




# 'Twas The Night Before Christmas




'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.




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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.




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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.




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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!



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



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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 on 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 bowl full 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!”



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# Questions

1. How many reindeer were there? Tick one.

- ☐ six
- ☐ seven
- ☐ eight
- ☐ nine

2. Number the events from 1-4 to show the order that they occur in the poem.

- ☐ A sleigh appeared.
- ☐ St. Nicholas came down the chimney.
- ☐ St. Nicholas filled the stockings.
- ☐ The children were in bed.

3. Look at the third verse. Where does the narrator move to? Tick one.

- ☐ door
- ☐ window
- ☐ upstairs
- ☐ garden

4. Draw **four** lines to match and complete the rhyming pairs.

And then, in a twinkling,  
I heard on the roof,...

Not a creature was  
stirring, not even a mouse.

'Twas the night before Christmas,  
when all through the house,...

And giving a nod, up the  
chimney he rose.

And laying his finger  
aside of his nose,...

I sprang from the bed to  
see what was the matter.

When out on the lawn there  
arose such a clatter,...

The prancing and pawing  
of each little hoof.

5. What material was St. Nicholas dressed in?

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6. Name **two** of St. Nicholas's reindeer.

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

7. **His eyes - how they twinkled!**

What impression does the word 'twinkled' give us about how St. Nicholas was feeling?

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# Answers

1. How many reindeer were there? Tick one.

- ☐ six
- ☐ seven
- ☒ **eight**
- ☐ nine

2. Number the events from 1-4 to show the order that they occur in the poem.

- 2** A sleigh appeared.
- 3** St. Nicholas came down the chimney.
- 4** St. Nicholas filled the stockings.
- 1** The children were in bed.

3. Look at the third verse. Where does the narrator move to? Tick one.

- ☐ door
- ☒ **window**
- ☐ upstairs
- ☐ garden

4. Draw **four** lines to match and complete the rhyming pairs.

And then, in a twinkling, I heard on the roof,...	Not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse.
'Twas the night before Christmas, when all through the house,...	And giving a nod, up the chimney he rose.
And laying his finger aside of his nose,...	I sprang from the bed to see what was the matter.
When out on the lawn there arose such a clatter,...	The prancing and pawing of each little hoof.

5. What material was St. Nicholas dressed in?

**St. Nicholas was dressed in fur.**

6. Name **two** of St. Nicholas's reindeer.

**Accept any two of the following: Dasher; Dancer; Prancer; Vixen; Comet; Cupid; Donner; Blitzen.**

7. **His eyes - how they twinkled!**

What impression does the word 'twinkled' give us about how St. Nicholas was feeling?

**Pupils' own responses, such as: I think the word 'twinkled' gives us the impression that St. Nicholas was feeling happy and that his eyes lit up.**

# Questions

1. Which of these is **not** a reindeer listed in the poem? Tick one.

- ☐ Dasher
- ☐ Dancer
- ☐ Darling
- ☐ Donner

2. How does the poet describe the driver of the sleigh? Tick one.

- ☐ lively
- ☐ slow
- ☐ dangerous
- ☐ careful

3. Draw **four** lines to match and complete the rhyming pairs.

The stockings were hung by  
the chimney with care,...

And filled all the stockings,  
then turned with a jerk.

More rapid than eagles his  
coursers they came,...

In hopes that St. Nicholas  
soon would be there.

He was dressed all in fur,  
from his head to his foot,...

And he whistled, and shouted,  
and called them by name!

He spoke not a word, but  
went straight to his work,...

And his clothes were all  
tarnished with ashes and soot.

4. Look at the third verse.

Which word has the closest meaning to 'a loud noise'? Tick one.

- ☐ arose
- ☐ clatter
- ☐ shutters
- ☐ sash



5. Look at the fourth verse.

Find and copy one word which means the same as 'tiny'.

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6. What did the poet compare St. Nicholas's nose to?

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7. **He had a broad face and a little round belly,  
That shook when he laughed, like a bowl full of jelly!**

What impression does the poet create about St Nicholas's belly with the phrase 'like a bowl full of jelly'?

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8. 'Twas The Night Before Christmas' was written many years ago. Why do you think the poem is still studied in schools today?

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# Answers

1. Which of these is **not** a reindeer listed in the poem? Tick one.

- ☐ Dasher
- ☐ Dancer
- ☒ **Darling**
- ☐ Donner

2. How does the poet describe the driver of the sleigh? Tick one.

- ☒ **lively**
- ☐ slow
- ☐ dangerous
- ☐ careful

3. Draw **four** lines to match and complete the rhyming pairs.

The stockings were hung by the chimney with care,...	And filled all the stockings, then turned with a jerk.
More rapid than eagles his coursers they came,...	In hopes that St. Nicholas soon would be there.
He was dressed all in fur, from his head to his foot,...	And he whistled, and shouted, and called them by name!
He spoke not a word, but went straight to his work,...	And his clothes were all tarnished with ashes and soot.

4. Look at the third verse.

Which word has the closest meaning to 'a loud noise'? Tick one.

- ☐ arose
- ☒ **clatter**
- ☐ shutters
- ☐ sash

5. Look at the fourth verse.  
Find and copy one word which means the same as 'tiny'.

**miniature**

6. What did the poet compare St. Nicholas's nose to?

**The poet compared St. Nicholas's nose to a cherry.**

7. **He had a broad face and a little round belly,  
That shook when he laughed, like a bowl full of jelly!**

What impression does the poet create about St Nicholas' belly with the phrase 'like a bowl full of jelly'?

**Pupils' own responses, such as: The poet creates the impression that St. Nicholas' belly wobbles by the use of the phrase 'like a bowl full of jelly' and that it is squashy.**

8. 'Twas The Night Before Christmas' was written many years ago. Why do you think the poem is still studied in schools today?

**Pupils' own responses, such as: I think that "Twas The Night Before Christmas' is still studied in schools today because Christmas Eve is an exciting topic for lots of children. Also, the way the poet has used rhyme makes it an effective and memorable poem.**

# Questions

1. **A wink of his eye and a twist of his head,  
Soon gave me to know I had nothing to dread.**

Which word is closest in meaning to the word 'dread'? Tick one.

- ☐ wish
- ☐ win
- ☐ love
- ☐ fear

2. Draw **four** lines and match each word to its simile.

cheeks ●

beard ●

mouth ●

nose ●

● as white as snow

● like a cherry

● drawn up like a bow

● like roses

3. What could be heard on the roof?

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4. Fill in the missing word.

As dry leaves that before the wild \_\_\_\_\_ fly,

5. Look at the verse that starts with:

**He was dressed all in fur, from his head to his foot,**

Find and copy one word which means the same as 'stained'.

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6. **And I laughed when I saw him, in spite of myself.**

Why do you think the narrator laughed when they saw St. Nicholas?

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7. **And the smoke it encircled his head like a wreath.**

Why do you think the poet chose to compare the smoke to a wreath?

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8. Summarise what St. Nicholas looked like using 30 words or fewer.

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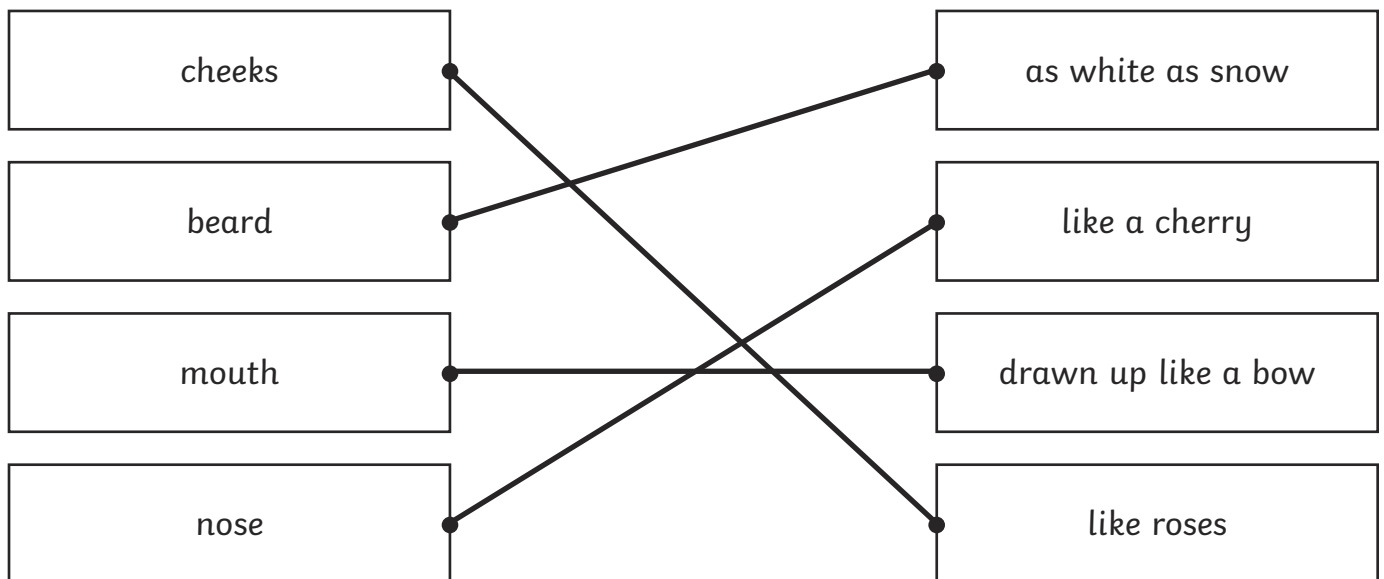
# Answers

1. **A wink of his eye and a twist of his head,  
Soon gave me to know I had nothing to dread.**

Which word is closest in meaning to the word 'dread'? Tick one.

- ☐ wish
- ☐ win
- ☐ love
- ☒ **fear**

2. Draw **four** lines and match each word to its simile.



3. What could be heard on the roof?

**The prancing and pawing of hooves could be heard on the roof.**

4. Fill in the missing word.

As dry leaves that before the wild **hurricane** fly,

5. Look at the verse that starts with:

**He was dressed all in fur, from his head to his foot,**

Find and copy one word which means the same as 'stained'.

**tarnished**



6. **And I laughed when I saw him, in spite of myself.**

Why do you think the narrator laughed when they saw St. Nicholas?

**Pupils' own responses, such as: I think that the narrator laughed when they saw St. Nicholas because they were amazed and shocked to see him so close.**

7. **And the smoke it encircled his head like a wreath.**

Why do you think the poet chose to compare the smoke to a wreath?

**Pupils' own responses, such as: I think that the poet chose to compare the smoke to a wreath to explain to the reader how the smoke went around St. Nicholas's head in a circle. The poet has also chosen a Christmas-themed object rather than something else circular to link with the theme of the poem.**

8. Summarise what St. Nicholas looked like using 30 words or fewer.

**Pupils' own responses, such as: St. Nicholas had a white beard, rosy cheeks and a red nose. He was plump and looked happy. He was wearing fur that was stained with ash and soot.**