

KEYSTAGE 3 ENGLISH

Read 'Snowball' and answer the questions.

Snowball

More snow fell that week
than had fallen for thirty years.
The cold squeezed like a bully's hug
and made you grin at nothing.

Andrew Pond and Davy Rickers and me (5)
went out,
three sprats, into the white bite of the world.
We shared my balaclava.

And for an hour we chucked snowballs (10)
at the windows on our estate;
spattered the pristine panes of Nelson Way,
powdered the gleaming glass up Churchill Drive
until we got bored
and Andrew Pond's mitts from his Granny
shrank. (15)

It was me who started it off,
that last snowball,
rolling if from the size of a 50p scoop,
down Thatcher Hill,
to the size of a spacehopper. (20)
It creaked under my gloves as I pushed.
Then Dave Rickers and Andrew Pond joined in,
and we shoved the thing
the length of Wellington Road.
It groaned as it grew (25)
and grew.

The size of a sleeping polar bear.
The size of an igloo.
The size,
by the time we turned the corner (30)
into the road where I lived,
of a full moon -

the three of us astronauts.

The worst of it was
that Andrew Pond and Davy Rickers ran off, (35)
leaving me
dwarfed and alarmed
by a planet of snow
on our front lawn.

It went so dark in our living room, (40)
I was later to hear,
that my mother thought there had been an eclipse.

And later that night -
after the terrible telling-off,
red-eyed, (45)
supperless -

I stared from my bedroom window
at the enormity of my crime,
huge and luminous
under the ice-cold stars. (50)

To tell the truth,
It was pride that I felt,
even though
I had to stop in for as long as it took
for the snowball to melt. (55)

Word bank

Sprats - small fish

HELP Types of questions

The questions you are asked below focus on different types of reading skills.

- Questions 1-2 require you to select information from the text.
- Question 3 requires you to 'read between the lines'
- Question 4 requires you to look at why the writer has structured and organised the text in a particular way.
- Question 5 requires you to investigate the writer's language choices.
- Question 6 requires you to look at the overall effect - how the writer's choices affect a reader's response.

Questions

1. Name two pieces of clothing that the children have with them.
2. Which four places do the children pass through?
3. From lines 41 - 55, explain the difference between the way the poet and her mother feel about the snowball. How can you tell?

HELP Comparing Characters

You can use the following strategy to help you to compare characters' feelings.

Step 1 Work out how each character feels.

- What do they say, think and do? How do they look (frowning, smiling, etc.)?
- What does this suggest about the way they feel?

Step 2 Compare the characters' behaviour and feelings.

- What is the same?
- What is different?

4. Re-read lines 29 - 33 below. How does the way the sentence is written add to the feeling of surprise at how the snowball grew?

The size,
By the time we turned the corner
Into the road where I lived,
Of a full moon -
The three of us astronauts.

5. Explain how each of the following images adds to the humour of the poem.

- a. three sprats, into the white bite of the world (line 7)
- b. the size of a spacehopper (line 20)
- c. the size of a sleeping polar bear (line 27)
- d. the size of an igloo (line 28)

6. How has the writer made the story of the snowball entertaining?

You should write about:

- what happens to the writer
- the writer's choice of names and places
- the way the snowball is described
- the way the writer uses exaggeration