

Tracks in the Snow

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

- 1 Lucas pulled on his boots and stepped off the cabin porch. His breath made little clouds, and the pine branches bent low under their white load. The path he had shoveled yesterday afternoon was gone, and the whole yard lay smooth and white, marked only by one line of small prints.
- 2 The prints started at the woodpile. Each one was no bigger than a quarter, and they came in sets of four. They led straight to the bird feeder, where sunflower shells lay scattered all over the snow. The feeder, which Aunt Rosa had filled to the top yesterday, swung empty on its hook.
- 3 From the feeder, the line of prints headed on across the yard, and Lucas followed it. Halfway to the big oak, the little prints suddenly grew far apart, as if the animal had started taking long leaps. A second set of tracks joined them there. These were larger, with four toes and a soft round pad, and they ran close beside the small ones.
- 4 Both sets ended at the foot of the oak. The small prints stopped at the trunk, and bits of bark lay on the snow. The large prints circled the tree three times and then wandered off toward the road. High above, something chattered loudly, and an acorn cap bounced off the top of Lucas's hat.
- 5 Lucas grinned up at the branches. "You were fast enough this time," he said. He walked back to the cabin, where Aunt Rosa stood at the door holding two steaming mugs. "Somebody out there owes you a bag of sunflower seeds," he told her, "and I think the cat from next door had a very busy morning."



Tracks in the Snow: Questions

The text does not say the answer. Find the clue that helps you and underline it in the color shown.

1. What can you infer happened during the night?

red

- ☐ The snow in the yard melted.
- ☐ Aunt Rosa shoveled the yard.
- ☐ Fresh snow fell and covered the yard.

2. Why did the small animal start taking long leaps?

orange

- ☐ It was running away from a larger animal.
- ☐ It was tired after eating so much.
- ☐ It was carrying seeds back to the feeder.

3. Which sentence best shows that the small animal climbed the tree?

yellow

- ☐ The prints started at the woodpile.
- ☐ The small prints stopped at the trunk, and bits of bark lay on the snow.
- ☐ Each one was no bigger than a quarter, and they came in sets of four.

4. Who emptied the bird feeder? Write the clue that helps you.

green

5. What can you infer about the larger animal?

blue

- ☐ It caught the small animal.
- ☐ It gave up because it could not reach the small animal.
- ☐ It climbed the oak tree too.

6. What do you think Aunt Rosa will do about the bird feeder? Use a clue from the story to explain.

Tracks in the Snow: Answer Key

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

1. What can you infer happened during the night?

red

- ☐ The snow in the yard melted.
- ☐ Aunt Rosa shoveled the yard.
- ☒ **Fresh snow fell and covered the yard.**

Proof Paragraph 1: “The path he had shoveled yesterday afternoon was gone, and the whole yard lay smooth and white, marked only by one line of small prints.”

2. Why did the small animal start taking long leaps?

orange

- ☒ **It was running away from a larger animal.**
- ☐ It was tired after eating so much.
- ☐ It was carrying seeds back to the feeder.

Proof Paragraph 3: “A second set of tracks joined them there.”

3. Which sentence best shows that the small animal climbed the tree?

yellow

- ☐ The prints started at the woodpile.
- ☒ **The small prints stopped at the trunk, and bits of bark lay on the snow.**
- ☐ Each one was no bigger than a quarter, and they came in sets of four.

Proof Paragraph 4: “The small prints stopped at the trunk, and bits of bark lay on the snow.”

4. Who emptied the bird feeder? Write the clue that helps you.

green

The small animal, probably a squirrel, ate the seeds. Clue: its prints led straight to the feeder, and shells were scattered all over the snow.

5. What can you infer about the larger animal?

blue

- ☐ It caught the small animal.
- ☒ **It gave up because it could not reach the small animal.**
- ☐ It climbed the oak tree too.

Proof Paragraph 4: “The large prints circled the tree three times and then wandered off toward the road.”

6. What do you think Aunt Rosa will do about the bird feeder? Use a clue from the story to explain.

Answers will vary. Example: She may move the feeder farther from the woodpile, because the prints show the animal started there and went straight to the seeds.