

Finding Your Inner Calm with Nova

Learning objective: To understand strategies for managing emotions and promoting personal wellbeing.

Read the text carefully and answer the questions below. Think deeply about how Nova manages her feelings and reflect on how these strategies might apply to your own life.

Nova the barn owl spends her nights observing the vast, shimmering stars. While stargazing brings her joy, Nova sometimes feels overwhelmed by the complexity of the universe. To look after her wellbeing, she has developed a special routine to help her feel calm and grounded. When she feels anxious, Nova practices 'wing-breathing'. She closes her eyes, takes a slow breath in for four seconds, and lets it out for six. This physical action signals to her brain that she is safe. Afterwards, she writes down one thing she is grateful for in her night-journal, such as the soft rustle of leaves or the silver glow of the moon. Nova knows that taking a moment to pause is not a sign of weakness, but a clever way to build resilience. By focusing on the present moment, she finds the tranquillity needed to continue her scientific discoveries. Whether she is charting constellations or reflecting on her day, Nova understands that looking after her mental health is just as important as keeping her feathers clean and her eyes sharp for the night ahead.

Word bank: wellbeing · tranquillity · resilience · mindfulness · perspective · sensation

1. Identify two specific techniques Nova uses to help her feel calm when she is overwhelmed. (2 marks)

2. What does Nova mean when she suggests that taking a moment to pause is a 'clever way to build resilience'? (2 marks)

3. Why might writing in a gratitude journal help someone improve their overall wellbeing? (2 marks)

4. Explain why Nova focuses on her breathing when she feels anxious. How does this connect to her physical state? (2 marks)

5. Do you agree that mental wellbeing is as important as physical health? Justify your answer using examples from the text and your own experience. (3 marks)

Draw: Draw a picture of Nova the barn owl in her favourite peaceful spot. Include symbols or items around her that represent things she might be grateful for in her night-journal.



Extension challenge: Imagine you are a wellbeing coach. Create a 'Calm Down Toolkit' for a younger student. Write a short guide explaining three different activities they could do to feel more relaxed, and justify why each activity is effective.