

The haunted dolmen



Comprehension

The haunted dolmen

It was getting late. Ben and Josh had been out walking all day. Ben looked at the limestone landscape around him, and shivered. It didn't seem the best place to be in the dark.

"Shouldn't we go home now?" Ben said.

"No," said Josh, "we're going to look at that first." He pointed to a strange group of stones in the distance.

When they got close, Ben could see two large upright stones with a flat one on top. It looked like a gateway to another world. It was a dolmen – a Stone Age tomb! As he scrambled around the dolmen, something in a crack in the rocks caught Ben's eye. He reached in and pulled out a pin made of bone. It looked very old.

Then Josh touched one of the stones with his hand. Suddenly the air went cold. The boys backed away. White mist rose up from the ground inside the tomb. It twisted together and turned into the ghost of a man.

The ghostly man had a large forehead and lots of hair. He was wearing animal skins tied together with a bone pin on one shoulder. There was a pin missing on the other shoulder.

The ghost pointed towards Ben with a trembling finger. Ben gulped, and then held up the bone pin. The ghost nodded. Ben placed the pin on the ground in front of the ghost, who vanished into mist again. The boys breathed sighs of relief, and then hurried away. The ghost of the dolmen was at peace once more.

Understanding words

Before we can understand a story we have to know what all of the words mean. Let's try one...

a Write the sentence in which you found the word 'shivered'.

b From that sentence, suggest what 'shivered' means.

c Write a new sentence using the word 'shivered'.

d Use a dictionary to find words with a similar meaning (synonyms) to 'shivered'.

e Draw a small picture showing what you think 'shivered' means.

Try this for other words, too. 2

Finding key words

Next, we need to find the key words that tell us what the story is about...

Read the story and underline the key words. Write the most important of these key words in a list like the one below. Write next to it a word that means a similar thing (a synonym). You don't have to use all the spaces, but you should not use more.

Key word	Synonym (similar word)
Example: vanished	disappeared

Sequencing

Sequencing means getting the events in the right order. Write these sentences in the correct order, so they make sense.

The ghost pointed towards the bone pin. Ben placed it at its feet.

Josh touched one of the stones of the dolmen, and the air went cold.

The ghost vanished again, and was at peace.

Ben and Josh had been out walking all day.

Mist rose from the ground and turned into the ghost of a man.

Ben wanted to go home, but Josh wanted to see the dolmen first.

As he went around the dolmen, Ben found a bone pin.

Get to the facts

1 What did the group of stones look like?

2 What did Ben find near the dolmen?

3 What did Josh touch with his hand?

4 What colour was the mist that rose out of the

5 Where did Ben put the bone pin?

Make a story...

When you read a description it often gives you ideas about how the event might be described differently.

Angering the ghost

Imagine you are Ben. Instead of giving the bone pin back to the ghost, you keep it and run away from the dolmen. The ghost screams and starts chasing you, stretching out a ghostly hand towards you...(now complete the story)

Below is a plain text version for printing:

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For example:

Key word – vanished

Synonym – disappeared

Sequencing:

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