

Year 6 Reading Comprehension: The Great Stargazing Expedition

Learning objective: To demonstrate understanding of inference, vocabulary, and authorial intent within a narrative text.

Read the passage carefully. Answer all questions using full sentences where required. Ensure your handwriting is clear and check your spelling and punctuation.

Nova the owl perched atop the highest branch of the Ancient Oak, her golden eyes fixed on the velvet darkness of the night sky. Below her, the forest floor was silent, save for the soft rustle of dry leaves. This was the night of the Great Alignment, an event she had tracked for months. Beside her, Max the monkey fidgeted, his fingers tracing patterns in the air as he calculated the precise angle of the rising moon. 'It is almost time, Nova,' Max whispered, his voice trembling with excitement. Nova adjusted her feathers, feeling the cool night breeze against her wings. She knew that beyond the canopy, the stars were not merely pinpricks of light, but ancient stories written across the vast, ink-black tapestry of space. With a gentle hoot, she nudged Max toward the clearing. Tonight, they would not just watch the sky; they would map the secrets of the cosmos together.

Word bank: luminous · vast · constellation · navigation · anticipation

1. Identify two adjectives the author uses to describe the night sky. What atmosphere do these words create? (2 marks)

2. Why does Max fidget and trace patterns in the air? Use evidence from the text to support your answer. (2 marks)

3. In your own words, explain what Nova means when she thinks the stars are 'ancient stories written across the vast, ink-black tapestry of space'. (3 marks)

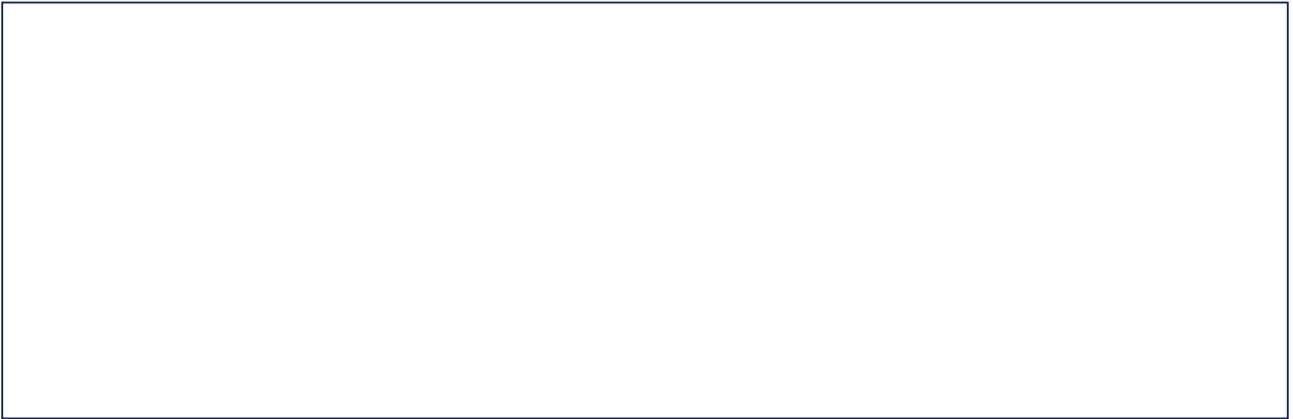
4. How does the author show the relationship between Nova and Max? Refer to their actions in the text. (3 marks)

5. The author uses the phrase 'velvet darkness'. What does this tell us about the quality of the night? (2 marks)

6. Find and copy a phrase that suggests Nova is an experienced observer of the sky. (2 marks)

7. Imagine you are Nova. Write a diary entry of 100-150 words describing your feelings as the Great Alignment begins. Focus on the sights, sounds, and your friendship with Max. (11 marks)

Draw: Draw what you imagine the 'Great Alignment' looks like from the perspective of the Ancient Oak tree, including the constellations Nova and Max are observing.



Extension challenge: Total: /25. Challenge: Research one real-life constellation and write a short paragraph explaining its name and the story behind it.