

The Star-Gazer's Quest: A Reading Comprehension Challenge

Learning objective: To develop retrieval, inference, and vocabulary skills through a short narrative text.

Read the story about Nova the owl below, then answer the 10 questions that follow to test your comprehension skills.

Nova the barn owl sat perched upon the highest branch of the ancient oak tree. While the rest of the forest slept, Nova adjusted her spectacles and peered through her brass telescope. Tonight, the sky was a velvet cloak scattered with shimmering diamonds. She was searching for the elusive 'Silver Fox' constellation, a pattern of stars that only appeared during the crisp, clear nights of late autumn. 'It must be near the horizon,' she whispered to herself. Suddenly, a streak of light zipped across the dark expanse—a shooting star! Nova quickly scribbled a note in her leather-bound journal. She loved the silence of the night, for it allowed her to hear the secrets of the universe. With a soft flutter of her wings, she repositioned herself, determined to map every single star before the first light of dawn turned the sky to pale pink.

Word bank: astronomy · nocturnal · constellation · observatory · horizon · magnificent

1. 1. What is Nova's main hobby? A) Writing poetry, B) Collecting words, C) Astronomy*, D) Baking cakes. (1 mark)

2. 2. True or False: Nova is a diurnal creature (active during the day). (1 mark)

3. 3. What does Nova use to help her see the stars more clearly? (1 mark)

4. 4. The author describes the night sky as a 'velvet cloak'. What technique is this? A) Simile, B) Metaphor*, C) Onomatopoeia, D) Personification. (1 mark)

5. 5. Where does Nova hope to find the 'Silver Fox' constellation? (1 mark)

6. 6. True or False: Nova is looking for a real animal in the sky. (1 mark)

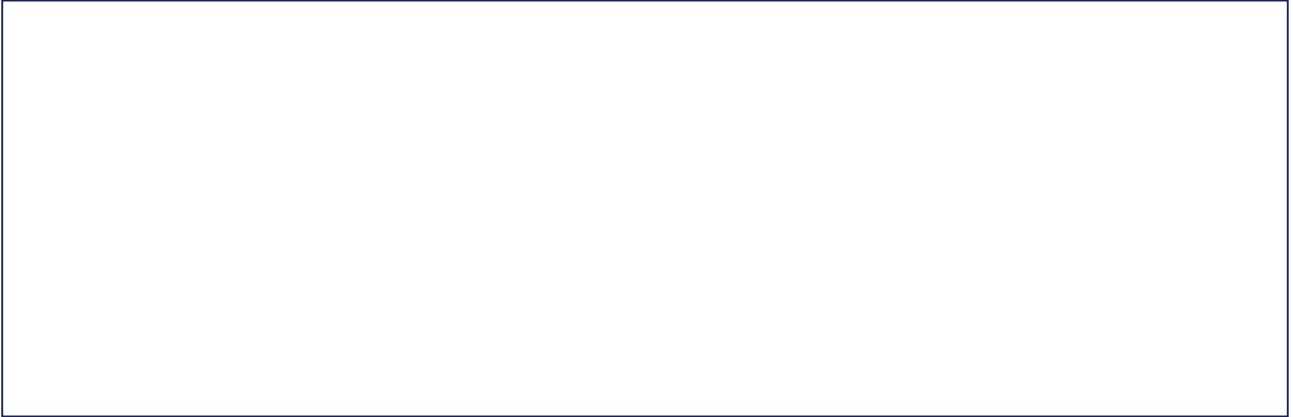
7. 7. What does Nova do immediately after seeing the shooting star? (1 mark)

8. 8. Which word from the text best describes the appearance of the stars? A) Dull, B) Shimmering*, C) Hidden, D) Heavy. (1 mark)

9. 9. At what time does Nova stop her work? (1 mark)

10. 10. Why does Nova enjoy the silence of the night? A) She is shy, B) It helps her sleep, C) To hear the secrets of the universe*, D) She has no friends. (1 mark)

Draw: Draw your own version of the 'Silver Fox' constellation as Nova might see it through her telescope, including the surrounding stars.



Extension challenge: Nova needs to buy a new ink bottle for her journal which costs £4.75. If she pays with a £10 note, how much change should she receive? Show your working out.