

Who lives here?

Look at the ice grotto and then tell me
Which of these places do you see?

A magic grotto for someone who
delivers Christmas gifts to you;
who keeps his sleigh in this shimmering place –
a man with a smiling, bearded face?

A palace with a mirrored hall,
glistening ice on every wall;
jewelled pillars, sparkling light,
crystal diamonds gleaming bright?

An ice-cold room in a wintry land,
painted by someone's frosty hand;
frozen fingers that point at you
trying to turn you cold and blue.

Who would live in the places you have seen –
Jack Frost, Father Christmas or the Snow Queen?
An ice giant, troll or polar bear –
who do you think would live in there?

Jillian Harker

Teachers' notes

Show the children the poster image of the ice grotto, encouraging them to talk about what they see. Make a collection of the key words they use, grouping together any that fit a similar category (words that describe cold or colour, for example).

Ask the children to look carefully at the

poster while you read the poem to them. Invite the children to say which verse best describes what they see. Encourage them to suggest who might live in the place described in that particular verse. Can they think of anyone else, real or imaginary, who might live in such a place?

Compare the words used to describe the grotto in the poem, with those the children used. Did they use the same words, or did they describe the ice grotto in a different way? Could some of their words be used in place of any of the words in the poem?

