

Nova's Starlit Observatory

Learning objective: To identify and use expanded noun phrases to add detail and imagery to writing.

Read the text carefully. Identify the expanded noun phrases—these are groups of words that describe a noun using adjectives or prepositional phrases. Answer the questions in full sentences.

Nova the barn owl perched upon the ancient, gnarled oak tree. She gazed up at the vast, obsidian sky, searching for hidden wonders. Tonight, the atmosphere was perfectly clear, revealing a shimmering, silver moon that bathed the woodland in a gentle glow. Nova adjusted her delicate, feathery spectacles and peered through her powerful, brass telescope. She observed a distant, sparkling constellation which resembled a hunter chasing a celestial fox. Beside her, a soft, cooling breeze rustled the emerald leaves of the forest. Nova felt a surge of excitement as she noted down her observations in her worn, leather-bound journal. The quiet, peaceful wilderness provided the perfect setting for her astronomical discoveries. Above, the countless, twinkling stars flickered like tiny diamonds scattered across a velvet cloth. Nova loved these quiet, solitary moments when the world felt both immense and intimate. She knew that every glowing star held a story, waiting for a curious explorer to uncover its secrets.

Word bank: luminous · vast · twinkling · obsidian · shimmering · celestial · distant · magnificent

1. Identify two expanded noun phrases used to describe the sky or the stars in the text. (2 marks) (2 marks)

2. What specific tools does Nova use to help her observe the night sky? (2 marks) (2 marks)

3. Why might Nova have chosen to go to the ancient oak tree to do her stargazing? (2 marks) (2 marks)

4. How does the author create a sense of atmosphere in the description of the forest? (2 marks) (2 marks)

5. Do you think Nova enjoys being a scientist? Justify your answer using evidence from the text. (3 marks) (3 marks)

Draw: Draw Nova the owl looking through her brass telescope at the night sky. Include at least three expanded noun phrases from the text in your drawing (e.g., draw the 'shimmering, silver moon' or the 'ancient, gnarled oak tree').



Extension challenge: Write a short paragraph (4-6 sentences) describing a walk through a forest at night. You must include at least four expanded noun phrases to add detail. Challenge yourself: Can you use a prepositional phrase to add extra detail to your noun phrase, such as 'the bright moon above the clouds'?