

# Comprehension

Answer these questions about Chapter 1 of Firebird.

## Part A

1. Who is allowed to pick the golden apples from the tree? Tick one.

- only the tsar
- the tsar and the gardener
- anyone, so long as they bring it to the tsar immediately

2. Why was the tsar angry with his guards?

---

3. Why does the gardener hold the firebird's feather 'delicately at the tip'?

---

4. Why is Dmitry quick to offer to catch the thief?

---

5. Why did Dmitry fall asleep so quickly? Give two reasons.

---

---

6. Why did Vasily bring his flute and nuts and treats along for his night watch?

---

---

7. If something was stolen from your school packed lunch, how would you react? How would you feel?

---

---



# Comprehension

## Part B

1. What information can we gather from the text about Erik?

---

---

2. How would you describe Vasily, the middle son, based on evidence from the text?

---

---

3. Why does the tsar not want Ivan to try to catch the thief?

---

---

4. Which of these statements about Ivan is not true? Justify your answer with evidence from the text.

- Ivan is strong-willed.
- Ivan has slow reactions.
- Ivan is disobedient.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



5. How would you describe the tsar, based on evidence from the text?

---

---

---

6. Which phrase tells you that Ivan was determined not to let go of the firebird?

---

★ ★  
Challenge Task ★ ★

Write questions that you would like to ask Ivan at the end of the first chapter.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



# Comprehension Answers

## Part A

1. Who is allowed to pick the golden apples from the tree? Tick one.

- only the tsar*  
 the tsar and the gardener  
 anyone, so long as they bring it to the tsar immediately

*Only the tsar can pick the golden apples from the tree. (The gardener can only pick up fallen apples from the ground in the tsar's absence.)*

2. Why was the tsar angry with his guards?

*He was angry because they had not guarded the tree well enough and hence there had been a breach of security with the apples being stolen.*

3. Why does the gardener hold the firebird's feather 'delicately at the tip'?

*The gardener holds the feather delicately at the tip because it is on fire.*

4. Why is Dmitry quick to offer to catch the thief?

*Dmitry quickly offers to catch the thief because he wants to gain the reward of half the kingdom.*

5. Why did Dmitry fall asleep so quickly? Give two reasons.

*Dmitry fell asleep quickly because he was tired from partying on the previous night and because he found it boring keeping watch.*

6. Why did Vasily bring his flute and nuts and treats along for his night watch?

*Vasily brought along the flute and the nuts and treats to make the time pass more quickly.*

7. If something was stolen from your school packed lunch, how would you react? How would you feel?

*Children's own responses, such as: I would be very confused if I found some food had gone missing. I would speak to a member of staff. I would feel upset that someone had touched my things.*

## Part B

1. What information can we gather from the text about Erik?

*Erik is old and is trusted by the tsar as he is the only person he permits to pick up the apples. He believes in the firebird.*

2. How would you describe Vasily, the middle son, based on evidence from the text?

*Vasily is a dreamer and a talented musician. He plays the flute. He is capable of thinking ahead as he thought about things to bring along that would help him stay awake. He likes his life in the palace but he is not greedy for more wealth or power. He can be disrespectful as he sniggered with Dmitry at the gardener's suggestions about the firebird.*

3. Why does the tsar not want Ivan to try to catch the thief?

*The tsar doesn't want Ivan to try to catch the thief because he thinks Ivan is a good boy but young and foolish. He cannot comprehend how Ivan would succeed where the brothers have failed.*

4. Which of these statements about Ivan is not true? Justify your answer with evidence from the text.

- Ivan is strong-willed.
- Ivan has slow reactions.*
- Ivan is disobedient.

*The untrue statement is: 'Ivan has slow reactions.' This is not true because it says in the text that even though his instinct was to gape at the firebird, 'he quickly stretched out to grab the firebird'.*

5. How would you describe the tsar, based on evidence from the text?

*The tsar is rich, powerful and has wonderful gardens around his palace. He loves strolling in the orchard where the apple tree is. He delights in watching the apples grow plump and he is angry when someone is taking fruit from the tree. He expects his older two sons to be able to catch the thief and is angry with them when they fail. He thinks of Ivan as being much younger and less capable than his other two sons.*

6. Which phrase tells you that Ivan was determined not to let go of the firebird?

*The phrase that shows he was determined not to let go of the firebird is 'purposeful grasp.'*

### Challenge Task

Write questions that you would like to ask Ivan at the end of the first chapter.

*Example answers:*

*Why did you go on night watch when your father told you not to do this?*

*How did you feel when the firebird got away?*