

A Winter Celebration at the Great Oak

Learning objective: To identify and analyse how authors use descriptive language and character perspectives to create a festive atmosphere.

Read the story below carefully. Think about how the characters feel and how the setting is described. Answer the questions in full sentences.

The Great Oak forest was hushed under a blanket of freshly fallen snow. High above the forest floor, Nova the owl perched on a sturdy branch, watching as the moon reflected off the glistening icicles. Below, Max the monkey was busy preparing for the annual Winter Feast. He had spent the morning calculating exactly how many nuts, berries, and sweet roots were needed to feed all their friends. 'It is a mathematical masterpiece!' Max exclaimed, adjusting his woolly scarf. Meanwhile, Pip the caterpillar was tucked away in a tiny, hand-knitted cocoon-sized blanket, reading a story aloud to a group of young beetle friends. The air smelled of pine needles and roasted chestnuts. Ellie the elephant arrived carrying a heavy, ancient crate filled with handmade decorations—glistening pinecones and stars crafted from twigs. 'This tradition brings us together,' Ellie said with a warm smile. As the sun began to set, the forest clearing turned a soft, golden hue. The friends knew that tonight, under the shimmering stars, they would celebrate their friendship with stories, songs, and a shared, bountiful meal.

Word bank: festive · glistening · anticipation · tradition · cozy · bountiful

1. How does the author describe the setting of the Great Oak forest at the start of the story? Use evidence from the text. (2 marks)

2. Why is Max the monkey excited about the Winter Feast, and what does this tell us about his personality? (2 marks)

3. What are Ellie the elephant's decorations made of, and why does she value this tradition? (2 marks)

4. Find and copy an adjective from the text that describes the meal the friends are about to share. (1 mark)

5. How do you think the characters feel about each other? Use details from the text to explain your answer. (3 marks)

Draw: Draw a scene showing the Great Oak forest at sunset. Include the decorations Ellie brought and the friends gathering around for their feast.



Extension challenge: Imagine you are invited to the Winter Feast at the Great Oak. Write a short diary entry (100 words) describing what gift you would bring to share with your friends and why it is special.