

The Big Game

Read the story. Then answer the questions on the next page.

- 1 Every seat in the gym was taken for the last basketball game of the season. Devin tied his shoes, untied them, and tied them again, because his team, the Hawks, had already lost to the Comets twice this year. “I have **butterflies in my stomach**,” he told his friend Priya. “Me too,” she said, “but let’s just play our game the way we practiced.”
- 2 The Comets started well. Their best player was **as quick as a rabbit**. She stole the ball three times before the first quarter ended, and she scored each time. The Hawks chased her up and down the court and could not catch her.
- 3 By halftime the Hawks were behind by ten points. Devin dropped onto the bench beside his teammates and wiped his face with a towel. “I am **so tired I could sleep for a week**,” he said. Coach Ramirez knelt in front of the team. “Ten points is not much,” she said. “Pass the ball, look for the open player, and **keep your chin up**.”
- 4 The second half was different. **Squeak, squeak** went the shoes on the shiny floor as the Hawks passed the ball again and again. Priya made two long shots from the corner, and Devin added a layup. With five seconds left on the clock, the score was tied.
- 5 Priya threw the ball to Devin. He took one step toward the basket and shot. The ball hit the hoop and **danced around the rim** while nobody in the gym made a sound. Then the ball dropped through the net. The Hawks had won by two points, and the whole team ran to hug Devin.



The Big Game: Questions

Go back to the bold words in the text. Think about what the author really means.

1. What does Devin mean by “butterflies in my stomach”?
 - ☐ He ate something strange for lunch.
 - ☐ He is very hungry.
 - ☐ He feels nervous.
2. “so tired I could sleep for a week” is an example of which kind of figurative language?
 - ☐ hyperbole
 - ☐ simile
 - ☐ onomatopoeia
3. What does the author mean by “as quick as a rabbit”?
 - ☐ The player hopped up and down.
 - ☐ The player moved very fast.
 - ☐ The player was small and shy.
4. “keep your chin up” is an example of which kind of figurative language?
 - ☐ personification
 - ☐ idiom
 - ☐ simile
5. What does the author mean by “danced around the rim”?
 - ☐ The ball rolled and bounced around the hoop.
 - ☐ The players danced under the basket.
 - ☐ The ball missed the hoop completely.
6. Devin says he is “so tired I could sleep for a week”. Write your own hyperbole to show how excited the Hawks were when they won.

The Big Game: Answer Key

Answers are in green. The proof is where to find each answer in the text.

1. What does Devin mean by “butterflies in my stomach”?

- ☐ He ate something strange for lunch.
- ☐ He is very hungry.
- ☒ **He feels nervous.**

Proof This saying describes the fluttery feeling people get in the stomach when they are nervous.

2. “so tired I could sleep for a week” is an example of which kind of figurative language?

- ☒ **hyperbole**
- ☐ simile
- ☐ onomatopoeia

Proof Nobody sleeps for a week. Devin exaggerates to show how tired he is.

3. What does the author mean by “as quick as a rabbit”?

- ☐ The player hopped up and down.
- ☒ **The player moved very fast.**
- ☐ The player was small and shy.

Proof Rabbits are fast, so the comparison shows how fast the player moved.

4. “keep your chin up” is an example of which kind of figurative language?

- ☐ personification
- ☒ **idiom**
- ☐ simile

Proof It is a common saying that means stay hopeful, and it has nothing to do with a real chin.

5. What does the author mean by “danced around the rim”?

- ☒ **The ball rolled and bounced around the hoop.**
- ☐ The players danced under the basket.
- ☐ The ball missed the hoop completely.

Proof A ball cannot dance. The author means it circled and bounced on the rim before it fell in.

6. Devin says he is “so tired I could sleep for a week”. Write your own hyperbole to show how excited the Hawks were when they won.

Answers will vary. Example: The Hawks cheered so loudly that people heard them in the next state.
