discovering a side of Venice no one else knows. They pass under low bridges, through narrow passages, and even past a mysterious, abandoned palazzo that's rumored to be haunted. Suddenly, they hear a strange noise from the old palazzo—like a door creaking open by itself. Marco and Luca freeze, staring at the dark windows of the building. Just as they start to get nervous, a flock of pigeons bursts out from one of the windows, startling them. They both laugh, realizing it was just the birds.

By 4:00 p.m., they decide to head back, but the boat's engine starts sputtering. Marco tries to fix it, but the boat comes to a stop in the middle of the canal. They're stuck! Luckily, a passing gondolier sees them and tows their boat back to safety. The boys are a little shaken, but they laugh about the adventure as they get back.

Marco gets home by 5:30 p.m., just in time to help his grandfather at the glass-blowing workshop on the island of Murano. He keeps the day's adventure a secret, knowing his parents wouldn't approve. At 7:00 p.m., he sits down with his family for dinner, a traditional Italian meal of pasta, fish, and fresh vegetables. After dinner, Marco finishes his homework, but he can't stop thinking about the mysterious palazzo and their unexpected adventure.

By 9:00 p.m., he's ready to relax, chatting with Luca online about their next plan. Before bed, around 10:30 p.m., Marco steps out onto the small balcony of his house. As he looks out over the quiet canal, he wonders what other secrets Venice might be hiding, waiting for him to discover.

1. How does Marco travel to school in the morning?

- A) By air.
- B) By water.
- C) By land.
- D) He doesn't go to school.

2. What is unusual about Marco's school backpack today?

- A) It is brand new.
- B) It is filled with textbooks.
- C) It is bigger than usual.
- D) It is smaller than usual.

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3. What does Marco secretly bring with him?

- A) A few slices of pizza.
- B) A gift for his friend Luca.
- C) Some tools to repair the boat.
- D) Some special things.

4. What surprising thing happens during Marco and Luca's boat ride?

- A) They hear a weird sound.
- B) They get lost in the canals.
- C) They open a secret door.
- D) They follow the birds.

5. What does Marco think about before bedtime?

- A) The upcoming school project.
- B) His family meal.
- C) His future vacation.
- D) The hidden mysteries of his city.