

## Task for *Mirror*

### Visual Comprehension Quiz

Quiz based on the image set inside the Hardware store.

Q: How is colour used to draw attention to the figure of the boy?

A: *The bright red stands out against the bland background. No other red is used.*

Q: Is the boy in the foreground or the background of each image? Why is he placed here?

A: *Foreground: highlights importance in the narrative and draws reader's focus.*

Q: What do his actions with the piping suggest about the boy's personality?

A: *He is curious and playful.*

Q: Describe the scale (size and number) of the store and its products?

A: *It could be described as vast. There is the appearance of many bins filled with similar products in large quantities. The framing of the image to not include the tops of the pipes or shelves gives the impression that they continue to rise higher.*

Q: What might this suggest about shopping or consumption in the western world?

A: *That it is based on quantity or is excessive.*

Q: Why do you think Baker uses so many strong vertical lines in this image?

A: *It adds a sense of height/vastness to the store.*

Q: What does the labelling of the plants as 'real' suggest about a lot of goods that westerners purchase?

A: *That many are not 'real', that is, our spending and thus our lifestyle is artificial.*

Q: What might be symbolised by the fact the plants are contained within a box?

A: *The western tendency to constrain the natural world in favour of the built environment.*

Q: What does the appearance of the people in line at the checkout suggest about Australia's population?

A: *Its multicultural nature.*

Q: Which symbolic codes have been used to generate this idea about Australia's population?

A: *Costume, proximity (closeness), facial expression (contentment – except one!)*

Q: How does Baker create a visual link between the boy and his father at the checkout and what does this suggest about their relationship?

A: *Both are holding vertical pieces of wood. It suggests the boy mimics his father, adopting his values and cultural practices. It also suggests the closeness of their familial bond.*

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Q: What does the sign above the checkout suggest about Australians' motivations about what they purchase?

A: *That budgetary concerns override our value of where a product is made, its quality and so on.*

## Extension

Q: What might be the symbolic meaning behind why the background of these pages is blank white? Compare this to the contrasting image of the Moroccan market.

A: *The bland western shop vs the vibrant Moroccan market suggests a criticism of western shopping habits and values as empty, soulless and artificial.*