

The Mechanics of a Moonlight Garden: An Explanation Text

Learning objective: To identify and analyse the structural and linguistic features of a formal explanation text.

Read the text below carefully, noting how the author uses technical vocabulary and causal conjunctions to explain a natural process. Then, answer the questions to demonstrate your understanding of the text's structure and purpose.

How does a Moon-Bloom flower open? The Moon-Bloom is a rare botanical phenomenon that thrives in the cool, silver light of the evening. Firstly, as the sun dips below the horizon, the temperature begins to drop rapidly. This atmospheric shift acts as the primary trigger for the flower's internal mechanism. Secondly, the plant senses the decrease in light intensity through specialised cells in its petals. Consequently, the cells at the base of the petals begin to rapidly absorb moisture from the surrounding night air. As these cells swell with water, they create internal pressure. Finally, this pressure forces the petals to unfurl, revealing the glowing centre that attracts nocturnal pollinators. This process ensures that the flower remains protected during the harsh heat of the day, opening only when it is safe to interact with the night air.

Word bank: conjunctions · causal · chronological · technical · passive voice · phenomenon · mechanism

1. Identify two causal conjunctions used in the text. How do these words help the reader understand the process? (2 marks)

2. Explain why the Moon-Bloom flower waits until the temperature drops before it unfurls its petals. (2 marks)

3. Find one example of technical vocabulary in the text. Define it based on the context provided. (2 marks)

4. Compare and contrast the Moon-Bloom's opening process with a typical flower that blooms in sunlight. What might happen if the Moon-Bloom were planted in a desert during a heatwave? (3 marks)

5. Justify why the author chose to use the present tense throughout this explanation. (2 marks)

Draw: Draw a scientific diagram of the Moon-Bloom flower. Label the specialised cells at the base of the petals and show how they swell with water to trigger the opening mechanism.



Extension challenge: Imagine you are Nova the owl. Write a short explanation text (150 words) describing how a specific star cluster forms in the night sky. Use at least three causal conjunctions and include a 'Did you know?' box with a fascinating space fact.