

Name _____

Mystery and Beauty: The Girl with a Pearl Earring by Johannes Vermeer

Short Answer Key

1. The girl's expression in "Girl with a Pearl Earring" is often considered mysterious because she gazes at the viewer with her lips slightly parted, as if she is about to speak. Her enigmatic expression invites interpretation and curiosity.
2. The pearl earring in the painting is significant as the focal point, and Vermeer uses light to enhance its appearance by creating a soft, diffused glow. The use of light and shadow adds depth and three-dimensionality to the earring, making it appear almost tangible.
3. Vermeer's use of light and shadow contributes to the overall atmosphere of the painting by creating a sense of warmth and intimacy. The soft, diffused light falls gently on the girl's face, making her eyes and the pearl earring seem to shimmer with life.
4. "Girl with a Pearl Earring" is sometimes called the "Dutch Mona Lisa" because of the enigmatic expression on the girl's face, which is reminiscent of Leonardo da Vinci's Mona Lisa. Both paintings feature subjects with mysterious and captivating gazes.
5. Answers will vary, but students can use Vermeer's technique of meticulous brushwork and attention to detail to convey emotions such as curiosity, intrigue, or contemplation in the girl.

