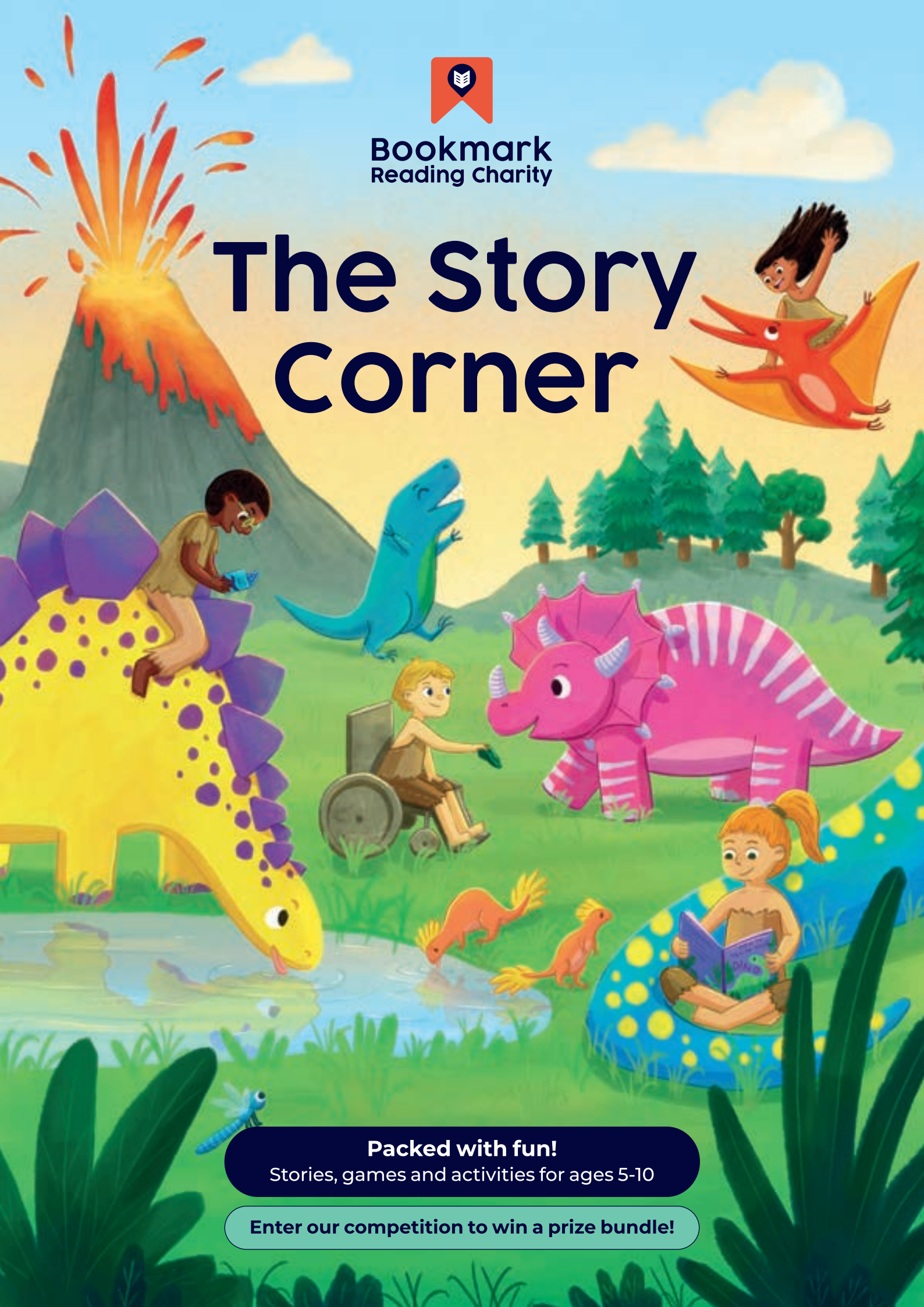




Bookmark
Reading Charity

The Story Corner



Packed with fun!

Stories, games and activities for ages 5-10

Enter our competition to win a prize bundle!

Dear Reader,

My name is Sufiya Ahmed and I have written lots of books (nearly forty) but the ones that are really special to me are my historical fiction stories.

Do you like history? I loved history when I was at school and I loved learning about the Egyptians, the Greeks and the Romans. I especially enjoyed reading stories about the history of our own island. From William the Conqueror to the Tudors, the Victorians and all the way to the two world wars, I was fascinated by them all.

Have you ever wondered what happened to the two Princes in the tower? I did as a little girl, I even made up stories about them!

In my stories now, the people who operated in the shadows take centre stage and I like to combine the history with a fun, brave adventure. That's why my World War II books like Rosie Raja Undercover Codebreaker and Under Fire are full of spies, morse code and secret messages!



Sufiya Ahmed

Would you like to be a secret codebreaker?

Try breaking this reverse alphabet code: R OLEV SRHGLIB

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z
Z Y X W V U T S R Q P O N M L K J I H G F E D C B A

Hint. Work out the letter opposite to break the code. We have done the first one for you!

WORD PUZZLE GAME

Can you find them all?

Knights

Fossil

Tudors

Toys

Myths

Dragon

Legends

Viking

Dinosaur

Monster

S	M	S	S	F	L	E	G	E	N	D	S	K	M
T	T	Y	H	Y	V	G	O	O	O	O	S	G	M
E	O	O	T	S	U	O	S	D	N	T	O	D	O
V	V	K	E	H	V	S	T	O	H	R	D	T	N
I	M	O	G	I	S	R	O	G	Y	T	R	O	S
K	S	H	K	T	M	T	I	E	S	N	A	O	T
I	G	I	S	N	O	N	T	S	Y	R	G	N	E
N	N	R	I	S	K	Y	S	M	I	O	O	G	R
G	I	D	R	I	K	N	S	R	M	I	N	E	S
Y	E	S	O	F	O	S	S	I	L	S	Y	E	M
F	O	O	U	O	D	I	N	O	S	A	U	R	X
O	I	S	R	O	D	M	N	R	I	E	L	I	D
U	O	U	F	E	T	G	T	U	D	O	R	S	N
E	S	F	M	T	Y	T	O	Y	T	D	R	S	Y



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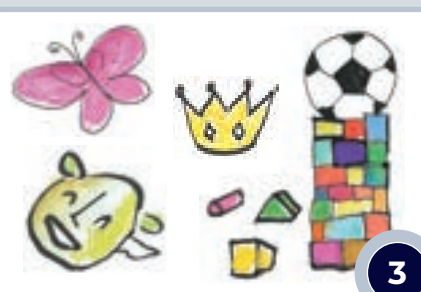
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All content curated & adapted by **Bookmark Reading Charity** for **The Story Corner** magazine.
Special thanks to all our contributors | Front cover artwork by **Sasha Stowe (c) 2025**.

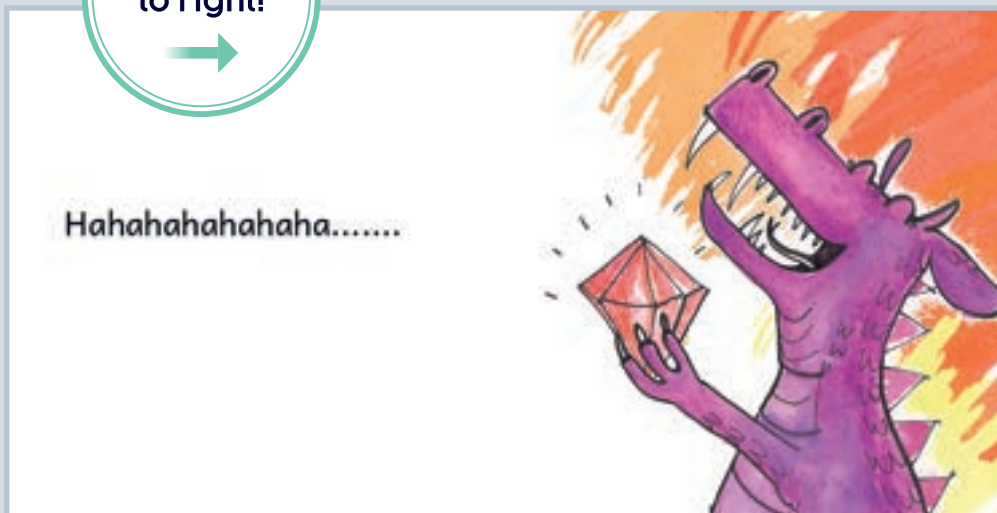


Say 'TSAH-kah-nee' - Tsakane is name that comes from a South African language meaning happiness or joy!





Read left
to right!





We're going to get you!

...you fiery fiend!



Did you know?

St George, the patron saint of England, was a medieval knight?



What do you think will happen next?

THE CAVE *downwind of* THE CAFÉ



SPOT THE 15 DIFFERENCES



When a mysterious, delicious-smelling café appears at the edge of the woods, it seems Glumfoot's dreams are finally coming true. But for the local ogre, there's only one thing on the menu – the café's chef! It's up to Glumfoot and his quick thinking to save the day in this wonderful addition to the world of The Café at the Edge of the Woods.

The next in the Rene and Glumfoot series is out now! A prequel to the first book, this one tells the story of how Glumfoot came to work at the Café...



Scan this QR
code for more
activities!



Visit bookmarkreading.org/the-story-corner for the answers.

Old Toys

What Do Old Toys Look Like?

Old toys come in lots of different shapes and sizes. Here are a few you might have seen before.



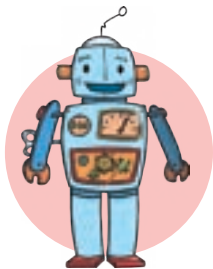
Rag Dolls

Rag dolls are soft, stuffed toys. Their hair is usually made from wool. Rag dolls used to be made from scraps of material.



Teddy Bears

Teddy bears have been around for a long time and they are still popular today. Teddy bears are soft toys. Today, they are often made in the shape of different animals.



Tin Robots

Tin robots usually had a small metal key attached to them which you turned lots of times. This would make small wheels inside the toy turn and make it move.



Rocking Horses

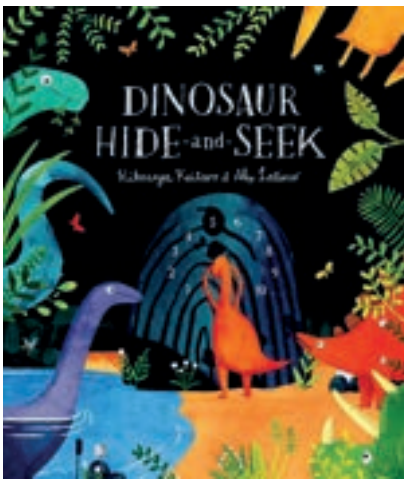
Rocking horses were made from wood and sometimes had real horse hair. Today, rocking horses are usually made from plastic.

Comparing Old and New Toys

Old toys are different to new toys in many ways. These include what they were made from, how they were made and how they moved.

Many old toys were handmade. This meant they took a long time and cost a lot of money to make.





DINOSAUR HIDE-AND-SEEK by Alex Latimer
Oxford University Press



Scan to
reveal the
dinosaurs

Can you find all
the dinos in this
exciting **game of**
Dinosaur hide-and-
seek? Some of them
are very sneaky!



PTERANODON



BRACHIOSAURAS

Where is
everybody
hiding?



**TYRANNOSAURUS
REX**



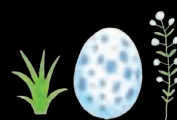
ANCHISAURUS



PLESIOSAURUS



TRICERATOPS



IGUANODON

MARY ANNING

(ENGLAND, 1799–1847)

Mary grew up close to the sea, in a place called Lyme Regis. Mary's father taught her how to find and clean the **fossils** buried in the rocky cliffs and beaches. The family was very poor, so they all hunted for fossils to sell to tourists from a table outside their home.

FOSSILS

Fossils are the remains or traces of living things from over 10,000 years ago. They are often formed from hard parts of animals, such as bones and teeth, which have turned into rock.

When Mary was just 12 years old, she **excavated** a complete, 5.2-metre-long skeleton of an *Ichthyosaurus* – a reptile that swam in the sea at the time of dinosaurs. Mary spent months carefully digging it out of the rocks.

When Mary was a baby, she survived being struck by lightning!

Scan this QR code for more information on how to **make your own fossil!**



MAKE YOUR OWN FOSSIL!

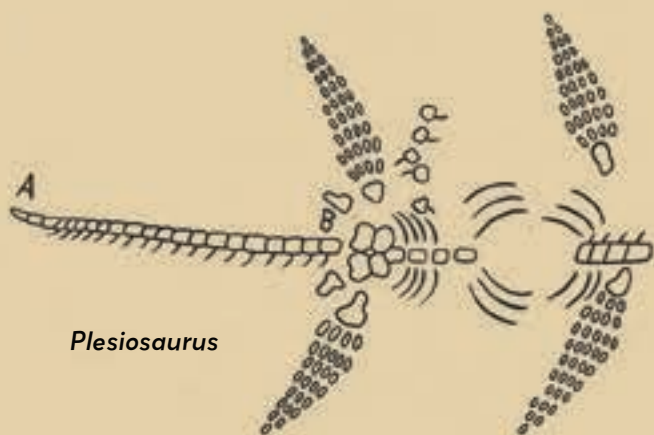
- 250g plain flour (plus extra for kneading)
- 250g table salt
- 125ml warm water
- Bowl for mixing
- A paper cup or small cardboard box
- Plasticine or sticky tack
- Objects with interesting shapes to 'fossilise', such as seashells or plastic toys
- An adult to supervise



SELF-TAUGHT SCIENTIST

Mary became an expert in fossils, and kept careful records of everything she found. She taught herself the sciences of **geology** and **anatomy** to better understand her discoveries.

When Mary made her most famous discovery, the first complete skeleton of a *Plesiosaurus*, some scientists thought it must be a fake! They eventually admitted their mistake.



Many scientists came to see Mary's work, and she often knew more about palaeontology (the study of fossils) than them. However, because Mary was from a poor family, they didn't mention her in their research. Not even when she'd discovered and identified the fossils they were writing about!

UNDERSTANDING THE PAST

The fossils Mary found often ended up on display in museums. Huge crowds came to see them and learn about the past. Mary's work also helped other scientists understand that animal **species** can go extinct (die out forever).

In her lifetime, Mary never got the respect that she deserved for her great work, and she was always poor. However, since Mary's death, people have started to give her proper credit for her amazing discoveries.

Mary was also a leading expert in the study of coprolites ... that's fossilised poo!

Why don't you give it a try?

4



5



6



EUREK-HER! By Frances Durkin and Nur Ventura. Illustrations by Nur Ventura. Published by b small.

That's No Way to Learn

Unlike in Queen Victoria's time, our modern schools are great;
Back then, instead of paper, all the children wrote on slate.

Discipline was very cruel in Queen Victoria's reign.
If boys and girls were naughty, teacher struck them with a cane.

And if they got their sums wrong, even if it was just once,
They had to wear a silly hat, as children shouted, "Dunce!"

In those days, teachers hardly smiled; most were very stern.
A class could be a hundred strong – that's no way to learn!

Boys and girls taught separately – so different, way back when.
Then booted out to find a job the minute they turned ten.

Today, it's very different: our classrooms are so cool.
It's much more fun than learning in a Victorian school.



Activity: Can you write a poem about what your school would have been like in a past era?



Tales of Myths and Legends

Hear from author Ash Bond as she introduces the world of Peregrine Quinn - a fun, fast-paced adventure series full of magical creatures, ancient myths and exciting surprises!

Peregrine loves reading about Classical myths, which is lucky as that knowledge comes in pretty handy when she is suddenly rocketed into a world of fauns, centaurs and ancient chaos goddesses! Don't worry, you don't need to know about any of these things before you start reading the series, but perhaps after you've finished, you'll want to learn a little bit more about the myths that you've met along the way...

Let's take Peregrine's godfather for example. We first meet Daedalus Bloom when he and Peregrine are attempting to break into the Bodleian library in Oxford. As well as being Peregrine's godfather (and always getting her into trouble!) Daedalus is the waistcoat-wearing owner of the world-famous Daedalus Bloom's Plant Clinic. In Greek myth, Daedalus was the architect of the labyrinth that held the minotaur, the half-man half-bull that King Minos hid in the labyrinth's centre. In Peregrine's world, as well as being a florist, Daedalus is also an Architect, and was the designer of much of the Cosmic Realm's technology or 'CosTech'. He also designed the portal system, which is its own kind of labyrinth that connects the Cosmic Realm and the Terran Realm.

Not all of the myths that Peregrine meets are friendly. We also have our villain Hekate. In the ancient world Hekate was the goddess of witchcraft, and of mist. She is also sometimes linked to the moon, to crossroads and even to ghosts. In the Peregrine Quinn series, Hekate Jones is a double-crossing Grand Architect who has a taste for potion-making, evil potion-making...



I hope this has inspired you to pick up the Peregrine series, and to know that there are so many more stories to discover, buried inside the pages. Want to find out more? You can find a list of some of the myths mentioned in the books on my website at ashbondwriter.com

Peregrine Quinn and the Cosmic Realm and Peregrine Quinn and the Mask of Chaos are out now by Ash Bond, published by Piccadilly Press.



Which Terrible True Tales time era are you from?

Ever wondered if you'd thrive carving stone tools, sailing with fearsome warriors, or strutting around in a toga? The **Terrible True Tales series** whisks you through history's weirdest and wildest times. But **which era would YOU belong to?** Take this quiz and find out!

What's your ideal weekend activity?

- A) Crafting something with my hands - pottery, DIY, anything messy
- B) Learning something new - philosophy, art, or music
- C) Visiting the spa and then feasting on a banquet
- D) Going on an epic adventure (maybe with a bit of raiding...)
- E) Gossiping about who's in trouble at court
- F) Exploring ancient secrets and treasures



Books are available to buy on our website and in all good bookstores!

1

What's your signature style?

- A) Furs and practical clothes; who cares about fashion?
- B) Flowing robes and a laurel crown, darling
- C) A shiny suit of armour (or maybe a toga for formal occasions)
- D) A cool helmet with wings or horns
- E) Fancy ruffs, puffed sleeves, and lots of jewels
- F) Gold, eyeliner, and a headdress fit for a pharaoh

2

Your dream meal would be...

- A) Whatever I can cook over an open fire; simple and hearty
- B) Olives, bread, and honey cake
- C) Oysters, dormice (don't ask), and a goblet of wine
- D) Roasted meat after a day sailing
- E) A royal feast with pies, pastries, and a bit of scandal
- F) A lavish banquet on the banks of the river Nile

WHAT RESULT DID YOU GET?

Count how many times you picked each letter.
Your most frequent letter is your era!

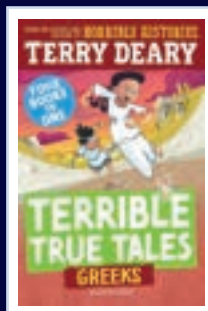
Mostly A's Stone Age!

You're practical, resilient, and love nature! You'd be perfectly at home hunting, gathering, and making amazing tools out of... well, rocks. Fire is your friend!



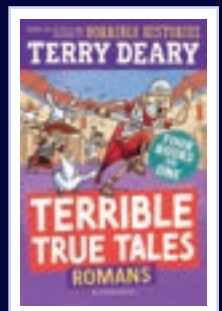
Mostly B's Ancient Greeks!

You're a thinker, a dreamer, and probably enjoy drama (literally!). From theatre to philosophy, you'd fit right in debating big ideas in a toga.



Mostly C's Romans!

You're ambitious, clever, and love to be in charge. Roads, baths, and conquering half the known world? That's totally your vibe.



4

How do you handle problems?

- A) Smash it with a rock
- B) Think it through logically and discuss with friends
- C) Build an aqueduct, invent something clever, or just conquer it
- D) Charge straight in with bravery
- E) Scheme politely and use charm to win
- F) Call on the gods (or at least look mysterious while you do)

Want to know more about your time-traveling alter ego?

Dive into the Terrible True Tales series and uncover all the gross, funny, and totally unbelievable facts about your era!

5



What would your friends say about you?

- A) Tough, resourceful, and always prepared
- B) Wise, curious, and a little dramatic
- C) Ambitious, organised, and a bit bossy
- D) Fearless, loud, and loves an adventure
- E) Stylish, witty, and a bit of a social climber
- F) Mysterious, glamorous, and into ancient traditions

Enter our competition for the chance to win this series!

3



6

If you found a time machine, what would you do first?

- A) Use it to gather supplies and survive in the wild
- B) Visit the first Olympic Games or a famous philosopher
- C) Travel to Rome to see the Colosseum and its spectacles
- D) Sail to a new land to explore (or raid!)
- E) Spy on royal secrets and scandalous plots
- F) Go straight to a pyramid to discover hidden treasures

Mostly D's Vikings!

Adventure calls! You're brave, bold, and love a good journey (plus, you rock the Viking aesthetic). Longships are definitely your thing.



Mostly E's Tudors!

You're stylish, social, and maybe a little bit scheming. The Tudor court would be your perfect playground for gossip, power plays, and fabulous outfits.



Mostly F's Ancient Egyptians!

You're elegant, mysterious, and love a bit of ceremony. You'd be building pyramids, honouring the gods, and rocking that iconic eyeliner.





Hard hieroglyphics

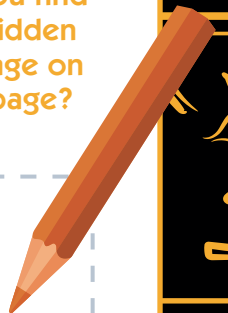
Egyptian scribes learned hieroglyphics, which were more like pictures than our letters. Here is a hieroglyphic alphabet. Write a letter to a friend using it, and decode their note to you.



Extract from *Terrible True Tales: Egyptians*

A		H		O		V	
B		I		P		W	
C		J		Q		X	
D		K		R		Y	
E		L		S		Z	
F		M		T			
G		N		U			

Can you find the hidden message on this page?



Monster Mash-up

People have been making up monsters and strange beasts for a long time. They appear in cave-paintings and are still popular in films and books today.
Some of the most famous are...

Dragons: Fire-breathing lizards with scaly skin, serpent eyes, bat wings and talons.

Griffins: Creatures that guard the gods. A griffin had the body, tail and back legs of a lion, the head and wings of an eagle, and an eagle's talons for front feet.

Egyptian gods: Humans with animal heads, like jackal-headed Anubis, cobra-headed Amunet, lion-headed Sekhmet and falcon-headed Horus.



Extract from *Terrible True Tales: The Stone Age*

Now it's your turn!

Can you draw and name a completely new monster, made up of bits of other animals and humans?

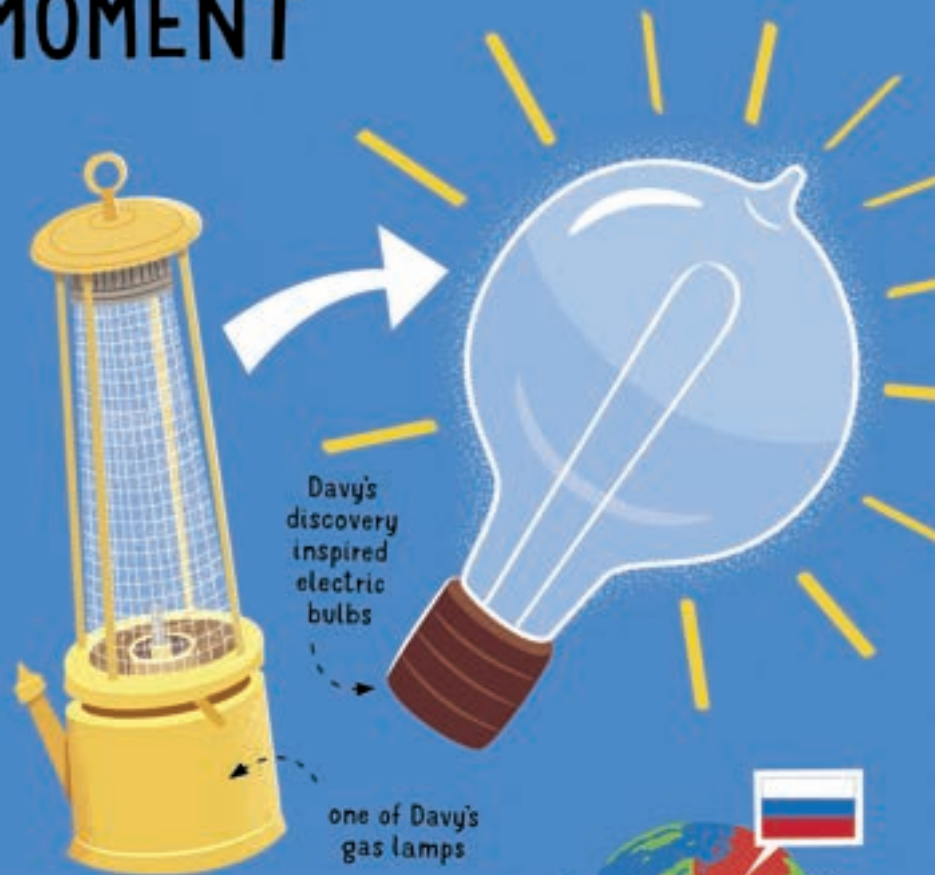


My monster's name is



A LIGHTBULB MOMENT

For thousands of years humans used torches, oil lamps, candles and lanterns to light rooms and streets. This finally changed at the end of the eighteenth century when gas lamps were invented but it was the power of electricity that completely transformed the way the world could be illuminated. The very first electric light was invented by Humphrey Davy in 1802. He passed an electric current through a platinum **filament** and made it glow. His invention wasn't very practical, but many more inventors worked on their own versions of this **incandescent light**.



1778 - 1829

Humphrey Davy
Bristol, England

Davy invented the very first electric light by passing an electric charge through a platinum filament.



1828 - 1914

Joseph Swan
Gateshead, England

By enclosing the filament inside a glass bulb, Swan created a practical device that could be used safely inside homes and public buildings.



1902 - 1942

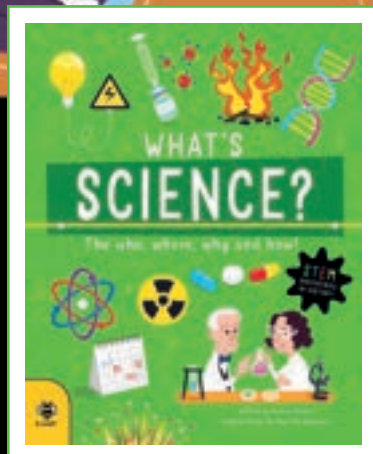
Oleg Losev
Nizhny Novgorod, Russia

While experimenting with semiconductors, Oleg Losev invented the first LED light.



What's Science?

By Frances Durkin and The Boy Fitz Hammond, published by b small

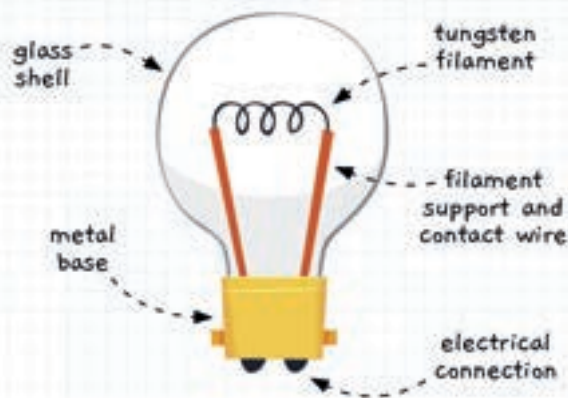


In 1850, the British scientist Joseph Swan enclosed the filament inside a glass bulb. He used vacuum technology to remove the air from the bulb as oxygen would make the filament break apart. Swan continued his experiments and, in 1881, he started his own company to manufacture lightbulbs. The American inventor Thomas Edison had created his own version of the lightbulb just after Swan and the two men combined their companies to light homes and buildings all over Europe and America.

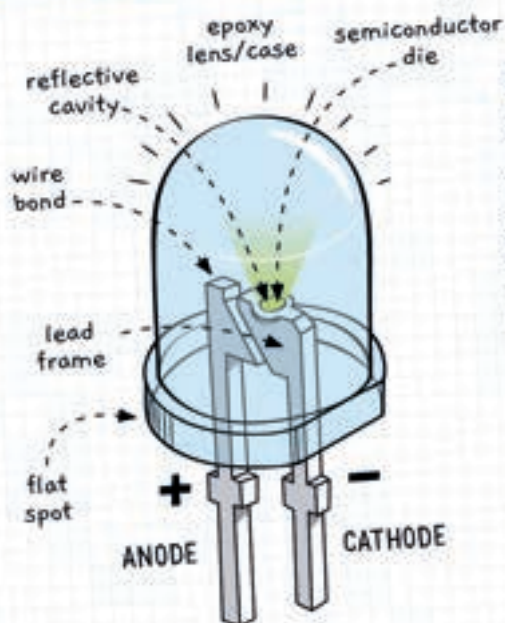


HOW A LIGHTBULB WORKS

When electricity passes through the filament of a lightbulb it causes it to glow. The filament in modern lightbulbs is a metal called tungsten.



The first public building in the world to be fully lit by electric lighting was the Savoy Theatre in London.



LIGHTING THE FUTURE

An LED (light emitting diode) is a tiny lightbulb without a filament. It creates light when an electric current passes through a **diode**. The first LEDs were created by a Russian scientist called Oleg Losev in 1927. They are far more energy efficient and long-lasting than incandescent lightbulbs and are now a popular form of lighting.

TAKE IT FURTHER

Why do you think electric light was an important invention?

What do you think happened before artificial light?



What's Technology?
By Frances Durkin and The Boy Fitz Hammond, published by b small

An extract from

Sunil and his inventor friend Alex have a problem. Alex's time machine went time-travelling all alone and they need to find it before it's too late. Enjoy this extract from the latest in this brilliant series!



'There has been a world-ending disaster!' Alex said, grabbing Sunil by the shoulders.

'A disaster?' Sunil's dad asked, as he walked up behind Sunil.

'No!' Alex lied quickly, letting go of Sunil. 'Everything is great.'



Sunil's dad frowned. 'Are you sure? Can I help?'

Alex paused. 'Do you have some sort of time-hook capable of capturing a missing object in the past?'

Sunil's dad blinked a couple of times. 'No, I don't.'

'Then your help is not required!' Alex beamed.

'Have you lost something?' Sunil's dad asked.

'Yeah, it's sort of a beaten-up old filing cabinet with a screen, two drawers, lots of wires sticking out of it and handles...' Alex explained.

Sunil knew exactly what she was talking about. 'You lost the Boring Machine?'

How could Alex have lost the Boring Machine? It was large, didn't have any wheels and always sat on top of Alex's downstairs toilet.

Sunil's dad thought for a moment. 'It sounds like the one on display in the new art gallery.'

Alex's eyes bulged. 'What?'



'They've a really old beaten-up filing cabinet in there. It's the only "found object" in the show.'

'A new gallery? Where?' asked Alex.

'Just down the road. Where the old milkshake café and costume shop was.'



Sunil had a sinking feeling. He'd been to that shop before. The owner was a devious man.

Alex looked furious. 'Mr Shaykes! He's behind this!'

She immediately turned on her heel and began marching away. Sunil understood why. Mr Shaykes was constantly out to make money however he could. His hustles often got Alex in trouble because he used her inventions for his own benefit.

'Hey!' Sunil's dad said. 'Don't forget Sunil!'

Sunil ran after Alex.

'How can you lose BM?' he asked as he caught up with her.

'I felt sorry for it.' She huffed. 'It was always complaining that it never got to time travel. It always stays in the present day while we grab the handles and flip back into the past. So I gave it a pair of arms to grab its own handles... and pop! It vanished.'

'It went back in time? To where?'

'That's the thing, I can't read the controls to find out.' Alex sighed. 'It could be anywhere.'

'Ah...' Sunil grimaced. 'So the Boring Machine sent itself back in time? And it didn't reappear?'

'Exactly. And now it sounds like Mr Shaykes has it in his new art gallery! But how did he get hold of it?'

As they turned the corner Alex balled her fists. 'That is exactly what I'm going to find out!'

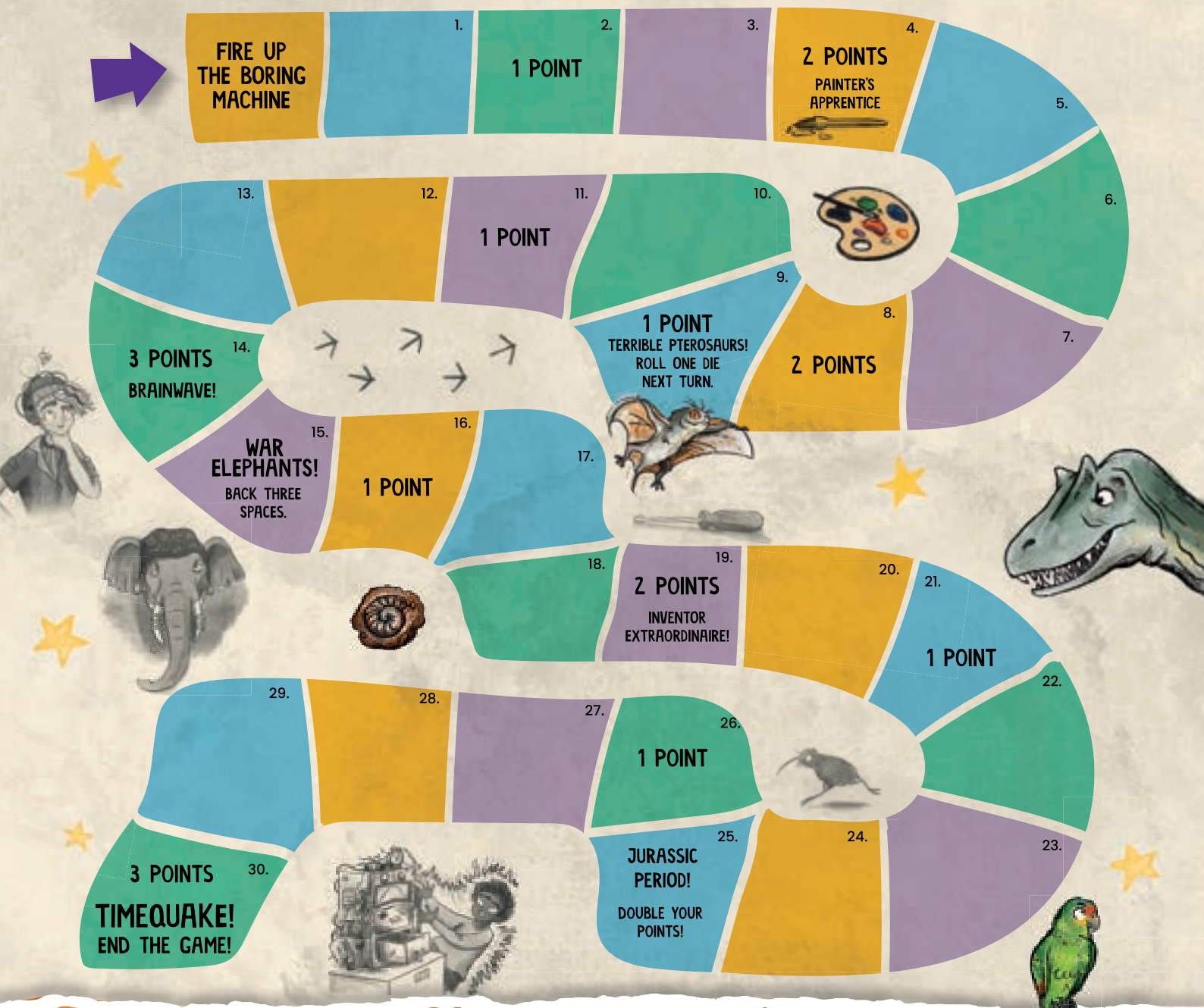
Enter our competition for the chance to win this series!

Illustrations © Rebecca Bagley, 2025
Time Machine Next Door series
© Iszi Lawrence, 2025

TIME MACHINE NEXT DOOR GAME

Rules:

1. YOU WILL NEED: 2 dice, and coins, counters or other small objects like Smarties to represent each player.
2. Takes turns. The oldest player goes first, since they've lived through the most history! Start on the space 'FIRE UP THE BORING MACHINE'.
3. On your turn, roll both dice. Choose the number on one of them and move that many spaces backwards (BORING) or forwards (ANTI-BORING) in time.
4. The first time you land on a space with points or an event, score that many points or follow the instructions.
5. First person to land on space 25, the Jurassic Period, doubles their points.
6. When a player reaches Space 30, STOP the Time Machine - whoever has the most points wins!



Real history.
UNREAL adventures!

Hurtle through time with
Alex and Sunil in this hilarious
series for 7+.

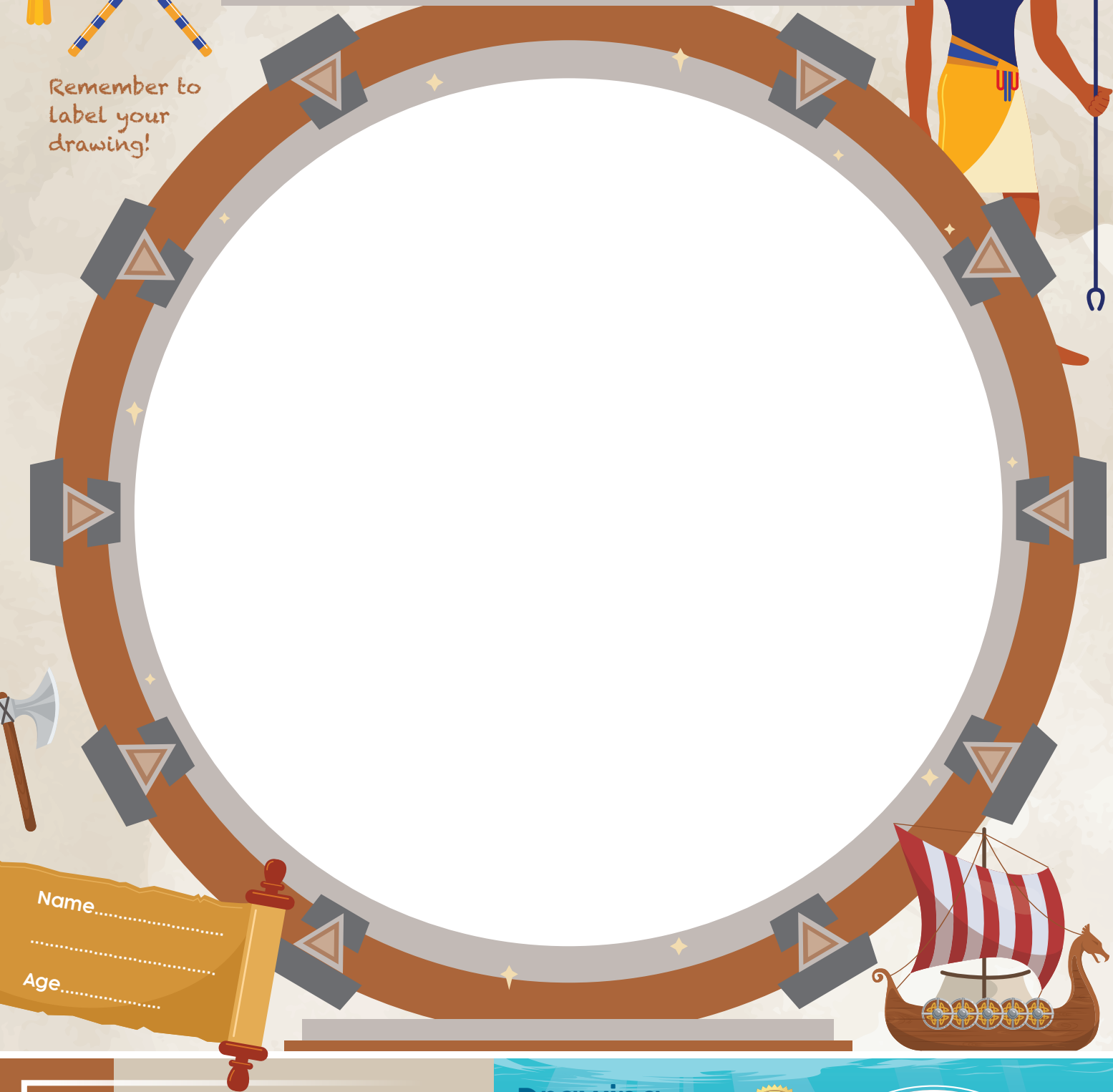


READ ALL
SIX BOOKS
IN ANY
ORDER!

Enter our competition!

Imagine you could get into a time machine and go to your favourite historical era. Where would you go? Can you draw yourself there?

Remember to
label your
drawing!



Name.....
.....
Age.....
.....

HOW TO ENTER

22

Ask a grown-up to take a photo of
your picture and email it to
thestorycorner@bookmarkreading.org

Grown-ups
Terms and conditions
plus the closing date
are available on
our website



bookmarkreading.org/the-story-corner

Drawing Competition Winner!

Goodness, age 10

Issue 13 – What did you see
through the porthole?





ISSUE 14
PRIZES!

BOOK BUNDLE + £20 voucher for winner, £5 voucher for 2 runners-up



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A WEEK
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TIMES

ONLINE
OR IN
PERSON



Why did the
Vikings sail to
England in
longboats?

It was too far to swim!

Who built
King Arthur's
round table?

Sir Cumference!

Why did the
Egyptian mummy
go for a relaxing spa
and massage?

They were all wound up!

What is a snake's favorite
subject at school?
Hissstory!

Jokes

Why is
history like
a fruit cake?

It's full of
dates!

Where are kings
and queens crowned?
On the head!





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The story corner
Magazine

Issue 14



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quizzes and games that
spark imagination and
bring stories to life.

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promoting the wellbeing and welfare of children.

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