

Mammoth hunt



Comprehension

Mammoth hunt

Ten men were gathered near the top of a cliff, each carrying one or two long spears with flint tips. The men were looking for animals to hunt for food.

Suddenly they heard a low bellowing noise. In the distance was a herd of woolly mammoths. The leader of the hunters signalled to his men to be quiet and ready. They crouched down behind rocks.

As they watched the herd, they saw that one mammoth was falling behind because it was limping. It was the perfect target. When it had fallen so far behind that it was separate from the other mammoths, the hunters moved in. They surrounded the mammoth, which bellowed in alarm. But the herd had moved on. It was alone now.

The mammoth towered above the men. It swung its two long, curving tusks to and fro to put the men off, and stamped its heavy feet. The hunters took it in turns to attack. Each one cautiously stepped towards the mammoth, threw his spear at it, and quickly retreated.

But the spears alone would not be enough to kill the beast. The leading hunter called out for his men to attack the mammoth from behind. They drove the mammoth right up to the top of the cliff, until it had nowhere else to go but over the edge. The mammoth tried to back away, but it did not have enough grip. It fell and landed with a great crash at the bottom of the cliff.

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 'bellowing'.

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

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

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

e Draw a small picture showing what you think 'bellowing' 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: cautiously	carefully

Sequencing

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

The mammoth fell over the edge of the cliff and landed at the bottom.

They drove the mammoth towards the cliff.

In turn, each hunter threw their spear at the mammoth, and then

The men surrounded the lone mammoth. It swung its huge tusks at the men.

Hunters with flint-tipped spears had gathered at the top of a cliff.

They heard a noise, and saw a herd of woolly mammoths. One mammoth was falling behind.

Get to the facts

1 Where were the men gathered?

2 What were they carrying?

3 What did the mammoth swing to put the men off?

4 Where did the hunters drive the mammoth?

5 Where did the mammoth land?

Make a story...

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

The mammoth

Imagine you are the woolly mammoth. You've been injured and now have a limp. The rest of the herd are getting ahead of you, and they're not slowing down. You call out for them to stop... (now complete the story)

Below is a plain text version for printing:

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- b From that sentence, suggest what 'bellowing' means.
- c Write a new sentence using the word 'bellowing'.
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Read the story and underline the key words. Write the most important of these key words in a list. Write next to it a word that means a similar thing (a synonym).

For example:

Key word – cautiously

Synonym – carefully

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