

Year 6 English Assessment: The Winter Solstice Celebration

Learning objective: To demonstrate understanding of narrative structure, descriptive language, and character development within a festive story context.

Read the passage carefully. Answer all questions in full sentences where appropriate. Check your spelling and punctuation. Good luck!

The village of Oakhaven was draped in a blanket of silence, save for the soft crunch of snow beneath Leo the lion's paws. Above, the sky was a velvet tapestry, pinned with stars that Nova the owl had spent all evening charting. Leo clutched a scroll of hand-written poetry, his tail twitching with a mixture of nerves and excitement. Tonight was the Great Gathering, an annual tradition where the forest residents shared stories around a central, glowing fire. As he reached the clearing, he saw Bea the bee busy organising the lanterns, her wings humming a gentle rhythm that seemed to orchestrate the very air. The scent of pine and toasted chestnuts hung in the cold night, a fragrant promise of warmth and friendship. Leo took a deep breath; his words were ready, and the spirit of the season filled him with a quiet, golden courage.

Word bank: Atmospheric · Metaphor · Personification · Anticipation · Benevolent · Resonance · Frost-kissed

1. Identify one example of personification in the first paragraph and explain why the author chose to use it. (2 marks)

2. How does the author create an atmosphere of anticipation? Refer to specific language choices from the passage. (3 marks)

3. Using your own words, describe the relationship between the characters mentioned in the passage. Why are they meeting? (3 marks)

4. The author describes the sky as a 'velvet tapestry'. What type of figurative language is this, and what does it suggest about the setting? (2 marks)

5. Leo feels 'golden courage'. In the context of the story, what does this phrase tell us about his emotional state before he performs his poetry? (3 marks)

6. Leo is preparing for the Great Gathering. Write a short paragraph (50–70 words) describing the poem he might read to his friends. Use at least two adjectives and one piece of punctuation other than a full stop. (5 marks)

7. If the villagers decided to buy decorations for the gathering, and they spent £12.50 on lanterns and £8.75 on festive ribbons, how much change would they get from a £50 note? (2 marks)

8. Explain why the author chose to set this story during a 'blanket of silence'. How does this contrast with the end of the passage? (3 marks)

Draw: Draw the Great Gathering in the clearing. Include Leo the lion holding his scroll, Bea the bee lighting the lanterns, and the velvet sky Nova the owl is watching.



Extension challenge: Total: /25. Write a diary entry from the perspective of Bea the bee, explaining how she prepared for the arrival of her friends at the Great Gathering.