Thistledown Lane

The Midsummer Swap Party: Reading Comprehension

KS1 · Year 1 and Year 2

Free · with answers



- Year 1: a short retelling and 6 questions
- Year 2: the whole story and 9 questions, with reading domains
- Answers for both, and a mark scheme for Year 2

Watch the episode free at **thistledownlane.co.uk/episode-the-midsummer-swap-party**

A gentle claymation series about kindness, friendship and the seasons on an English country lane.

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For grown-ups

How to use this pack

Two levels from the same story. **Year 1** is a short retelling with picture-friendly questions: tick, order and true or false. **Year 2** is the whole story as told in the episode, with questions tagged by KS1 reading content domain (1a to 1e) and a mark scheme. You can watch the episode together first, read it aloud, or use it as an independent reading task.

KS1 reading content domains

- **1a** draw on knowledge of vocabulary to understand texts
- **1b** identify and explain key aspects of texts, such as characters, events and information
- **1c** identify and explain the sequence of events in texts
- **1d** make inferences from the text
- **1e** predict what might happen on the basis of what has been read so far

The story

On the longest day of the year, everybody comes to Moss's Swap Party. Why isn't it getting dark, and what's twinkling in the hedge?

The lesson

What you share matters more than what you have.

Curriculum links

English, Year 1 and Year 2 reading comprehension: listening to and discussing stories, discussing word meanings, predicting, making inferences and checking the text makes sense. PSHE: sharing, saying thank you, friendship, community.

Year 1: The Midsummer Swap Party

Name: _____





It was midsummer on Thistledown Lane. Moss had a big idea. “A Swap Party!” he said. Everybody would bring something special to swap. Old Wren told the birds, and the birds told everybody else.

That evening, all the friends came to the Swap Shop. Skye brought a white pebble. Hazel brought some birch bark. Barnaby came with his spade.

Skye gave her pebble to Barnaby. Barnaby gave Skye a lump of mud! Pip brought back the glass drop. She did not want a swap. She just wanted to share it.

The wren cousins sang Sorrel a thank-you song. His fluffy fur had kept their babies warm.

There were games on the lane. But the sun did not go down. “Why isn’t it getting dark?” asked Pip. “Because today is the longest day of the whole year,” said Mam.

At last the sky turned a soft, deep blue. Tiny green lights glowed in the hedge. They were glow-worms! Moss’s shelves were still full. But he had never felt so lucky.

Year 1 questions

Name: _____

1 Whose idea was the Swap Party?

☐ Moss ☐ Lilly ☐ Mam

2 What did Skye bring?

☐ a white pebble ☐ a shell ☐ a feather

3 What did Barnaby give Skye?

☐ a spade ☐ some mud ☐ a button

4 What was glowing in the hedge?

☐ glow-worms ☐ candles ☐ raindrops

5 Put these in order. Write 1, 2 and 3 in the boxes.

☐ Tiny lights glowed in the hedge.

☐ Moss had a big idea.

☐ Skye came to the party.

6 True or false?

The party was on the longest day of the year. **True** ☐ **False** ☐

Pip wanted a swap for the glass drop. **True** ☐ **False** ☐

The sun went down very early. **True** ☐ **False** ☐

Year 2: The Midsummer Swap Party

Name: _____





It was midsummer on Thistledown Lane. The hedges were thick and green, the grass was full of buttercups, the bees were busy in the clover, and the sun was warm on the wall. And Moss had been thinking. “I’ve had an idea. A big idea. The biggest idea I’ve ever had,” said Moss. “Is it a cake?” asked Lilly.

“Better than a cake. A party! A Swap Party! Everybody comes to the Swap Shop, and everybody brings something special to swap. And nobody pays, of course,” said Moss. “Everybody? Skye, and Hazel, and Pip, and Barnaby?” asked Sorrel. “And the cousins. Everybody who helped on the lane this spring,” said Moss.

“Oh, Moss, that’s a lovely idea. When is it?” asked Bramble. “Tonight! It’s midsummer. The best night of the whole year for a party,” said Moss. “Then leave the inviting to me. I’ll tell the birds in the hedge, and the birds will tell everybody else,” said Old Wren. And off flew Old Wren, chattering all the way along the lane. By lunchtime, everybody knew.

That evening, Moss swept the step, and polished the little bell, and opened the hatch wide. “Ding-a-ling! Swap Shop’s open!” said Moss. And straight away, a streak of navy and red came swooping down the lane.

“Hello, everybody! It IS spring! Well… it’s nearly summer, really,” said Skye. “Skye! You came! What have you brought?” asked Bramble. “A smooth white pebble from the seaside. I’ve been keeping it, just for today,” said Skye.

Then, along the lane, without a wibble and without a wobble, came Hazel. “Wibble, wobble… ta-da! I’ve brought a curly bit of birch bark. And my little oak has got lots of new leaves!” said Hazel. Then, from down by the pond, came a little hopping sound.

“One little hop… and another little hop!” said Pip. And right behind her, without a word, hopped the little frog. And then, very muddy and very cheerful, came Barnaby, with his spade over his shoulder.

“Dig, dig, diggity! Am I late? I was digging. I’m always digging,” said Barnaby. And last of all, with a great twittering, down came the wren cousins, all squeezing onto the gatepost next to Sorrel. “Squeeze in, squeeze up!” said the wren cousins.

“There’s always room for the cousins,” said Sorrel. And there they all were. The lane outside the Swap Shop was full of friends.

“Right! Who wants to swap?” asked Moss. “Me! This pebble is for Barnaby. Because when my old nest crumbled, Barnaby found me the best sticky mud on the lane,” said Skye. “For me? Then you can have this. A big lump of my very best mud. In case your nest needs mending next spring,” said Barnaby.

And Skye laughed so much, she nearly fell off the gatepost. “This bark is for Moss. Because Moss gave me the twigs that keep my little oak safe,” said Hazel. “Curly birch bark! That’s going right at the top of the shelf. And here’s a blue button for you, Hazel, to match your scarf,” said Moss.

“I’ve brought the glass drop back. The froglets are all grown up now. So somebody else can borrow it, and look at little things,” said Pip. “That’s kind, Pip. What would you like to swap it for?” asked Moss. “Nothing. I just wanted to share it,” said Pip.

And Moss didn’t know what to say. Because nobody had ever done that at the Swap Shop before. “Sorrel! Sorrel! Our babies have hatched! And your fluffy fur kept them warm as anything!” said the wren cousins. “My fur? My old, falling-to-bits fur?” asked Sorrel.

And the cousins sang Sorrel a little thank-you song, all together, from the top of the gatepost. And Sorrel went pink right to the tip of his ears. “Moss, everybody’s swapping. But you haven’t swapped anything yet,” said Bramble. “I know. And I don’t mind a bit,” said Moss.

So the party went on. There were games on the lane, and Lilly told a long, silly story about a squirrel who lost her beret, and Barnaby showed everybody how to dig a very small hole. And still the sun didn’t go down.

The light went all golden, and the shadows grew long. Mam came up the lane to see what all the laughing was about. And Pip was looking up at the sky. “Why isn’t it getting dark? It’s ever so late. I’m usually tucked up in bed by now,” said Pip.

“Because today is the longest day of the whole year, Pip. It’s midsummer. The sun stays up as long as it possibly can,” said Mam. “As long as it can? Just for our party?” asked Pip. “Well, I think the sun wants to stay for the party too. But even the sun goes to bed in the end,” said Mam. “Then I’ll stay up just as long as the sun does!” said Pip.

And at last, very slowly, the sky turned pink, and then purple, and then a soft, deep blue. “Look! The hedge! The hedge is twinkling!” said Lilly. All along the bottom of the hedge, tiny green lights were glowing in the grass.

“Glow-worms. They glow on warm summer nights. Looks like they’ve come to the party too,” said Old Wren. “They’re like little stars that live in the hedge,” said Bramble. “Do you know what, Bramble? My shelves are still full. But I’ve never felt so lucky,” said Moss.

And everybody sat together on the warm lane, old friends and new friends, watching the hedge glow. Even the cousins were nodding off, in a fluffy little row on the gatepost.

“It’s not what you’ve got that matters. It’s what you share. A story, a song, a helping paw. The best things aren’t things at all. Goodnight!” said Bramble. And so, on the longest day of the year, the Swap Party went on and on, until the stars came out over Thistledown Lane, and the little lights in the hedge glowed all night long.





Year 2 questions

Name: _____

1 Where did Skye's smooth white pebble come from? (1 mark) 1b

2 Lilly said, "The hedge is twinkling!" What does **twinkling** mean? (1 mark) 1a

☐ shining with little lights ☐ shaking in the wind ☐ growing very fast

3 Name **two** things that happened at the party before it got dark. (2 marks) 1b

4 Find and copy **one** colour word that tells you what the sky looked like as the sun went down. (1 mark) 1a

5 Number these events from 1 to 4. (1 mark) 1c

☐ Lilly sees the hedge twinkling.

☐ Old Wren tells the birds about the party.

☐ Skye gives Barnaby a pebble.

☐ Pip asks why it isn't getting dark.

6 Why did Hazel bring the birch bark for Moss? (1 mark) 1d

7 Pip didn't want anything for the glass drop. Why didn't Moss know what to say? (1 mark) 1d

8 Moss said, "My shelves are still full. But I've never felt so lucky." Why did Moss feel lucky? (1 mark) 1d

9 Barnaby gave Skye some mud "in case your nest needs mending next spring". What do you think Skye will do with it? Use the story to explain. (1 mark) 1e

Answers

Year 1

1. Moss
2. a white pebble
3. some mud
4. glow-worms
5. 1 Moss had a big idea. 2 Skye came to the party. 3 Tiny lights glowed in the hedge.
6. True; False (she just wanted to share it); False (it stayed up late, because it was the longest day)

Year 2 (total 10 marks)

1. From the seaside.
2. shining with little lights
3. Any two, 1 mark each: friends swapped things (Skye's pebble for Barnaby's mud); the cousins sang Sorrel a thank-you song; there were games on the lane; Lilly told a long, silly story about a squirrel who lost her beret; Barnaby showed everybody how to dig a very small hole.
4. pink, purple or blue (accept: golden, "The light went all golden")
5. Old Wren tells the birds about the party (1); Skye gives Barnaby a pebble (2); Pip asks why it isn't getting dark (3); Lilly sees the hedge twinkling (4).
6. To say thank you, because Moss gave her the twigs that keep her little oak safe.
7. Nobody had ever done that at the Swap Shop before. Everybody always swapped, but Pip just wanted to share.
8. Because all his friends came and shared things, songs and stories with each other. Having friends matters more than having things.
9. Any sensible answer linked to the story, for example: keep it and use it to mend her nest next spring if it crumbles again, like it did over the winter.