The Garden beyond the Gate

And at that point, she said, she had an overwhelming desire to push against that imposing, ornate, iron gate and enter the world beyond it. And so, with a steady hand, she opened the gate and on the instant she was there: inside the garden which still consumes her imagination to this very day.

There was no doubt that Belle was so astonished she found it difficult to describe the scene before her - to explain it fully and give it justice. She had a feeling of utopia - absolute heaven - as if nothing could ever cause her to be unsatisfied or unhappy ever again. Perfection reigned; the colours were subtly vibrant, with no hint of harshness. Belle was filled with pure ecstasy, filling her heart to the very brim. And everything was magnificent there…

Powerful waterfalls cascaded over silver-white chasms; redwood trees reached up until they touched the sky. And between those

incredible trees wound a multitude of marble pathways, each demarcated with what looked like precious stones - glinting in the sunshine at the edges.

It was a place of glory and delight, and Belle would remember it forever.

Daisy Courie, year 6