

Making Inferences

When things aren't explained literally in a text, you can use clues to reach a logical conclusion. This is called inference.

Read the short story then answer the questions in full sentences.

Burns Night Bash

The twins, Hamish and Fiona, were looking forward to their Burns Night celebration. Exactly a month after Christmas, they needed an excuse for a party.

The village green still had tree lights twisted in the bare branches and there were three sacks of potatoes and ten bottles of fizzy pop in the kitchen of the village hall. It seemed like the party was meant to be.

Since New Year's Day, Hamish had been preparing his best 'poetry voice' and Fiona had driven mum mad with her twice daily Scottish dancing practise on the wooden kitchen floor.

When the children invited their best friend, Bruce, to join them in their band, Dad banished them all to the garden shed.

Mum volunteered to cook the celebration meal for the children and their primary school friends. She shopped for ten bags of carrots and 12 turnips, which all looked a bit odd on the supermarket conveyor belt. The checkout girl thought they were for a donkey sanctuary!



Questions

1. Who is older; Hamish or Fiona?

How do you know?

2. Why do you think the children were ready for another party?

3. Why did Dad banish the children to the garden shed?

4. What is Hamish planning to do on Burns night?

Why do you think that? Use evidence from your text to support your answer.

5. What dish do you think Mum was making with the turnips?

Why didn't she need to buy another ingredient for the dish?

Answers

These are the most probable answers, using evidence from the text. Other answers are acceptable if they are consistent with the text and are plausible.

1. Who is older; Hamish or Fiona?

Hamish and Fiona are twins so they are the same age.

How do you know?

The text opens with, 'The twins, Hamish and Fiona'.

2. Why do you think the children were ready for another party?

In January the nights are long and the weather is often cold and miserable.

There is nothing to look forward to after Christmas and a party would cheer everyone up.

3. Why did Dad banish the children to the garden shed?

Dad banished them so that they could do their band practice and if it was noisy they wouldn't disturb anyone in the shed.

4. What is Hamish planning to do on Burns night?

Hamish is going to read a poem on Burns night.

Why do you think that? Use evidence from your text to support your answer.

The text says 'had been preparing his best 'poetry voice'.

5. What dish do you think Mum was making with the turnips?

Mum was making neeps and tatties.

Why didn't she need to buy another ingredient for the dish?

She didn't buy potatoes because there were already three sacks in the village hall.

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Burns Night Bash

The 25th January arrived and the twins, Fiona and Hamish, were almost bursting with excitement. As well as the long-lasting Christmas lights, the inside of the village hall was bedecked with tartan banners and bunting – everyone at school had blue, red and green felt tip fingers!

Mum had been peeling potatoes for a week and every pan in the kitchen was filled with one of three types of vegetable. It seemed like there was an army to feed.

Bruce, Hamish and Fiona had perfected 'Scotland the Brave' as their show-stopper and the boys were ready to provide a musical backing to Fiona's nifty Scottish dancing routine. After plenty of rehearsing, she was step perfect, but the kitchen floor needed to be re-varnished.

With butterflies in their tummies and grins on their faces, the children got changed into their kilts and crisp white shirts, ready to head off to the newly decorated village hall.

Questions

1. Who made the banners and bunting?

How do you know this? Find and copy evidence from the text.

2. Why did mum feel like she was feeding an army?

3. What has Fiona's dance practice got to do with the kitchen floor?

How do you know this? Find and copy evidence from the text.

4. Had the children had butterflies for breakfast?

Why did the author chose to use this metaphor in the story?

5. Did the children think their act was good? Copy a word/phrase which tells you this?

Challenge

Why did the author choose to use the word 'bash' in the title of the story?

Answers

These are the most probable answers, using evidence from the text. Other answers are acceptable if they are consistent with the text and are plausible.

1. Who made the banners and bunting?

The children and their friends made the banners and bunting.

How do you know this? Find and copy evidence from the text.

The text says 'everyone at school had blue, red and green felt tip fingers!' because they had all been colouring the decorations with felt tips.

2. Why did mum feel like she was feeding an army?

Mum was feeding the guests at the celebration and if there are a lot of people to feed, there is a saying; 'It's like feeding an army'.

3. What has Fiona's dance practice got to do with the kitchen floor?

The kitchen floor needs re-varnishing because that is where Fiona rehearsed with her dancing shoes on.

How do you know this? Find and copy evidence from the text.

The text says that 'the kitchen floor needed to be re-varnished.' Fiona must have practised so hard that she had worn away all of the polish.

4. Had the children had butterflies for breakfast?

I don't think the children will have eaten butterflies for their breakfast.

Why did the author chose to use this metaphor in the story?

When people are excited or nervous their tummy feels like fizzy things are inside it – just like butterflies fluttering their wings. It adds to the feeling of anticipation in the story.

5. Did the children think their act was good? Copy a word/phrase which tells you this?

The children thought their act was good. A phrase which shows this is 'show-stopper', 'nifty', 'step perfect'. [One word/phrase].

Challenge

Why did the author choose to use the word 'bash' in the title of the story?

A 'bash' is another name for a party or celebration, usually a lively one.

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Burns Night Blush

Arriving at the village hall exactly a month after their Christmas Day party, Fiona, Hamish and their friend Bruce, were speechless as mum and dad drove them round the village green, which appeared alight with hundreds of glow worms. The magical scene exceeded their expectations, as the modest tree lights from Christmas had been supplemented with hundreds of illuminations donated by local families. Whatever happened now, Burns Night was going to be a sparkling success.

The surprises didn't stop there. The interior of the hall was festooned with tartan, and some anonymous benefactor had supplemented the bunting with swags of blue silk and emerald green ribbons. It looked like something from a Hollywood film set. The industry the children had put into preparing the hall had been matched by their friends and neighbours in secret. The entire place was perfect for a celebration fit for a poet.

Once the stage was set, the trio played their well-rehearsed pieces and Fiona danced like a dream to the backing of the band. Hamish recited Robbie Burns' famous poem. Mum had cooked the potatoes, carrot and turnip and the fizzy pop was making everyone burp! The children and their school friends were ready for a feast, so they seated themselves in patient anticipation awaiting the arrival of the meal.

Mum popped her head round the kitchen door looking a little red in the face. Dozens of expectant faces turned her way. The main event was about to be presented.

"Emm, did anyone bring haggis?" she whispered...



Questions

1. Why are the children described as 'speechless'?

2. If the Christmas lights were still in the trees, why do you think the people in the village had added more?

3. Why do you think some of the preparations were 'secret'?

4. If the children had prepared the celebration for their friends, why is the party described as being 'fit for a poet'?

5. Where in the text is there evidence for who the celebration is for?

6. Why was mum red in the face when she asked if anyone had brought the haggis?

Challenge

The first two parts of the story are called, 'Burns Night Bash'.

Why is the last part called, 'Burns Night Blush'?

Answers

These are the most probable answers, using evidence from the text. Other answers are acceptable if they are consistent with the text and are plausible.

1. Why are the children described as 'speechless'?
If something unexpected and astonishing happens, then often people are emotional and can't speak for a while as they need a moment to take everything in.
2. If the Christmas lights were still in the trees, why do you think the people in the village had added more?
The people in the village knew how hard Hamish and Fiona were working to make the party a success and they wanted to help and surprise them by adding to the tree lights already there.
3. Why do you think some of the preparations were 'secret'?
The preparations were secret because the community wanted the quality of the decorations to be a surprise to the children.
4. If the children had prepared the celebration for their friends, why is the party described as being 'fit for a poet'?
The story refers to 'Burns' who was a famous Scottish poet.
5. Where in the text is there evidence for who the celebration is for?
The title of the story is 'Burns Night Blush' and at the end of paragraph one it says, 'Burns Night was going to be a sparkling success.' Later in the story it says, Hamish recited Robbie Burns' famous poem.
6. Why did mum have a red face when she asked if anyone had brought the haggis?
Mum and the children had decorated the hall, prepared the vegetables, rehearsed the performances, but forgotten the haggis for the traditional meal. Mum was embarrassed that she had done this so blushed as she asked the question in the hope someone else may have remembered.

Challenge

The first two parts of the story are called, 'Burns Night Bash'.

Why is the last part called, 'Burns Night Blush'?

The title is a play on words that indicates someone is going to be embarrassed about something.