

Name: _____

Snow Elephants

by Donna Latham

"Yay, Nick's home from college!" Ella rapped on the window when she saw her brother. Nick waved to her from inside his car. "My first wish came true! Nick's home! Now, if only it would snow..." Suddenly, Ella scowled and wondered, "Who's that guy with Nick?"

"Ella!" Nick cried as he walked through the front door. He picked her up and tossed her into the air. "Mom, Ella, meet my friend, Narong. He's from Thailand. He's visiting us for the weekend."

"Welcome," Mom said.

Narong asked, "Where is your snow, please? I have never seen snow."

Mom shrugged and smiled. "So far, we've had nothing."

"That doesn't stop us from wishing for snow, right, Ella?" Nick winked.

"Blah," Ella muttered. "Winter's not much fun without snow."

"Would you like a snack?" Mom asked. "Ella and I baked yummy cookies this morning."

Ella twirled her hair glumly. She thought to herself, "Narong spoiled everything. Nick was supposed to come home to spend time with me. Why should I share him with Narong?"

Narong sat shyly at the kitchen table. He pointed to a plate of cookies. "Are those elephant cookies?"

Ella quietly grumbled, "Elephants are my favorite animal."

"Miss Ella, the Thai people cherish elephants." Narong's eyes danced. "White elephants are a symbol of royalty."

Ella's eyes widened. "Royalty? Well, I'm going to be a princess when I grow up." Narong nodded in agreement. For the first time, Ella smiled. "I whipped up the snow white frosting on these cookies. See? 'Cause I'm wishing for snow. Like you."

"Snow elephants taste yummy," Nick said as he crunched a cookie at the kitchen table.

Mom peeked out the window and saw swirling snowflakes tumbling softly from the sky. "Ella, look out the window! Your second wish finally—" Mom looked back towards the kitchen table. "Where did everyone go?"

Outside, Ella padded powdery snow into a ball. She placed it in Narong's hand. Her wishes had come true, and she realized that she had made a new friend.



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1. What two things did Ella wish for?

2. How did Nick treat Ella?

- a. He acted excited to see her.
- b. He ignored her.
- c. He acted angry at her.

3. Describe where and when this story takes place.

4. When did Ella first smile in this story?

5. How did Ella's feelings towards Narong change from the beginning of the story to the end of the story?

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Choose the correct definition of each underlined vocabulary word.

1. Ella rapped on the window when she saw her brother.
 - a. leaned
 - b. tapped
 - c. covered with paper
 - d. waved
2. Ella twirled her hair glumly.
 - a. shyly
 - b. slowly
 - c. excitedly
 - d. sadly
3. Miss Ella, the Thai people cherish elephants.
 - a. love and appreciate
 - b. use for work
 - c. hunt for
 - d. take good care of
4. White elephants are a symbol of royalty.
 - a. hard work
 - b. religion
 - c. strength
 - d. having to do with kings and queens
5. Suddenly, Ella scowled and wondered, "Who's that guy with Nick?"
 - a. looked confused
 - b. smiled
 - c. made an angry face
 - d. laughed out loud
6. I whipped up the snow white frosting on these cookies.
 - a. hit hard
 - b. made
 - c. added color
 - d. ate

ANSWER KEY

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1. What two things did Ella wish for?

Ella wished her brother Nick would come home and she wished for snow.

2. How did Nick treat Ella in this story? a

a. He was excited to see her.

b. He ignored her.

c. He was angry at her.

3. Describe where and when this story takes place.

The story takes place at Nick and Ella's home, during the winter.

4. When did Ella first smile in this story?

Ella first smiles after she tells Narong she wants to be a princess.

5. How did Ella's feelings towards Narong change from the beginning of the story to the end of the story?

At the beginning of the story, Ella was jealous of Narong. At the end of the story, she realized they had some things in common and she liked him.

ANSWER KEY

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Choose the correct definition of each underlined word.

1. Ella rapped on the window when she saw her brother. **b**
 - a. leaned
 - b. tapped
 - c. covered with paper
 - d. waved
2. Ella twirled her hair glumly. **d**
 - a. shyly
 - b. slowly
 - c. excitedly
 - d. sadly
3. Miss Ella, the Thai people cherish elephants. **a**
 - a. love and appreciate
 - b. use for work
 - c. hunt for
 - d. take good care of
4. White elephants are a symbol of royalty. **d**
 - a. hard work
 - b. religion
 - c. strength
 - d. having to do with kings and queens
5. Suddenly, Ella scowled and wondered, "Who's that guy with Nick?" **c**
 - a. looked confused
 - b. smiled
 - c. made an angry face
 - d. laughed out loud
6. I whipped up the snow white frosting on these cookies. **b**
 - a. hit hard
 - b. made
 - c. added color
 - d. ate