

Name _____



Winter Wonderland

Jan Brett's *The Mitten* takes place in a snowy forest, and this wintry setting is essential to the story. The cold, white landscape creates the perfect conditions for Nicki to lose his mitten, setting off the chain of events that makes the story so fun and memorable. Without the snow-covered setting, the story's events would unfold very differently.

The mitten is lost in the first place because it blends into the snow. Nicki's grandmother warns him that a white mitten could easily disappear, but he insists. When he drops it, he doesn't notice, and that small moment leads to the main plot of the book. If the setting had been a grassy meadow or a sandy beach, the mitten would have been easy to spot, and the animals wouldn't have had the chance to use it as shelter.

The winter setting also explains why the animals behave the way they do. The woodland creatures are not just climbing into the mitten for fun—they are seeking warmth and protection from the cold. The snow forces them to share space in a way they never would under normal circumstances. A bear, a fox, a rabbit, and a mouse would not usually crowd together, but in this frozen world, survival makes them set aside their differences. The snowy weather forces them to cooperate, making the story both funny and heartwarming.

Even the way the mitten changes throughout the story is linked to the cold environment. As more animals enter, the mitten stretches and bulges, showing how desperately they need warmth. The final moment, when the bear sneezes and sends the animals flying, works so well because of the icy air. The sudden burst of movement in the quiet, snowy setting makes the scene more dramatic and amusing.

At the end of the story, Nicki finds his mitten, stretched out and different than before. The snowy setting made this adventure possible, turning a simple lost mitten into a cozy hideaway for the animals. Without the cold, snowy backdrop, the story wouldn't have the same sense of urgency, humor, or charm. Jan Brett's setting not only makes *The Mitten* visually stunning but also plays a key role in shaping the plot and the characters' actions.