

Read the passage. Then answer the questions.

### **Gabriel Dawe, Thread Artist**

(1) Colorful bands of light soar from the metal railing of a balcony up to the balcony on the floor above. Light filters through windows and brightens it like sun shining through a rainbow. But it's not a rainbow. It is a series of strands of thread suspended in the space to form a giant sculpture. It is one of the works of artist Gabriel Dawe.

(2) As a boy growing up in Mexico, Gabriel was not allowed to use textiles or embroidery. They were thought to be materials only women should use. Later, he went to school to learn graphic design. When he moved to Canada in 2000, the bright, intense colors of his Mexican culture began appearing in his artwork. Soon, he began working with thread and created a series of sculptures. He named them *Plexus*. While working in his studio, he found himself climbing up and down a ladder hundreds of times a day. He decided to build a tool so he wouldn't have to use a ladder. The tool was made with safety pins, wood, and an extension pole. It works like a giant needle.

(3) But Gabriel no longer creates his thread sculptures in his studio. Instead, he creates them at the site of the installation, or art exhibit. These installations are usually in very large spaces in galleries. The space determines how the works are structured. These sculptures cannot be moved. Once the exhibit is over, they are taken down.

(4) First, Gabriel evaluates the location for the possibilities it offers and what he thinks he can do in the space. Then he begins planning how the sculpture will be arranged. He decides where he can place the wood structures that hold the hooks that anchor the threads in place. Next, he plans how and in what sequence he will place the anchor points. Then he decides on the colors he will use and how they will blend with each other. This he maps out on paper. Gabriel uses regular sewing thread that comes in a variety of colors and is 100 percent polyester. Each strand of thread is held in place by tension. Gabriel makes his final color mix as he creates the sculpture. For *Plexus No. 9*, Gabriel used about 37 miles of thread in a rainbow of colors.

(5) Some of Gabriel's installations fit in the space like a spider web. One such piece was *Plexus No. C3*. It was exhibited at the Dallas Art Fair in 2012. Others create a dreamlike feel, such as *Plexus No. 12*. It was installed in a gallery on a college campus in Texas. One installation gives the appearance of a multicolored, floating veil. This sculpture, *Plexus No. 4*, was exhibited at a gallery in Dallas in 2010. People can walk around the pieces. From each vantage point, the viewer will see a different perspective. The lighting in the space gives the semitransparent installations a life of their own.

(6) In 2012, Gabriel was invited to install a new sculpture at a conference. It was installed in the lobby of a theater in Long Beach, California. The thread was stretched between two stairway columns. It took Gabriel and his team about 80 hours to complete. Officials of the city and the company that manages the theater were very impressed with Gabriel's work. They decided to keep the sculpture as a permanent exhibit. A company in

North Carolina commissioned Gabriel to install a piece in their offices. He was also hired to create a sculpture in a private home in San Diego, California.

(7) When the sculptures are dismantled, Gabriel collects the used threads. With them, he creates other pieces that he calls *Relics*. Gabriel believes that this gives the work of art a second life. The threads are wrapped together by color and displayed in clear boxes or cubes.

(8) The next time you see a spool of thread, think about what this slender fiber can be used for other than sewing.

Choose answers to multiple choice questions. Type responses to questions that ask you to write a response. Be sure to save your work.

12. What is the meaning of *installation* as it is used in this passage?

- A. put in charge
- B. exhibit
- C. setting up
- D. space

Teacher feedback:

Score:

13. Read this sentence from Paragraph 4.

Each strand of thread is held in place by tension.

What is the meaning of *tension*?

- A. anchor
- B. stress
- C. confining
- D. stretching

Teacher feedback:

Score:

14. Answer the questions about the passage.

- (a) Why does Gabriel Dawe call his works that he puts in clear boxes or cubes *Relics*?
- A. They are threads he hopes to use again one day.
  - B. They are keepsakes of his past artwork.
  - C. They hold new threads he has collected to use in the future.
  - D. They hold threads organized by colors he likes.