

Making Inferences

When things are not 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.

Eid al-Fitr – At Last!

This was the day Aktar had been waiting for. 30 early mornings and a nagging rumbling tummy were almost over for another year. The excitement of the first few days of **fasting** had turned into the biggest test of his life so far. Time spent with the family was not so hard but once Aktar ran through the school gates every morning the **temptation** kicked in! This year marked his first full **Ramadan**. Last year, he had almost completed the month-long fast – but not quite. A bad bout of flu had stopped him in his tracks.

This year, he had felt both humble and proud to have attended prayers 5 times each day for a month. His teacher had set up a special prayer station in school in one of the small classrooms. His prayer mat had been carefully positioned and the space was cosy and quiet for prayer time.



But that was all over for now; today was **Eid al-Fitr** and Aktar and his sister Manju were looking forward to the most delicious date breakfast. First things first though – what Eid present was he going to get? Deep inside, he hoped that it was going to be the new football boots he had pointed out, several times, to his mum and dad!

Eagerly jumping out of bed, Aktar spotted the bright new clothes, neatly **draped** on the back of his bedroom chair. A huge smile crept over his lips. Today was going to be a great day.

At breakfast, Mum and Dad announced that after Eid prayers at the **mosque**, the whole family would join them for celebrations, lunch and presents!

On the way to the mosque, the family recited Eid prayers.

“Well done for finishing your first Ramadan fast Aktar! Mum and I are very proud of you,” beamed Dad. “Manju may join you next year then the whole family will be fasting together.”

Making Inferences

Glossary

fasting – going without food, especially for religious reasons

temptation – desire or craving for something, especially something considered wrong

Ramadan – in the Islamic calendar it is the ninth month of the year, during which Muslims fast between dawn and dusk

Eid al-Fitr – the first day of the Islamic month of Shawwal that marks the end of Ramadan

draped – arranged/hung

mosque – a building in which Muslims worship

Questions

1. What could the phrase 'a nagging, rumbling tummy' mean?

2. Use the information from the opening paragraph. How does Aktar feel? Circle as many words as you think.

disappointed

tired

excited

challenged

Use evidence from the text to support your choices.

3. Why did the teacher set up a classroom for Aktar to pray?

4. Do you think Aktar was mostly looking forward to having a special breakfast or receiving presents? Give reasons for your opinion.

5. Can you think of a celebration similar to Eid that you have been part of? Describe your feelings and the events of the day. Were they similar or different to Aktar?

Answers

1. What could the phrase 'a nagging, rumbling tummy' mean?

A nagging, rumbling tummy could mean that Aktar was hungry.

2. Using the information from the opening paragraph. How does Aktar feel? Circle as many words as you think.

Use evidence from the text to support your choices.

disappointed

tired

excited

challenged

All words could be chosen here with evidence to support each as follows:

disappointed: Because he did not complete Ramadan the previous year.

tired: Because he had to get up early every morning for a month.

excited: Because he knew that the day was going to involve lots of celebrations, food, family and presents.

challenged: Because Aktar had found fasting difficult but had stuck with it for the whole month.

3. Why did the teacher set up a classroom for Aktar to pray?

If anyone needs to pray 5 times a day, some of those times may be during school time. It wouldn't be easy to leave school to go to the mosque so a classroom was set up in school. Also, a classroom would be a private place to think and pray, away from the business of school.

4. Do you think Aktar was mostly looking forward to having a special breakfast or receiving presents? Give reasons for your opinion.

I think Aktar was mostly looking forward to his presents as he mentions that more often than breakfast in the story.

Answers

5. Can you think of a celebration similar to Eid that you have been part of? Describe your feelings and the events of the day. Were they similar or different to Aktar?

Answers will vary. Responses could be similar to:

I have been part of Christmas celebrations that are very similar to Eid. I got up very early in the morning because I was excited like Aktar. I went to church with my parents and met lots of my friends there and we said, “Happy Christmas!” to each other. It felt nice to be with lots of people. On our way home, we picked up a neighbour of ours, who was alone, so that she could have company on Christmas Day. I felt proud that we were being kind to someone else. When we got home, our cousins joined us and we gave each other presents and ate a special lunch that had taken mum ages to prepare. After lunch, we played games. It was a great day and everyone laughed and was happy.

Making Inferences

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

Eid al-Fitr – At Last!

Aktar had listened especially closely to the prayers and the words of the **Imam** this morning. After completing his first fast, Aktar felt **particularly** special and grown-up this year and was starting to understand fully why this month of fasting and prayer was so important to Muslims all over the world. The thought that millions of others were carrying out the same prayers, with the same beliefs of peace and goodwill to all, made him feel humble. He heard the Imam tell those gathered for prayer that they should show the world, through their actions, their belief in peace, kindness and **generosity**. Aktar was determined that he should be the best Muslim he could be and follow those guidelines as often as he could; not always easy with an annoying little sister like Manju!

Back in the car, the family set off on a different route to return home.

“I thought we were going back to celebrate with the family,” said Manju.

“We are,” replied Mum, “but first, we need to share our day with as many of our friends as we can.” It seemed to take ages to reach home again. It was an Eid tradition to always take a different route back home. There were many **detours** and stops along the way for Eid greetings with friends.

“Eid Mubarak!” exclaimed Dad to his friends, as he stopped the car and jumped out for a handshake or an embrace.

The excitement of the special day was building and, by the time the family arrived home, the children were almost bursting with **anticipation** at the thought of a family celebration with grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins.

Glossary

Imam – the prayer leader at a mosque

particularly – more than average

generosity – kindness

detours – different route

anticipation – keenness/looking forward to



Questions

1. Why did Aktal listen 'especially closely to the prayers and words of the Imam' this morning?

2. How does going without food help someone to be a better person?

3. In what ways could Manju make it hard for Aktar to be a good Muslim?

4. How can taking a different route from home to the mosque and back again help the family to meet people?

5. If you took part in the Eid celebrations, would you enjoy them or not? Use evidence from the whole of the text in your answer.

Answers

1. Why did Aktal listen 'especially closely to the prayers and words of the Imam' this morning?

I think Aktal understood that the day was special, as it marked the end of Ramadan. He was concentrating especially hard to what the Imam had to say about how to be a good Muslim.

2. How does going without food help anyone to be a better person?

Going without food can help you to understand how people less fortunate feel and also, if you don't think about eating, you can concentrate on something else, like prayers or how to be a better person.

3. In what ways could Manju make it hard for Aktar to be a good Muslim?

If Manju annoys Aktar he could shout at her or be cross with her. That would be going against the Muslim teaching to be kind and generous to other people. It can be very difficult to be kind to people who make you angry though.

4. How can taking a different route from home to the mosque and back again help the family to meet people?

If the family travelled to and from the mosque on the same route, they would pass the same people and the same houses. If they went a different way, they could see more friends and call at different homes.

5. If you took part in the Eid celebrations, would you enjoy them or not? Use evidence from the whole of the text in your answer.

Answers will vary. Responses could be similar to:

I think I would enjoy Eid as it sounds like a happy celebration. I like the thought of spending the day with my family and relations, having special food to eat and swapping presents. I think that praying at the mosque would help me to think about other things rather than just the presents that I wanted and that may help me to be a better person.

Or

I don't think that I would enjoy Eid as I wouldn't like to go without food for a month before it. I think it would be hard to be kind to my sister or brother for that long. I would enjoy the food and presents though.

Making Inferences

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

Eid al-Fitr – At Last!

“Now Aktar and Manju, before we celebrate as a family, we need to remember the words of the **Imam** and share our good fortune with our neighbours,” smiled Dad.

“How do we do that?” they both asked.

“You can both take some Eid food to Mr and Mrs Hogarth next door. Sharing with our neighbours is a special part of today, just like they share gifts with us when they celebrate their special days.”

Returning from their errand, the children sat with the family, ready to begin the celebration meal.

Mum and Manju had spent a lot of time in the kitchen preparing the special meal but all of the visitors brought something to share with them. As well as a huge pot of **beef biryani**, date parcels and **baklava**, Grandma brought her famous lamb kofta kebabs and **falooda** and Auntie Nadyia brought coconut samosas and **halwa**.

Everyone was happy and chatty and their tummies felt full for the first time in a month. Presents were exchanged and games were played. Aktar and Manju were helpful hosts and the day was a success for everyone.

By the end of the day, long after the family had waved their relations goodbye, Aktar reflected on the celebrations that ended the month-long fast. “Thank you for a great day. I’m glad that I made it to the end of Ramadan,” he whispered to Dad as he was nodding off to sleep, “I feel that I’m trying to be a good Muslim.”

“Eid Mubarak, Aktar, so do I,” smiled Dad proudly.



Making Inferences

Glossary

Imam – the prayer leader at a mosque

beef biryani – spicy coloured rice mixed with meat, fish, or vegetables

baklava – a dessert of filo pastry layered with nuts, with syrup or honey

falooda – a cold desert of rose syrup, vermicelli, sweet basil seeds, and pieces of jelly with milk, often topped off with a scoop of ice cream

halwa – a sweet dish made of almonds, carrots, or semolina boiled with milk, sweetened with sugar and spiced with cardamom

Questions

1. Why does Dad ask the children to share their good fortune with others before they celebrate themselves?

2. Why did Mum and Manju need to spend a long time in the kitchen?

3. Using information from the whole text, why does Aktar think he is being a good Muslim?

4. How does this story make you feel? Refer to the vocabulary the author uses in the text to justify your opinion.

Challenge: How would you feel if you had fasted (gone without food during daylight hours) for a month? Would it make you a better person? How?

Answers

1. Why does dad ask the children to share their good fortune with others before they celebrate themselves?

Answers will vary. Responses could be similar to:

Dad asks the children to share with others first because it shows that the family thinks it is important to think of others before themselves.

2. Why did mum and Manju need to spend a long time in the kitchen?

Answers will vary. Responses could be similar to:

If people are celebrating a special event, it is enjoyable to spend time to prepare food to share with the family and friends. Some of the food that is eaten would only be prepared at that time so it may take longer or be more complicated to make than everyday meals. It shows that Manju and her mother think of this day as out of the ordinary so they make special efforts to make different food to share.

3. Using information from the whole text, why does Aktar think he is being a good Muslim?

Answers will vary. Responses could be similar to:

Aktar remembers what he has learned at the mosque and is happy to share celebration food with his neighbours before he eats. He also helps his parents during the day. At the end of the day, he thanks his dad and talks to him about how hard he is trying to be a good Muslim, which shows that it is important to him.

4. How does this story make you feel? Refer to the vocabulary the author uses in the text to justify your opinion.

Answers will vary. Responses could be similar to:

The story includes lots of feelings and values. The author uses words and phrases like; celebrate, share, good fortune, smiled, special, happy, gifts, chatty, presents, games, helpful, success, waved goodbye, great day, proudly. These words all make me feel like Eid was a day that everyone enjoyed celebrating. It included thinking about why Muslims celebrate it and involves the whole family and neighbours too. I think the values that Aktar and his family show are ideas and beliefs that anyone would be proud of.

Answers

Challenge: How would you feel if you had fasted (gone without food during daylight hours) for a month? Would it make you a better person? How?

Answers will vary but should be backed up. Responses could be similar to:

I think it must be very difficult to go without food for a month and I respect the effort it must take to do that. Muslims think a lot about what sort of person they are during their fast (Ramadan) and I think that instead of eating if I used the time to pray and reflect on my behaviour it would probably help to make me a better person. I would know a bit more about what it felt like to be truly hungry and be able to empathise with those people in need more than I do now.

or

I think that if I went without food for a month I would be grumpy and cross all of the time and not a better person at all. I would be constantly thinking about food, not about the things that would improve me. I would probably be bad-tempered with my brother or sister more, not less, and I know that I wouldn't be able to do any homework because I wouldn't be able to concentrate.