

Rudolph

You may have heard about a reindeer named Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer. In fact, you may think that you are familiar with his story. However, I bet you don't know how he ended up with that bright red light bulb on the end of his nose.

It all started a long time ago when Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer was just plain old Rudolph. He wasn't very old and, like all youngsters, didn't like to do as his parents told him. Growing up in Lapland around all of the elves and other reindeer which helped Santa, meant that Rudolph's life was very calm, and safe. And probably a little boring.

As a young reindeer, Rudolph wasn't allowed out on the main Christmas run, and he wasn't old enough to take his first flying lessons. Instead, all he could do was wander around in the snow, trying to find something exciting.

One day, he wandered a little bit further than usual and stumbled onto something that, to him, seemed magical. Stretching away in front of him was a steep, winding hill that seemed to go on forever. He rushed back to his mother and asked her if he could take one of the training sledges that the elves used and have a go.

"Very well," his mother said, but she knew him too well. "Only if you promise to sit on your bottom, and to wear your scarf wrapped tightly around your face. It is very cold out there today, and I don't want you coming home with a red nose from the wind."

Rudolph agreed to do as he was told and raced away with the sledge. When he reached the brow of the hill, he hopped aboard and slid at a tremendous pace, until he finally came to a rest. Quick as a flash, he dragged the sledge back up and repeated the whole process again and again.

After a while, his good friend Gladys wandered over to see him. She was also a reindeer and was just as bored as Rudolph. "Why don't you go down head-first and on your front?" she asked, knowing that Rudolph could never pass up a challenge.



Rudolph was about to say that he wasn't allowed when he realised just how much fun it sounded. After all, he thought, his mother would never know.

Wanting to do it as soon as possible, Rudolph leapt onto the sledge and lay down. Suddenly, his nose felt very close to the snow. He had to remove his scarf so that it didn't get tangled, and he felt very cold. He didn't want to back down, so he pushed himself off and realised at once what a mistake he'd made.

The snow quickly became deeper and rose above the edge of the sledge. When he had been sat upright, this hadn't been a problem because it had just hit his feet. Now, his nose was buried under inches of icy snow and was acting like a shovel, moving it out of the way of the sledge. He went faster than he'd ever gone before, but the snow kept piling up against his face.

When he finally reached the foot of the hill, Rudolph stood up shivering. Even before he saw the look of shock on Gladys's face, he knew that his nose was glowing bright red. It had become so cold that it never returned to its normal colour.

SUMMARY FOCUS

1. What did Rudolph do as soon as he got back to the hill with the sledge?
2. Why was the snow worse when he was on his front?
3. What did Gladys do after she met Rudolph?
4. What was Rudolph going to do before he realised how much fun Gladys's idea sounded?
5. When did Rudolph realise that his nose was glowing?

VIPERS QUESTIONS

I

Do you think Rudolph's mother trusts him to behave? Explain your answer.

R

Who normally trains on the sledges?

V

Find and copy a word from the text that means "the top of a hill".

I

Do you think Rudolph's friends get him to do lots of silly things? Explain your answer.

R

Which word in the text describes how Rudolph got onto the sledge the first time?

Answers:

1. Jumped on it and rode it down the hill
2. It was hitting his nose rather than his feet
3. Dared him to go down on his front
4. Tell her he wasn't allowed to do it
5. When he stood up at the bottom of the hill

I: She probably doesn't because she reminds him that he is to behave. It says she "knows him too well".

R: The elves

V: Brow

I: Gladys knew that he could never pass up a challenge, so it's likely he gets challenged a lot

R: Hopped