

Name _____



Greener Than Paint

Directions: Read the passage carefully from beginning to end. Pay attention to how the main character *feels, acts,* and *changes* as the story unfolds. As you read, **highlight or underline** moments that reveal jealousy and how the character responds to it. Use them to guide you in writing the **life lesson or moral** that the main character learns by the end.

The Green Paint Incident

Maya had always loved art class—until the day her best friend, Zoe, won the school art contest. Maya's painting had been bright and careful, but Zoe's swirling blue skies had taken first place. That night, Maya scrolled through Zoe's art page online, frowning at the flood of comments and likes.

The next day, Maya walked past the art board and saw Zoe's winning piece on display. Without thinking, she muttered, "It's not *that* good." When Zoe turned, smiling, to thank her for helping clean the brushes, Maya just nodded, feeling her face warm.

Later, as Maya sat alone, she noticed her own half-finished canvas: a messy mix of greens and yellows. She sighed and began painting again, this time just for fun. By the time Zoe stopped by her table, Maya was laughing at a blotch of green paint that had splashed onto her arm. "You know," Maya said, smiling, "your painting really is beautiful. I think it pushed me to try harder." Zoe grinned back. "Then I guess we both won." That afternoon, Maya realized something she hadn't before: *jealousy steals joy, but gratitude brings it back.*

Life Lesson / Moral:

Reflection Questions:

1. What specific event helped Maya realize that jealousy was hurting her happiness?
2. How did Maya's feelings about Zoe change from the beginning to the end of the story?
3. What might this story teach readers about friendship and comparison?