



Twas the Night Before Christmas correction task and discussion

Replace the words below that don't rhyme with similar words that do, then listen or ask your teacher to check your answers.

Twas the night before Christmas, when all through the house
Not a creature was stirring, not even a rat.
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 brains.
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 problem.
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 ice
Gave the lustre of midday 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 fast,
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 everyone!"

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 also.

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 jump.

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

His eyes how they twinkled! His dimples how happy!
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 mouth,
And the smoke it encircled his head like a wreath.
He had a broad face and a little round stomach,
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 fear.

He spoke not a word, but went straight to his job,
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 evening!"

Discussion

- How does the poet describe St Nicholas?
- How is that similar or different from your picture of Father Christmas, Santa Claus and/or St Nicholas?
- How similar do you think those pictures of St Nicholas/ Santa might be to the real St Nicholas, who was a bishop in the 4th century in what is now Turkey?
- Do children nowadays know that there was a real saint behind the stories of St Nicholas and Santa? Does it matter?
- Does it matter that Santa is a non-religious figure who dominates a religious festival? Why/ why not?
- Do you think it is okay to tell children that figures like Santa, the Easter Bunny, the boogiemán, and the tooth fairy really exist? What about using those kinds of stories to make people behave?
- Do parents do that in your country? What mythical figures do they talk about?