

JOURNEY INTO EARTH

Based on Ideas in
**Uncharted Territories:
Adventures in Learning**
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GUIDE FOR PARENTS

This adventure involves a trip deep into some cave networks. You can extend and develop this in any way you like. Maybe one day you'll be able to visit a cave network as a family and see for yourselves some of the features we found in this story.

The activities in this pack are designed to inspire your child but you don't need to stick to them rigidly. If you (or they) have alternative ideas then please feel free to pursue them. Only work on activities for as long as you and your child are interested – this really is about pick 'n' mix and doing things that feel right for you. In fact, you'll get plenty of learning out of simply reading through this pack.

We've kept resources to a minimum – where there are suggestions, you can adapt them to suit what you have available.

1. WHO DOES THIS BELONG TO?

RESOURCES

- A backpack (if not, any bag will do).
- A rough map of a cross section of a cave network (see page 3 or draw your own and put it in the backpack).
- A sketch of a compass (you can either use the image on page 3 or draw your own and put it in the backpack too).
- Drawing of man at cave (see page 3).
- The letter on page 4 – you can either print it out and get your child to read it, or read it to them.
- Pens and paper.

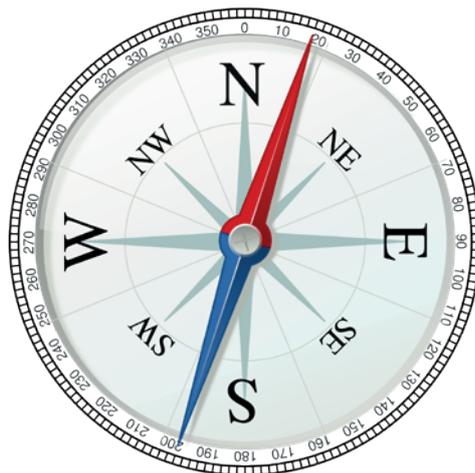
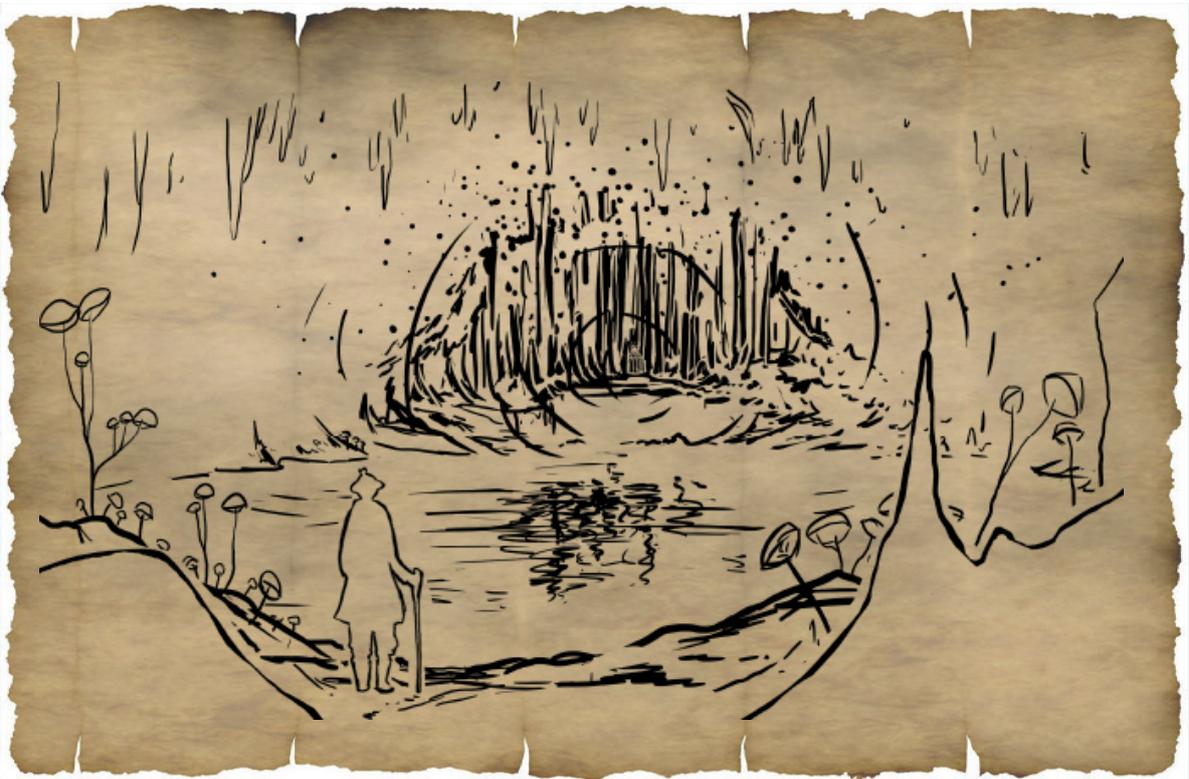
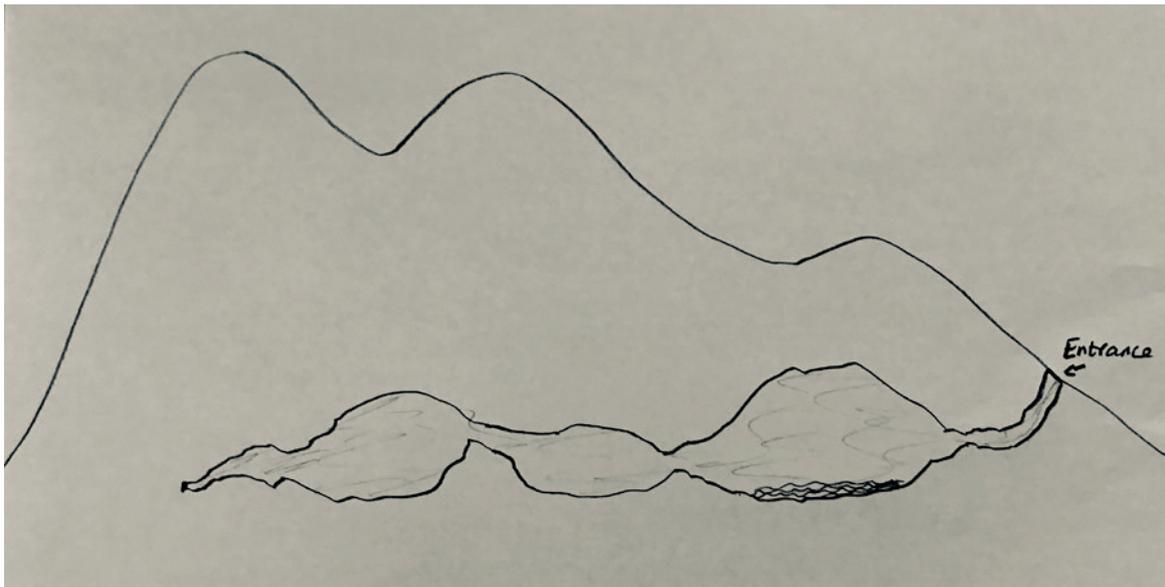
Who might our mystery bag belong to?



ACTIVITIES

1. Let's say we have found this dirty, old backpack. It seems to have been left here, but we have no idea who it belongs to or why they seem to want us to have it. Who might own a bag like this? Shall we look inside? (If your child says no, try something like "I think it must be okay to look, or how will we ever know who to return it to?")
2. Take out the paper items. Examine them one by one. First the compass sketch. What is it? What is it used for? What kind of person might need this? What do you think the letters might mean?

1. WHO DOES THIS BELONG TO? continued



Dear Explorer,

By now you will have found my bag. I couldn't think of a better person to leave it with - thank you for looking after it for me.

If you are a good explorer, you will have already looked inside! You will see there is a drawing of a man by a cave too - that is my grandfather - a great adventurer who found this cavern underground almost 100 years ago. Since then I don't think any human being has been back. My grandfather gave this picture to me and told me these words:

"Not another human soul on this planet knows about this place and when you are grown you must go and explore further. I never made it past this cavern - my supplies were insufficient, but I saw that beyond it in the distance there were at least two more - I drew what I thought the network might be like - but there may well be more to be discovered where the light could not reach. You, like me, child, have an explorer's heart. I can see it in you. Finish my work for me."

Of course, I was just a child then and had no idea where the caves were. I have spent years trying to find this place. I now think I know where the entrance is. It is well hidden by brambles and weeds.

It is my hope you'll come with me - that you'll help me on this adventure and share with me the wonders we may find.

Your friend and fellow explorer,

Adam

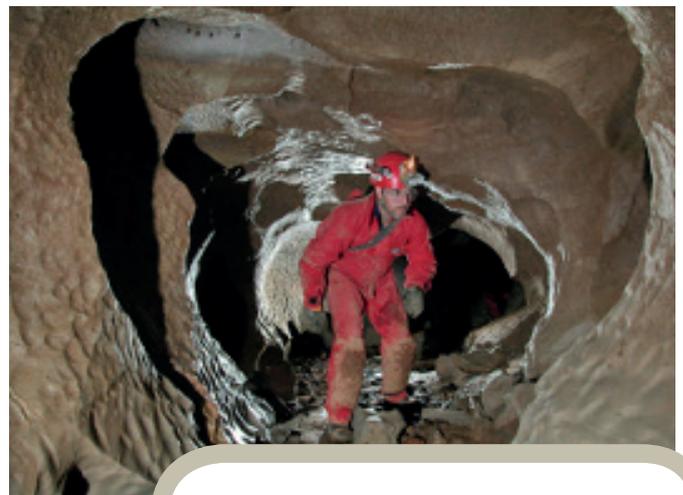
ACTIVITIES CONTINUED

3. Then look at the cross section map of a cave network. Again, what is it? Is it hand drawn? I wonder who might have drawn this and why?
4. Now look at the drawing. Examine it closely. Who is the man? What is he wearing? What do his clothes suggest about when the drawing was made? What kind of hat is that? Does he look 'modern' or from a past time? How long ago do we think it was? What is he doing? What is that object at the back of the cave? Could this bag belong to that man?
5. Now 'discover' the letter. Let your child read it. If they need support, read it together. Discuss the contents of the letter – what does it mean? What is it asking you to do? Who do we think wrote this letter? Do we want to help them? Would we like to go on an adventure into the cave? (If they say no, perhaps suggest they watch from the back to make sure you're safe while you go on the adventure and will they help you to get ready and run for help if you need it? – they'll soon join in).

2. PREPARING FOR A JOURNEY

RESOURCES

- Pens and paper.
- A torch if you have one. If not, don't worry, you can pretend.
- If you have a backpack, your child can wear it, but it's just as simple to mime putting the backpack on. Be guided by them – some children like to 'dress up' for their adventure.
- If you'd like to do the science experiments, you'll need two glasses, a saucer, some water, salt (or bicarbonate of soda) and a short length of string.



What will we need to take to keep us safe?



ACTIVITIES

1. Look again at the drawings of the caves. What does your child notice about the journey? (The map shows that the cave seems to have a downwards tunnel and some narrow passages. It seems quite long. There seems to be a lake.)
2. If we were to go on this journey, what should we take with us? Discuss with your child and get them to make a list of what they think they would need. If you think they need some ideas, look at the image of the caver on the previous page). You might ask some prompt questions:
 - a. How will we see in the dark?
 - b. How will we get up and down steep surfaces?
 - c. How will we get across water?
 - d. How will we let people know if we are in trouble?
 - e. Will we need food and water? What would be good to take?
 - f. How will we keep ourselves dry and warm?
 - g. How will we protect our heads, hands and feet from stones and sharp edges?
 - h. How will we record our journey?
 - i. How will we get past the brambles and weeds?
3. Once you have your list, mime packing the bag. You can use a real bag or an imaginary one, but tick each item off the list as it is packed. One of you can read the item, the other pack and say “check!” You might have so much stuff you both need to pack a bag!
4. Mime putting the backpack on. Fasten the clips around your middle. Adjust the straps on your shoulders. Bend your knees and test the weight – can you bend or squat with it on? Good. You’re ready. Take a selfie of explorers ready to head off on an adventure. If you have one, give your child a torch! Now read the following part of the story:



Narration:

The team was assembled and ready to go. They had packed for any eventuality and early one morning, just as the sun was rising and before any passers-by might see them, they assembled at the entrance to the cave. Waiting for them, with an expression of relief on his face, was Adam. Adam was dressed to be seen! A red, hard-hat. A red jumpsuit. No-one was going to miss Adam in a crowd! But then no-one was going to miss him if he got lost in a cave either. Adam knew what he was doing.

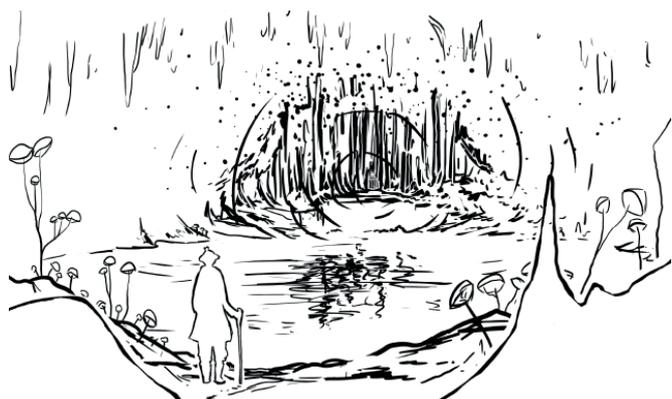
They put on their gloves to protect their hands and started to cut the brambles and weeds back. Soon the entrance to the cave was exposed. [Insert your child's name here] had walked past it a hundred times and would never have dreamed there was a cave behind all those plants. But there it was. And it was dark and steep!

5. Stand with your child as if at the entrance to the cave. You can either simply imagine being there right now, or if they want to they could make a 'cave den' which will take more time. Once they've done that, stand at the entrance with your torches (pretend or otherwise) shining down into the darkness. Ask the question "How are we going to get down there?"



Narration:

They stood for a moment, feeling more than a little anxious. But they were brave, intrepid explorers and, in no time, they were descending into the darkness on their ropes, until at last they stood with their feet firmly on the ground and turned around to see where they were...



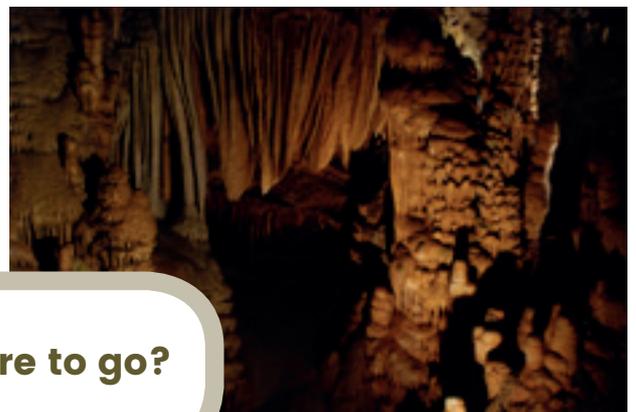
ACTIVITIES CONTINUED

6. Imagine your torchlight captures a small circular area of the cave – this is all you can see. Ask your child to write a short description of what they can see in the light. See if they can use lots of adjectives/describing words and their imagination to bring this setting vividly to life and then let them read it aloud to you.
7. There are amazing formations in the cave – what are they called and how are they formed? Watch this [video clip](#) to find out.
8. And if you and your child want to do a [little science experiment](#), you could make your own stalactite – why not add some food colouring to make it more colourful? It will take a week or so to see the full results, but you should see some changes every day.
9. What are the bright dots on the cave roof? Could this be another undiscovered ‘glow’ cave? [Look at this one](#) in New Zealand! Now back to our cave – how are we going to get across that lake? You can work together to write instructions or an account of how you got across, or record your child telling the team how we’re going to do it. What equipment did we bring that might be helpful? Let your child decide how they want to communicate their problem solving skills – either verbally or in written form, but help them to organise their thoughts so that their ideas are explained clearly.

3. A WARNING!

RESOURCES

- The image of hands (see page 11 – keep it hidden until activity 3).
- Pens and paper.



How far do we dare to go?



Narration:

The team arrived on the far edge of the lake where the strange lantern-like object still seemed to glow. It was only on close inspection that they realized it was not a lantern at all, but a small cage that had become crystallised over time to reflect their torch light. But why a cage? What small creature had it been intended for?

The team almost missed the sign underneath the cage – a handwritten note. The paper was old and very damp – it almost fell apart as they gently tried to open it. But there, written in big, capital letters, was a warning.



ACTIVITIES

1. What could the note mean? Should we turn back? Would a good explorer turn back? Take two pieces of paper – one for you and one for your child (or for each of your children) and write down on a piece of paper your decision – Carry On or Turn Back – count up the votes. What was decided?
2. Here the adult needs to respond to the majority view. If the vote was to carry on, then proceed to the next task. If it was to turn back, read out the following piece of narration.



Narration:

Not everyone was happy to turn back – although most of the team didn't think it sensible and safe, Adam and some others decided to go ahead.

“At least wait here,” he pleaded, “then if we need help we can call for you to go and fetch some. Sound echoes here – we will shout to let you know if it's safe.”

Reluctantly the team agreed that some of them would wait in the chamber and some would go ahead.

3. Depending on whether your child wanted to stay or go ahead, read the following extracts. As you read, ask them to mime what they think the cavers' bodies are having to do. If you really wanted to, you could set this up as an obstacle course, with narrow passages between furniture and a low tunnel – get your child to make an obstacle course in the shape of the map of the cross section of the cave. Either way, miming or obstacle course, the next step is reading the narration.

If they stayed behind, read this extract first, then continue with the next one:

The ones left behind listened carefully as the others went ahead. For a while they could hear nothing but the dripping of water and the occasional shuffle of feet, but then they heard a shout.

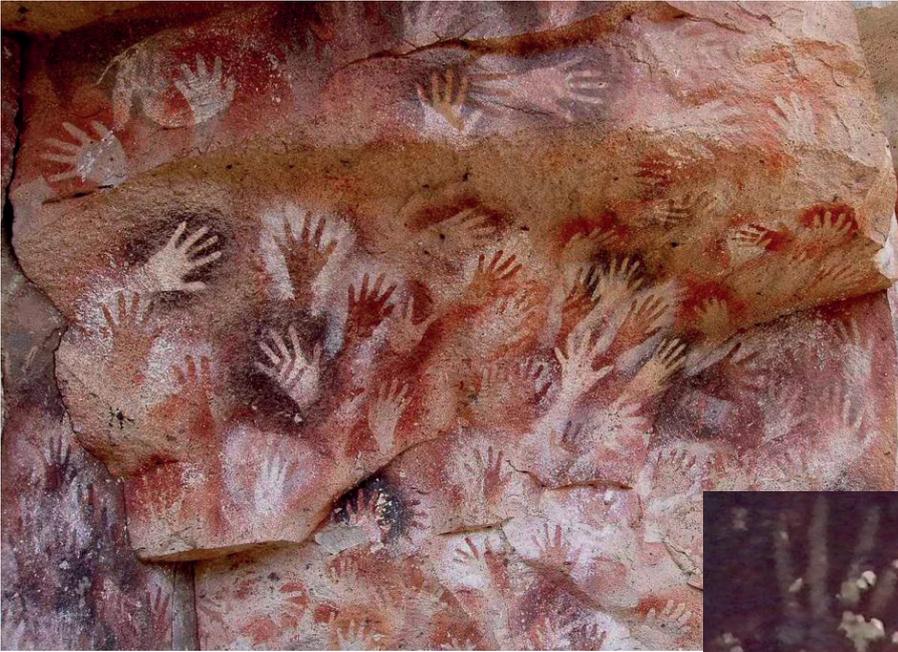
“You have to come and see this – come on! This is amazing!”

If they went forward, start the narration here:

Nervously the team crept forward into the narrow darkness ahead of them. There were sections where the roof was so low, they had to lie on their fronts to wriggle through and others so narrow they could only fit through sideways, carrying their bags over their heads. Eventually they made it through to the next cavern. And they could barely believe their eyes!

4. Show the two hand images, followed by the cave paintings. (see overleaf)

3. A WARNING! continued



3. A WARNING! continued

4. continued

Discuss with your child –

- a) Who made these?
- b) Why?
- c) When?
- d) How?

This **National Geographic clip** might help with some of the answers – there are some words your child might struggle with (like Shamen) so watch it together and explain what they don't understand.



5. Go through the clip again and pause it at the table of symbols that some prehistorians think might represent certain meanings. Could your child make their own coded message by creating a piece of art using those symbols? Try to use a large piece of material for this (the reverse side of an offcut of wallpaper would be great if you have any, or the side of a cardboard box or a cereal box opened and folded out. They could even use chalk on a wall or driveway).

4. LET'S FIND OUT MORE!

RESOURCES

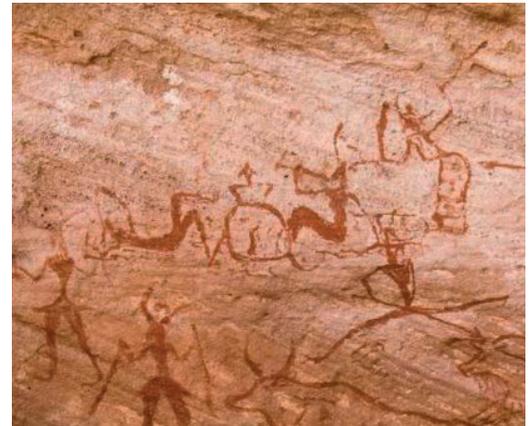
- Paper, pens and paint (or, in an activity below, you could try to make your own paint from plants in the garden, if you have one).
- Brushes for painting (or again, if you want to do the making activity, you can try to make your own from grasses or other objects you can find).

What do we know about these early people, homo sapiens?



ACTIVITIES

1. Deeper into the cave, the team find several more paintings – some depicting animals and some humans (show the cave paintings of humans). It's worth checking out the site [‘EarthnWorld’](#) for more examples.



2. Look again at the image of the three people sitting around a pot. It dates back to 12,000BC – towards the end of the Paleolithic period. What does it tell us about their way of life? Discuss the people with your child. What do they think they are doing? Remember, we'll never know for certain – we want children to understand that we don't always have clear answers in history or prehistory – we make best 'guesses' based on the evidence. However, the image suggests some leisure time. Can your child put together a list of possible activities and jobs people might do in an average day in this time period? They could create mimes of those jobs. See if you can guess them – a kind of Stone Age charades! The BBC's Hands on History series has a [‘Day in the Life of a 10 year old in Ancient Britain’](#) which might give them some ideas.
3. Ask your child this question: “If life was so difficult in the Stone Age – people having to hunt and gather their own food, make their own tools, their own clothes, their own shelters and keep themselves warm and safe, why on earth did they make time for art – either to paint or to dance or sing?” See what your child comes up with. In the past, other children have said things like:
 - a. In order to remember – they didn't have cameras.
 - b. They liked making art.
 - c. They wanted to leave something behind.

Use your child's answers to stimulate a discussion about why people make art – is it something that is part of being 'human'?

4. Can your child make their own piece of art in the style of a cave painting, but which depicts their life? What images would they leave behind for others to find that would tell future generations about how they live?
 - a. This task can be a simple paint on paper task OR
 - b. You can go to town on seeing if you can make your own colours and paint pigments from plants and flowers. There are **some ideas here**.
 - c. To add another layer of difficulty, can you find other tools to paint with – either making brushes from things found in the garden, or using fingers and hands? There are some great ideas for finger painting online and for using objects to paint other than brushes. Artist Iris Scott is famous for her finger painting and she leads **tutorials online** if you want to push yourselves and try one with your child.
5. Back to the Stone Age – what do we know about these early people? Here are some links to some information texts and videos you could watch with your child in order to gather some information. They are going to need this information (and maybe some more, when they create their Stone Age museum).
 - a. DK FindOut! Series has some great links for information about Stone Age people – let your child explore **this site**.
 - b. This BBC **short cartoon** shows the shift into the Neolithic period where people began to farm.
 - c. And where would we be without a **Horrible Histories** version of the Stone Age?
 - d. And the **BBC Bitesize materials** on the Stone Age offer more information linked to the school curriculum.



BOOKS ABOUT THE STONE AGE:

These fiction books are related to the Stone Age and your child might enjoy reading them.

Stone Age Boy by Satoshi Kishamura (5-9)

Ug. Boy Genius of the Stone Age by Raymond Briggs (5-9)

Stig of the Dump by Clive King (7-11)

Stone Age Tales: The Great Cave by Terry Deary (6-10)

5. BACK TO THE CAVE

RESOURCES

- The story narration.



Narration:

The cavers were astonished at their find. The caves went on and on and in each were more and more paintings. It was clear that this was a very special place indeed. One that must be protected. Adam gathered the team around him and spoke in a low and serious voice.

“If we tell anyone of what we’ve found here it will be ruined within months. People will come and trample all over the place. They will damage the stalagmites and stalactites. They will break the crystals. They will frighten the bats and glow worms away. Their breath will disintegrate the paintings – and that’s if they don’t try to chip them right off the rock. People cannot be trusted. We must tell no-one of what we have found here. Do you promise me? No-one! You must swear on it. We can come back and explore and we’ll leave the ropes to help us to find our way, but only us, do you hear? No-one else must know.”



ACTIVITIES

1. Do we agree with Adam? Should we keep this amazing place a secret? If so, how will we keep it secret? What should our ‘story’ be when we get back and people ask us about where we have been? How comfortable will we feel about telling lies to people we care about? Is it ever okay to tell a lie?
2. How will we keep it a secret? We will need to hide the entrance to the cave again, but how? We took all the weeds and brambles away. What can we do? Can your child come up with a strategy for keeping people out of the cave or hiding it?
3. Read the next part of the story with/to your child until you get to the end. Now discuss what you think Ali’s dad might do. What might his job be?



Narration:

Some people disagreed with Adam and thought that the caves should be shared with others but most agreed that it was important to protect the cave and so with some reluctance from some people, everyone agreed – they would never tell anyone of their discovery. And no-one would ever have known if it hadn't been for Lily.

Lily had always been a curious child. She could never sit still. 'Little Miss Fidget' her parents called her. Her grandma called her 'Little Madam' but never to her face. Lily wasn't a naughty child – she just had more energy than most people could cope with and her mind would jump from place to place. She was kind and she was clever – she saw the world differently to most people and when she got into trouble it was just because she had too many thoughts in her head all at the same time and it helped to shout some of them out.

She had shouted out a few too many of those thoughts this morning and her mother had lost her temper.

“For heaven's sake Lily, stop your nattering – give me a moment of peace will you! Why don't you go and play outside!”

Lily knew “go and play outside” meant “leave me alone” and she crept into the garden sadly even though it was still early in the morning. Lily liked to get up very early – another thing her mother found annoying. It was so early, the sun was only just rising. Lily threw a stone at the sun but it barely made it to the garden fence.

“That's another thing! The sun doesn't rise! What a stupid thing to say. The earth spins. There's no rising.”

“You're quite right! And if you'd be so kind as to not throw another stone, I might be able to get past your house without an injury.”

Lily looked up in astonishment. She hadn't seen the man about to walk by. And what a sight he was. Wearing a bright red jumpsuit, a bright red hard-hat and carrying a big backpack with ropes attached to it.

“Where are you going?” she blurted out.

“Just to work,” said the man looking away. “You're right about the Earth by the way.”

Narration continued:

“I know. I’m right about most things – not that anyone listens,” muttered Lily. She looked up but the man had gone. Most children would have let that go. But not Lily. Lily’s curiosity had been awoken and when Lily’s curiosity was awake, nothing would stop her questions. She slipped out of the garden gate and followed the man at a distance.

She followed him until he stopped in front of some brambles and bushes.

She watched as more people with more backpacks and more ropes gathered around him.

She stared as they cut back the vegetation and pulled it away until they exposed a dark entrance way into the side of the hill.

She observed them descend into the darkness, leaving their ropes behind so that they could climb back up again.

She slipped down the ropes and crept along after them, always silent and always a distance away.

She waited until they had all gone deeper, noticing that one had dropped a spare torch which she picked up and slipped into her pocket.

She inched along the edges of the lake, getting her feet wet. Her mum would be cross!

She hid behind a rock and waited until eventually the people came out, crossed back over the lake and disappeared.

She sat in the darkness and waited. Above her the ceiling twinkled as if there were fairy lights. She switched on her torch and crept into the passageway where the people had been and she sat and stared, stared and sat.

And after a while, she ran all the way home and told absolutely everyone she knew about what she had seen. But no-one believed her.

Until she told Ali.

Ali was her friend, but he’d been on holiday for a while. Lily couldn’t wait for him to get back and, as soon as he did, she poured out the whole story. A week had passed – an entire age in which no-one had even let her get to the end of what she had to say, but Ali listened to it all. And then Ali told his dad who worked for the council and his dad was very interested indeed...

6. FINDING A SOLUTION

RESOURCES

- Your child will be gathering and organising information in this section. You'll need pens and paper.
- You'll need something to make a timeline with. You could use masking tape or a long piece of string/rope. Or you can simply walk a timeline and mark points with objects like cups/sticks (see notes on page 20).



How can we protect this place but also let people see it?

Narration:

Ali's dad's job at the council involved looking after places that were important to the town and when he heard Lily's story, he sprang into action. Before a day had passed, a whole team had been sent down into the cave to find out more. They realised that the little girl had not only told the truth, but had not even expressed how incredible this place was. The newspaper headline said "Lily's Amazing Adventure" and there was a photograph of Lily looking grumpy with her mum smiling in her best dress beside her. There was no mention of Adam and his team who had really discovered the caves.

Adam's heart sank as he read the article. It was clear that the council intended to turn the site into a tourist spot. He sat and thought for a while and then picked up the telephone. If anyone was going to take care of that cave, it would be him and his team...





ACTIVITIES

1. If we were going to try to persuade the council to let us look after the site, what would we say? How could we persuade them that we are a responsible team and that we know what we are doing? Let your child come up with some reasons why they should be able to look after the caves and let them pitch it to you as if you are a member of the council.
2. Ask your child to draw or make a list of things they would want to make sure didn't get harmed?
3. Taking the items on the list, get them to think about how we could avoid damaging them – what might the rules be?
 - a. How do we protect the glow worms?
 - b. How do we protect the bats?
 - c. How do we make sure that people can get across the lake without damaging the stalagmites and stalactites?
 - d. How do we get people into the cave without hurting themselves? Will we have to build steps?
 - e. How will we protect the paintings?

Can your child write a short paragraph on each of the above points explaining what the rules and strategy might be? If this feels like too much for them, ask them to choose the thing they want to be in charge of and write about that instead.

4. How can we help people to understand what they might see? Outside the cave, the visitors will be given a chance to walk through a visitor's centre. What might it have in it? Can you draw a floorplan? Do we need:
 - a. A café?
 - b. A carpark?
 - c. Toilets?
 - d. A museum or information centre?

You and your child can have some fun with this if you like. What would a Stone Age themed café be called? What would the menu look like?

What kinds of food would be served? What do Stone Age themed toilets look like? This might take you off on some tangents, but when you've done that, we come back to communicating Stone Age life to visitors to the centre.

5. If we want people to better understand the Stone Age, what information would be useful for them to know and how would we present it? We could make:
 - Exhibits with images and artefacts (you can draw these) and with explanations of what they are.
 - Sculptures and statues (you could make these with your body and take a photo).
 - Re-enactments – you could create Stone Age 'scenes' to share with your visitors.
 - A timeline (see timeline ideas below).
 - An audio guide that people listen to as they go through your cave.
 - A map of the caves with the passages and caverns given exciting names.
6. Ask your child to use their knowledge and research of the Stone Age to make the things they want to put into their museum. You might want to talk to them about 'curating' an exhibition. A curator arranges information so that it's both interesting and informative. They decide what order to put things in and think about the pathway their visitors might take through the exhibition. Your child might want to make a little exhibition map.
7. Making the timeline – the scale of time when studying the Stone Age is vast and can be confusing for children. One way to do it is to pace the timeline out. First you'll need to decide if you want to use the Julian timeline (BC/AD) or the Common Era timeline (BCE/CE), which is the one many historians use. They're the same but one is without religion. So stand in the biggest room in your home, or if you have one, in the garden, and try to clear a walkable line from one end to the other. Get your child to take one step. That step is 2000 years from now. Mark the step (you can lay down tape or rope or place an object at each step). Keep going – how far back can you go?
 - 1st step (and a little wriggle) – the year 1AD/CE
 - 2nd step 2000 BC/BCE

- 3rd step 4000 BC/BCE
- 4th step 6000 BC/BCE
- 5th step 8000 BC/BCE
- 6th step 10000 BC/BCE
- 7th step 12000 BC/BCE
(roughly when our cave paintings were made)
- 8th step 14000 BC/BCE
- 9th step 16000 BC/BCE
- 10th step 18000 BC/BCE

(You can keep going, but you might run out of room or energy). Once you have your timeline you can pop dates and events onto it – do some research with your child – for example in 2490 BC/BCE the Great Pyramids at Giza in Egypt were built and in 3000 BC/BCE Stonehenge was built.

You can be guided by their questions too, eg: “Would dinosaurs have been on this timeline?” (No – you’d have to walk a very long way indeed to get to dinosaurs.)

8. Your child can now spend some time preparing their ‘Visitor’s Centre’ – perhaps in their room. They might want to keep it secret from you and invite you in as a guest. Or they might want to share it in a virtual exhibition – perhaps with extended family via Zoom or with their teacher. Let them play with this. They might want to ‘recreate’ the feeling of entering the cave for you – be prepared to have to crawl through the exhibition! They might want to make a den of the cave and play in there. Maybe one day you’ll be able to visit a cave network together.

AND FINALLY...

Let them take the learning where their interest takes them. One of the good things about learning at home is that there’s time to pursue your own interests. Some things may have sparked them more than others, so let them spend time on things they have become invested in. If they want to spend more time in the cave, that’s ok. There’s a loose end in the story too that they might want to tie up (the mysterious cage and missing creature). They may want to spend more time with Lily and Ali – it’s really up to them and you. **HAPPY ADVENTURING!**