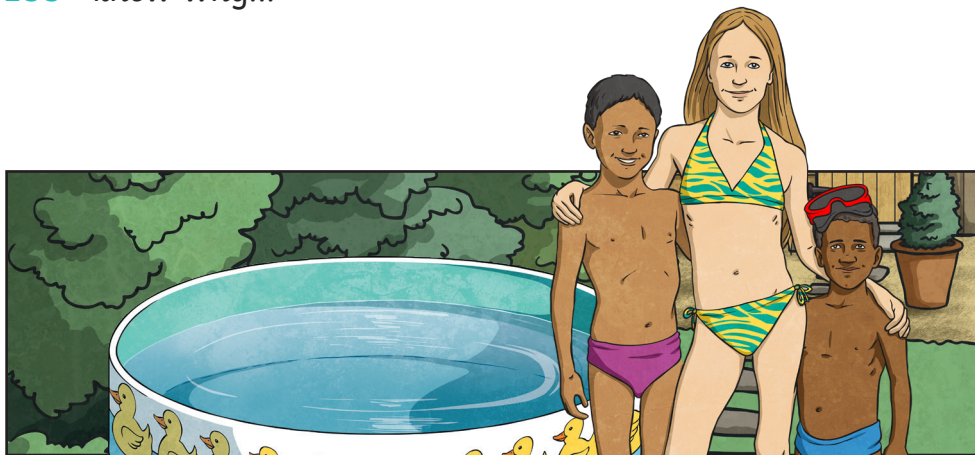


# A Very Unusual Winter

9 Children across the country splashed and frolicked in the  
16 paddling pool, wearing their swimming costumes and  
25 thick streaks of sun cream. Windows were wide open,  
37 fans were out of stock in most high street shops and the  
48 ice cream van hadn't made so much money in ages. It  
59 was the hottest day the United Kingdom had seen in over  
67 thirty years... yet it was the 21st December.

77 For as long as anyone could remember, the 21st of  
86 December had been an icy, cold day. Commuters walked  
96 to work, wrapped up tightly in thick coats and scarves,  
105 past chimneys that plumed with thick, white smoke as  
113 families gathered around the fireplace to keep warm...  
123 but not this year. Something very unusual seemed to be  
131 happening and one man – Simon Thomas – thought he  
133 knew why...



# Quick Questions



1. '*...chimneys that plumed with thick, white smoke*' In this sentence, what does 'plumed' imply about the amount of smoke?

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2. What date was the hottest day the UK had seen in over thirty years?

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3. Why were people shocked about the weather?

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4. What do you think that Simon Thomas may do next?

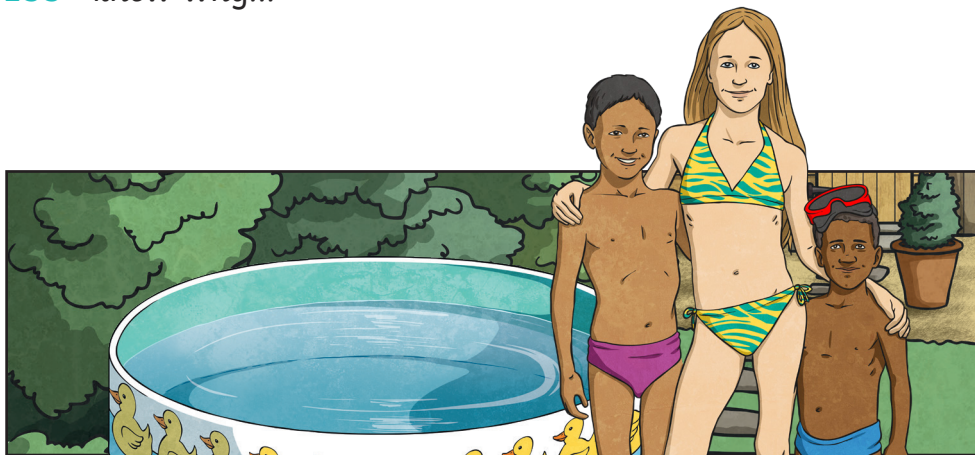
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# Answers



1. '...chimneys that plumed with thick, white smoke' In this sentence, what does 'plumed' imply about the amount of smoke?

**Accept answers which discuss that there was a lot of smoke.**



2. What date was the hottest day the UK had seen in over thirty years?

**Accept: '21st December'.**



3. Why were people shocked about the weather?

**Accept any reasonable explanation regarding the fact that glorious sunshine in December is unheard of, people normally get wrapped up warm, etc.**



4. What do you think that Simon Thomas may do next?

**Accept any reasonable prediction which would fit with the story, such as 'Simon Thomas approached scientists to see if he could fix the change in weather', 'Simon began to research what he could do to put it right' etc.**