

Day 11

Find the letter that ends one word and begins the next.

The three wise men were still following the star, which had turned North-West and was currently leading them through a desert. After 1 *th__xcitement* of the past few days, the magi were rather enjoying the flat, and somewhat bleak, landscape. Balthazar felt safe in the knowledge 2 *tha__hey* were surely so far from civilisation there were sure to be no mineshafts for him to fall down, or sages to engage him in a battle of wits. Caspar loved the desert for all the opportunities it afforded him to gaze off into the middle distance while contemplating the relative smallness of the magi in such a vast expanse of sand. When he 3 *though__hat* his 4 *fello__ise* men might not be impressed enough at the deep thought implied by his silence, he would regale them with facts-

“The 5 *wor__esert* comes from the Latin desertum (meaning an abandoned place), a participle of deserere- to abandon. However, in more recent times the term is used to refer to places where very little precipitation occurs- this can include polar regions. About one third of the land surface of the earth is arid or semi-arid...”

Though Kevin, Gary and Wayne the camels found this a little dull (they were, after all, rather better educated on the subject of deserts than even Caspar ever could be), they were happy to put up with it. The wise men didn't know it, but the star was currently guiding them towards a well-known camel party spot, 6 *jus__he* other side of the next oasis. The magi had noticed that the camels were rather 7 *mor__ager* than usual to continue the journey, with minimal malingering or procrastinating. They hoped, rather than really believed, that this represented a new phase in the camels' lives, in which they cast off the slothfulness of their past and embraced a future of industriousness.

Melchior had been at the back of the procession of wise men, quietly munching his way through the box of chocolate biscuits, and allowing Kevin the camel to chomp flowers off cacti they passed along the way. Eventually, the final biscuit had been eaten, and Melchior rifled around in the saddle bag of Gary the camel for something to do. He came across a box of magi-equipment: some 8 *bras__cales*, an astronomy text book, some spare swooshy gowns, and-

“Ooooooh, a telescope!” Melchior exclaimed. “What fun. I can look at that cactus over there really close up without having to get off my camel...”

Then he gasped and exclaimed gleefully-

“I can see the oasis on the horizon!”

At this, the 9 *camel__tarted* to trot, then do the closest thing a camel can to galloping, at a pace the wise men would never have suspected they could achieve. With Kevin leading the way, they lolloped towards the horizon, looking forward to the camel-shindig they knew was just around the corner.