

Nova's Nocturnal Discovery

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

Read the passage carefully. Pay close attention to how the author uses adjectives and prepositional phrases to build detailed descriptions. Answer the questions in full sentences, using evidence from the text.

High above the ancient, gnarled oak tree, Nova the barn owl perched on a sturdy, moss-covered branch. She gazed up at the vast, indigo sky, which was decorated with thousands of shimmering, distant stars. Nova adjusted her soft, snowy-white feathers as a cool, gentle breeze rustled through the dark, emerald leaves. Below her, the silent, silver-lit meadow stretched out like a velvet blanket. She watched a small, curious field mouse scurrying across the damp, dew-covered grass. The mouse paused near a cluster of tall, fragrant wildflowers. Suddenly, a bright, luminous moonbeam broke through the heavy, charcoal clouds, illuminating the intricate patterns of the forest floor. Nova felt a surge of wonder as she observed the majestic, quiet beauty of the night. This vast, mysterious world was her favourite classroom, offering endless secrets to those who took the time to look closely at the shadows and the light.

Word bank: nocturnal · luminous · vast · silhouetted · shimmering · intricate · ethereal

1. Find two examples of expanded noun phrases used to describe the sky or the moon. (2 marks) (2 marks)

2. What is the mouse doing in the meadow, and where is it positioned? (2 marks) (2 marks)

3. Explain why the author chose to use the phrase 'velvet blanket' to describe the meadow. (2 marks) (2 marks)

4. What might the author mean when they describe the world as Nova's 'favourite classroom'? (3 marks) (3 marks)

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

Draw: Draw Nova the owl perched on her branch, using the descriptions from the text to add detail to the sky, the mouse, and the meadow.



Extension challenge: Write a descriptive paragraph (approx. 80 words) about a sunrise in the forest. You must include at least four expanded noun phrases to describe the colours, the light, and the sounds of the waking woodland.