

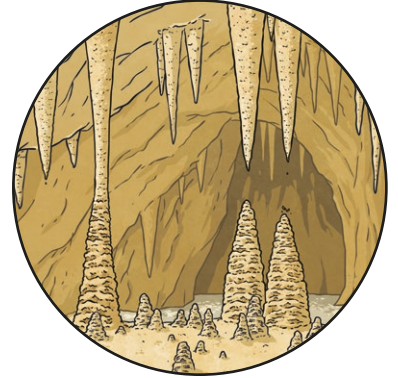


# The Stag

Lascaux, France

18,000 years ago

Breathing heavily, the young stag wandered along the path. Each of its steps echoed loudly in the cold air. Sand-coloured rocks stretched high above. The higher the rocks went, the more shadowy they became until they eventually disappeared into total darkness.



Weary, the stag stopped by a pool of water that was glinting in the cave entrance. He was a fine-looking animal with handsome, reddish-brown fur. His huge antlers raked at the sandy rocks as he drank, sending an eerie, scratchy sound through the cave.

Third Born didn't move as she watched the young stag from her hiding place. Pulling her bear skin coat tight, she crept low. The animal turned, gently licking its glistening wounds.

The wolves had left their mark.

The stag settled down, half-kneeling, half-lying and still breathing hard. There was something about the way it stared that made the hairs on the back of Third Born's neck stand on end. There was something unnatural about the creature - something ghostly.

**Q1:** When was this section of the text set?




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**Q2:** Find and copy an adjective which describes how the stag felt as it stopped by the pool of water.




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**Q3:** What had the wolves done to the stag?




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Quietly, Third Born turned and spat on the red rock by her feet. She smoothed it over with her fingers and added a few drops of animal fat from a small pouch she was wearing. Then she picked up a hollowed animal bone and teased some of the mixture inside, lifting the clean end to her mouth. Third Born slowly edged towards the sandy wall and blew softly. Red, rust-coloured paste flicked onto the surface of the rock and she began working it into the shape she wanted. Whilst the shadows were lengthening, Third Born, who was only ten summers old, carefully drew the stag on the wall.

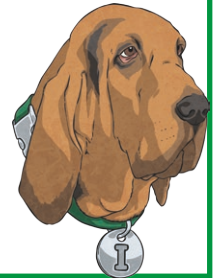
The creature was clearly a warrior as he had managed to escape the vicious wolves. His image deserved to live forever.

When she was finally finished, Third Born marked her painting with a handprint. She raised her head to admire the stag once more. It wasn't there. Like a ghost, the creature had silently vanished.

**Q4:** Why do you think that the shadows were lengthening?

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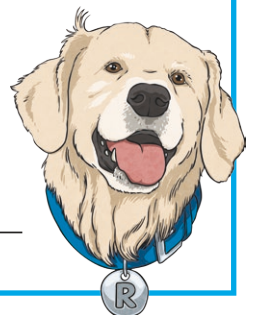
**Q5:** "...who was only ten summers old..."

How else could the author have written this line?

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**Q6:** List three things that Third Born used to draw the picture of the stag.

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**Q7:** How does Third Born's painting equipment differ to equipment used today?



### Present day

"Stone age people were quite incredible," the guide said in an enthusiastic voice. "They made paint out of all sorts of things."

"What sorts of things?" Jenna asked, staring at the cave walls. It was her first trip to France and Mum had insisted on visiting this old stone age place.

"Things like charcoal," the guide replied. "powdered rock, animal fats, spit—"

"—Spit?" Jenna repeated on disbelief.

"Yes," the guide chuckled, "or water. They would mix it all together to create their own colours."

"Was this one made of spit?" Jenna asked, pointing to a rather faded image of a stag.

"Who knows?" the guide replied, "This one's 18,000 years old."

Jenna couldn't take her eyes away. There was something about the way the stag was staring that made the hairs on the back of her neck stand on end. She felt out of breath and her side began to hurt.

"Are you OK, Jenna?" Mother asked.

"Let's go before they catch us," Jenna whispered.

"Before who catch us, dear?" Mother replied, laughing.

Jenna stared deep into her mother's eyes as an eerie, scratchy sound echoed through the cave. "The wolves..." she replied.



**Q8:** Why do you think that Jenna was shocked that the paint containing spit?

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**Q9:** Why do you think that Jenna acted so strangely at the end of the story?



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**Q10:** Give **two** ways that Jenna and Third Born are similar.

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**Q11:** Using 35 words or less, write a blurb for this story.

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# The Stag Answers

**Q1:** When was this section of the text set?

**Accept the answer: The story was set '18,000 years ago'.**

**Q2:** Find and copy an adjective which describes how the stag felt as it stopped by the pool of water.

**Accept the answer 'weary' only.**

**Q3:** What had the wolf done to the stag?

**Accept any answer which infers that the wolves had attacked, wounded or injured the stag.**

**Q4:** Why do you think that the shadows were lengthening?

**Accept answers which discuss the fact that it was becoming late in the evening, the sun was setting or it was late in the day, such as:**

- **The shadows were getting longer because the sun was setting.**

**Q5:** *'...who was only ten summers old...'*

How else could the author have written this line?

**Accept any similar answer to 'ten years old', such as:**

- **She was only ten years old.**
- **She had been alive for ten years.**
- **She was ten.**

**Q6:** List three things that Third Born used to draw the picture of the stag.

**Accept any three of the following answers:**

- **red rock**
- **spit**
- **animal fat**
- **(hollow) animal bone**

**Q7:** How does Third Born's painting equipment differ to equipment used today?

**Accept any reasonable differences between the Stone Age painting equipment mentioned and modern art equipment used for painting in the modern day, such as:**

- **Today we use paint brushes instead of a hollow animal bone.**
- **Third Born used crushed up rocks and spit but today we use paint from the shops.**

**Q8:** Why do you think that Jenna was shocked that the paint containing spit?

**Accept answers which discuss that spit is now seen as unclean or that it is totally unheard of to use spit when painting in the modern day, e.g.**

- Jenna might have been shocked because she had never used spit when painting before and did not know that people used to.
- Jenna was shocked because spit is unclean and she did not think people would use it for painting.

**Q9:** Why do you think that Jenna acted so strangely at the end of the story?

**Accept any reasonable answer which discusses any of the following themes:**

- Jenna was the stag in a past life.
- Jenna felt the same way that Third Born had felt when looking at the picture of the stag.
- The stag had strange powers which had carried on in time and were now affecting Jenna.
- The stag was a ghost within the cave.

**Q10:** Give **two** ways that Jenna and Third Born are similar.

**Accept any two reasonable similarities between Jenna and Third Born, including but not limited to:**

- They are both girls.
- They were both stood in the same place.
- Their hair stood on end when looking at the stag.
- They both experienced the same emotions when looking at the stag.
- They both heard the eerie scratching sound.

**Q11:** Using 35 words or less, write a blurb for this story.

**Accept any reasonably written blurb for the text, which covers some of the main points within 35 words but does not reveal the ending, such as:**

**A young girl paints a picture of a stag on a cave wall in France and 18,000 years later another young girl is viewing them. They are both mesmerised by the stag.**