

The Stargazing Expedition

Learning objective: To develop reading comprehension skills by retrieving information, making inferences, and evaluating character motivation.

Read the text carefully and answer the questions below in full sentences.

Nova the barn owl adjusted her brass telescope, peering intently at the dark, velvet sky. Beside her, Max the monkey sat cross-legged on a mossy log, clutching a notebook filled with complex calculations. Max was trying to measure the distance between the twinkling stars, while Nova preferred to observe the patterns of the constellations. 'Look, Max!' Nova hooted softly, pointing a wing toward a cluster of stars that resembled a crown. 'That is the Northern Sovereign. It only appears when the air is crisp and clear.' Max peered through his own makeshift cardboard tube. 'I wonder how many light-years away that is, Nova? If we knew the exact angle, we could calculate the trajectory,' he mused, scribbling furiously. The forest was silent, save for the gentle rustle of leaves and the distant hum of the stream. While Max found comfort in the certainty of his sums, Nova felt a sense of peace in the sheer vastness of the universe. To her, the night sky was not a puzzle to be solved, but a magnificent story written in light, waiting for someone to read it.

Word bank: constellation · nocturnal · telescope · vast · magnificent

1. What are the names of the two characters observing the stars, and what equipment is each of them using? (2 marks)

2. At what time of day does this story take place, and how do you know? (2 marks)

3. Why does Max feel the need to carry a notebook with him during their expedition? (2 marks)

4. How does Nova's attitude toward the stars differ from Max's attitude? (2 marks)

5. Do you think it is better to study the stars like Nova or like Max? Explain your reasoning. (2 marks)

Draw: Draw a picture of Nova and Max sitting in the forest at night, showing the telescope and the stars above.



Extension challenge: Research a real constellation and write a short, creative myth or story about how it got its name.