

'Twas the Night before Christmas

By Clement Clarke Moore



'Twas the night before Christmas, when all through the house
Not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse.
The stockings were hung by the chimney with care,
In hopes that St Nicholas soon would be there.

The children were nestled all snug in their beds,
While visions of sugar-plums danced in their heads.
And mamma in her 'kerchief, and I in my cap,
Had just settled our brains for a long winter's nap.

When out on the lawn there arose such a clatter,
I sprang from the bed to see what was the matter.
Away to the window I flew like a flash,
Tore open the shutters and threw up the sash.

The moon on the breast of the new-fallen snow
Gave the lustre of mid-day to objects below.
When, what to my wondering eyes should appear,
But a miniature sleigh, and eight tiny reindeer.

With a little old driver, so lively and quick,
I knew in a moment it must be St Nick.
More rapid than eagles his coursers they came,
And he whistled, and shouted, and called them by name!

"Now Dasher! now, Dancer! now, Prancer and Vixen!
On, Comet! On, Cupid! on, on Donner and Blitzen!
To the top of the porch! to the top of the wall!
Now dash away! Dash away! Dash away all!"

As dry leaves that before the wild hurricane fly,
When they meet with an obstacle, mount to the sky.
So up to the house-top the coursers they flew,
With the sleigh full of toys, and St Nicholas too.

And then, in a twinkling, I heard on the roof
The prancing and pawing of each little hoof.
As I drew in my head, and was turning around,
Down the chimney St Nicholas came with a bound.

He was dressed all in fur, from his head to his foot,
And his clothes were all tarnished with ashes and soot.
A bundle of toys he had flung on his back,
And he looked like a peddler, just opening his pack.

His eyes-how they twinkled! his dimples how merry!
His cheeks were like roses, his nose like a cherry!
His droll little mouth was drawn up like a bow,
And the beard of his chin was as white as the snow.

The stump of a pipe he held tight in his teeth,
And the smoke it encircled his head like a wreath.
He had a broad face and a little round belly,
That shook when he laughed, like a bowlful of jelly!

He was chubby and plump, a right jolly old elf,
And I laughed when I saw him, in spite of myself!
A wink of his eye and a twist of his head,
Soon gave me to know I had nothing to dread.

He spoke not a word, but went straight to his work,
And filled all the stockings, then turned with a jerk.
And laying his finger aside of his nose,
And giving a nod, up the chimney he rose!

He sprang to his sleigh, to his team gave a whistle,
And away they all flew like the down of a thistle.
But I heard him exclaim, 'ere he drove out of sight,
"Happy Christmas to all, and to all a good-night!"

Questions

1. How do we know that everything in the house was still and quiet?

2. What are the children doing in the poem?

3. Who is the narrator of the poem and how do you know?

4. Find and copy a word which is a synonym for brightness.

5. What are St. Nick's courasers? Tick one.

the children

his sleigh

his reindeer

eagles

6. Find and copy three similes used to describe St. Nick's appearance.

7. How does the narrator know not to be frightened?

8. Tick the correct box related to each statement in the table:

	True	False
St. Nicholas never stopped talking.		
St. Nicholas' clothes were clean.		
The sleigh was almost empty.		
He laughed when he saw St. Nicholas.		
St. Nicholas was smoking a pipe.		

For those statements which are false, write the correct statement below:

9. Why does St. Nick lay a finger on the side of his nose?

10. How does St. Nicholas tell the reindeer it is time to move on?

Answers

1. How do we know that everything in the house was still and quiet?

The poem says that not a creature was stirring which means nobody was moving.

2. What are the children doing in the poem?

In the poem, the children are asleep and dreaming.

3. Who is the narrator of the poem and how do you know?

The narrator is the father because it tells us that the children are snug in their beds, mamma (mother) is in her 'kerchief and he is in his cap ready for bed.

4. Find and copy a word which is a synonym for brightness.

lustre

5. What are St. Nick's courers? Tick one.

the children

his sleigh

his reindeer

eagles

6. Find and copy three similes used to describe St. Nick's appearance.

Accept any three of the following: cheeks like roses, nose like a cherry, belly like a bowl full of jelly, smoke around his head like a wreath, droll little mouth drawn up like a bow, the beard on his chin was as white as the snow.

7. How does the narrator know not to be frightened?

St. Nicholas turns his head and winks at him.

8. Tick the correct box related to each statement in the table:

	True	False
St. Nicholas never stopped talking.		✓
St. Nicholas' clothes were clean.		✓
The sleigh was almost empty.		✓
He laughed when he saw St. Nicholas.	✓	
St. Nicholas was smoking a pipe.	✓	

For those statements which are false, write the correct statement below:

St. Nicholas didn't say a word.

St. Nicholas' clothes were dirty/tarnished.

The sleigh was full of toys.

9. Why does St. Nick lay a finger on the side of his nose?

St. Nick lays a finger on the side of his nose to tell the person watching that it's a secret and not to tell anyone.

10. How does St. Nicholas tell the reindeer it is time to move on?

St. Nick tells the reindeer it's time to move on by whistling at them.