Name _____ Date _____



The Night Before Christmas

Read the poem aloud. The lines are numbered.

A Visit from St. Nicholas

Part 1 of 3, lines 1 to 20

'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 rein-deer,

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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Name _____ Date _____



The Night Before Christmas

Read on. The lines are numbered.

A Visit from St. Nicholas

Part 2 of 3, lines 21 to 40

"Now, Dasher! now, Dancer! now, Prancer and Vixen!
On, Comet! on, Cupid! on, Donder 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 look'd like a pedlar 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;



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Name _____ Date _____



The Night Before Christmas

Read on. The lines are numbered.

A Visit from St. Nicholas

Part 3 of 3, lines 41 to 56

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

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

49 He spoke not a word, but went straight to his work,
50 And fill'd all the stockings; then turned with a jerk,
51 And laying his finger aside of his nose,
52 And giving a nod, up the chimney he rose;

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



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Name _____ Date _____



The Night Before Christmas

Read about the poem. Then answer the questions.

Where Did the Poem Come From?

A Visit from St. Nicholas was first printed on December 23, 1823, in the Troy Sentinel, a **newspaper** in Troy, New York. No writer's name was printed with it. A friend of the writer's family had sent the poem to the newspaper.



Other newspapers printed it again and again, and many people learned it by heart. In 1837, a book of poems named Clement Clarke Moore, a professor in New York City, as the writer. In 1844, Moore put the poem in a book of his own poems. Some people think a poet named Henry Livingston Jr. wrote it instead, and people still argue about it today.

The poem changed how Americans pictured Santa Claus. It gave him eight tiny reindeer to pull his sleigh, and it gave the reindeer their names.

---

1. The poem was first printed in ____

a newspaper a book of poems a letter to Santa

2. The writer's name was printed with the poem in 1823. **true** **false**

3. When did Moore put the poem in a book of his own poems? **1844** **1837** **1823**

4. How did the poem change the way Americans pictured Santa Claus?

_____

_____

_____

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Name _____ Date _____



The Night Before Christmas

Find the rhyming words. Use the line numbers.

Rhyming words end with the same sound. Find each line in the poem.

1. Which word rhymes with house in line 1? **horse** **home** **mouse**

2. Which word rhymes with clatter in line 9? **colder** **clapping** **matter**

3. Which word rhymes with appear in line 15? **reindeer** **upon** **apple**

4. Which word rhymes with flash in line 11? **sash** **fish** **flesh**

5. Which word rhymes with snow in line 13? **below** **snowman** **new**

6. Which word rhymes with roof in line 29? **hoof** **rose** **rough**

7. Which word rhymes with merry in line 37? **cherry** **mercy** **many**

8. Which word rhymes with belly in line 43? **berry** **jelly** **bell**

9. Which word rhymes with wreath in line 42? **teeth** **wrath** **with**

10. Find two more words that rhyme in lines 49 to 56. Write them.

_____

_____

_____



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Name _____ Date _____



The Night Before Christmas

Draw a line from each old word to what it means.

kerchief	●	● someone who sells things from *a* pack
sash	●	● funny in an odd way
lustre	●	● the part of *a* window that slides up
coursers	●	● *a* soft, bright shine
pedlar	●	● *a* cloth tied over the head
droll	●	● fast horses (here, the reindeer)

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Name _____ Date _____



The Night Before Christmas

Number the events 1 to 6, in the order they happen.

Use the poem. Write 1 by what happens first.

☐ St. Nicholas comes down the chimney.

☐ The family goes to bed.

☐ The sleigh flies away.

☐ He sees a sleigh and eight tiny reindeer.

☐ St. Nicholas fills the stockings.

☐ A clatter on the lawn gets him out of bed.

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Name _____ Date _____

The Night Before Christmas

Write the eight reindeer in ABC order.

The reindeer in the poem (lines 21 and 22):

Dasher, Dancer, Prancer, Vixen,
Comet, Cupid, Donder, Blitzen



1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____

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Name _____ Date _____



The Night Before Christmas

Copy the lines. Write neatly.

The first and last lines of the poem

'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;

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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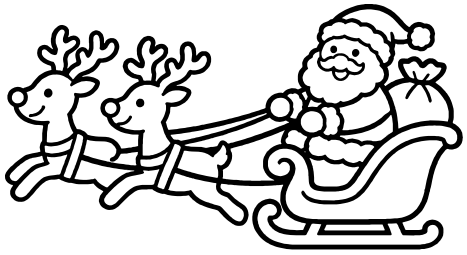
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whistle and thistle (or work and jerk, nose and rose, sight and night)

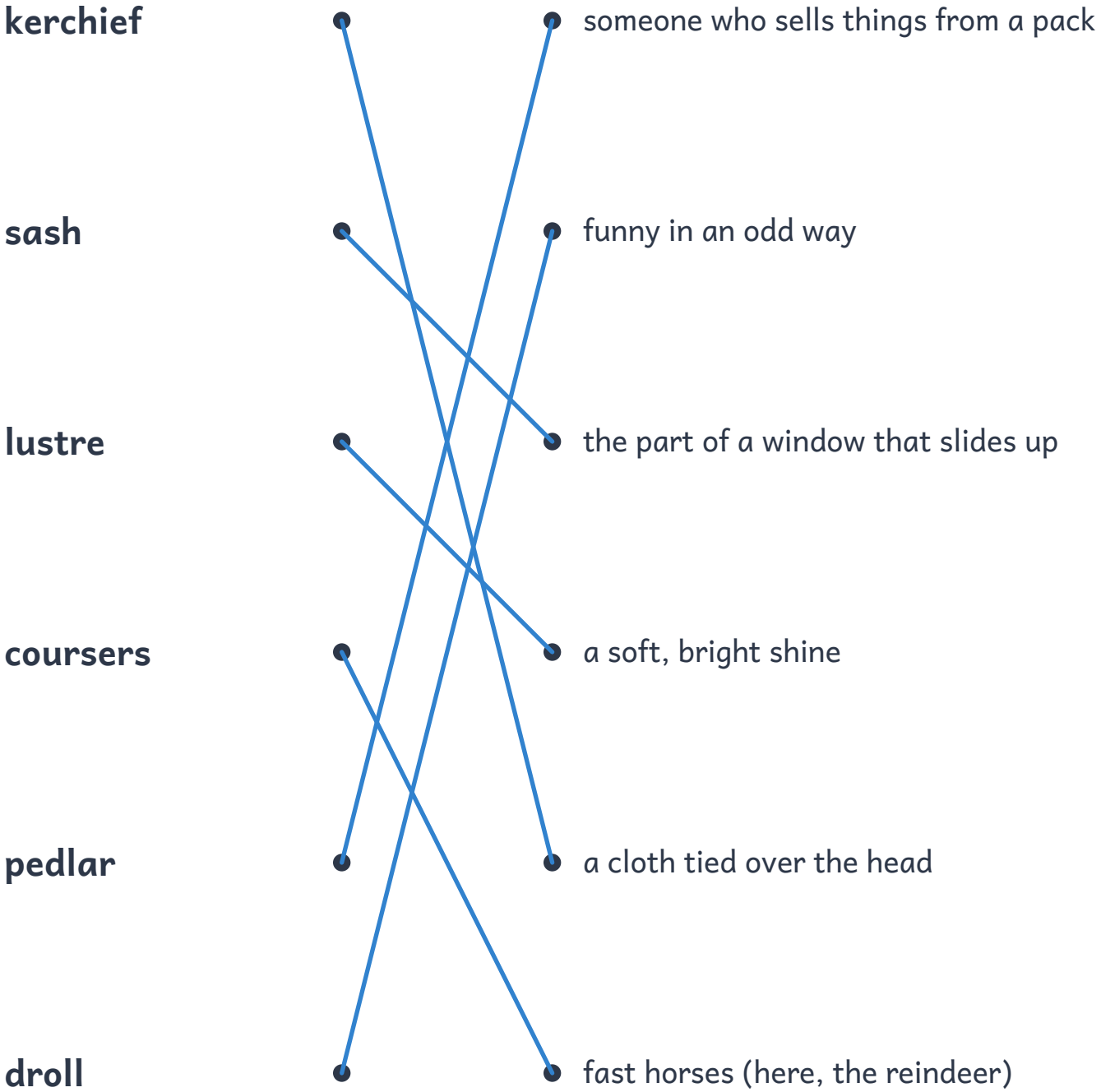


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The Night Before Christmas

Draw a line from each old word to what it means.



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The Night Before Christmas

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1 The family goes to bed.

6 The sleigh flies away.

3 He sees a sleigh and eight tiny reindeer.

5 St. Nicholas fills the stockings.

2 A clatter on the lawn gets him out of bed.

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Comet, Cupid, Donder, Blitzen



1. Blitzen
2. Comet
3. Cupid
4. Dancer
5. Dasher
6. Donder
7. Prancer
8. Vixen

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