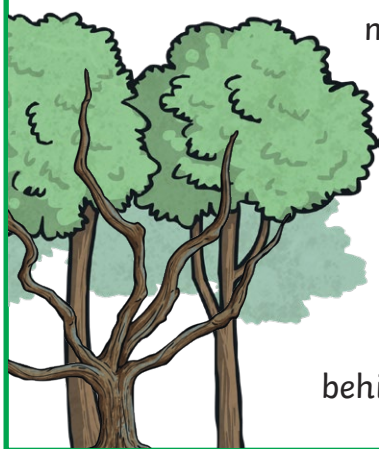


Balseith's Beast

A raucous splashing seemed to explode from what was once a tranquil brook. It was a repetitious noise – rhythmic like the ticking of a clock – and as if great rocks were being hurled from the heavens into a boundless pool. Balseith peered cautiously around the tree trunk at the water's edge, which he had previously been using for shelter. He was desperate to know what could be making such an almighty sound.

As the beast came into focus, Balseith could scarcely comprehend what stood before him: a gargantuan creature whose unusual frame seemed to be made from the trees themselves. Twisted roots and vine intertwined and weaved together to create a solid, sturdy frame which towered high above the canopy. It appeared to be a strange mixture of natural and mechanical: a structured, futuristic robot made purely from plant matter. It was unlike anything Balseith had ever seen before and as his eyes travelled up the creature's trunk, he made a further startling discovery.

Balseith let out an audible gasp: a mistake he would instantly regret as the creature instantly spun to find the source of the noise. Balseith leapt backwards as quickly as he could, desperate to retreat to the safety of his shelter. Yet, as he hid and trembled behind the tree, he heard the rhythmic splashing begin once more.



How is the beast made to seem mysterious?

Explain **two** ways, using evidence from the text to support your answer.

3 marks
