

Longman English

Spark!



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5 The unexplained

Even though there have been many scientific discoveries, there are still some mysteries that can't be explained. Match the mysteries below with the pictures. Write the correct numbers in the circles.



These huge stones were moved from over 220 km away. How did people do that 5,000 years ago?

Could it be true that this waterfall in Hong Kong is haunted?



Are there monsters living deep in the wilderness?



What do you know about the unexplained mysteries above? Do you know about any other unexplained mysteries? Share your knowledge with a partner.



In this unit, you will listen, read and talk about unexplained mysteries and write a story.



Skim the text. How are paragraphs 1–4 different from the rest of the text?



Scan the text. What are the three places that form the Bermuda Triangle?

There is an area in the Atlantic Ocean where things sometimes mysteriously disappear. Read on to find out about one of the biggest mysteries ever.

Text 1



Chapter 1 A visit to the library



1 Walking into the library, Alex noticed it was unusually quiet. He felt a slight chill as he strolled over to the help counter.

‘Miss! Are you there? Miss So?’ Alex called out, peering over the counter.

2 Suddenly the librarian popped up from behind a stack of books. Adjusting her big, square, rather bulky glasses, she exclaimed, ‘Ah, it’s you, Alex! Good timing! I’ve found the article you wanted about the Bermuda Triangle.’

3 Alex grinned. ‘Had it gone missing?’ he joked.

4 Amused by his joke, she smiled back and opened the magazine. ‘Let’s take a look, shall we?’

The Mystery of the Bermuda Triangle



5 Every now and again, ships and planes go missing without a trace, and are never seen again. One particular area that is known for such disappearances is the Bermuda Triangle. This area of sea, also called the Devil’s Triangle, is so feared yet so fascinating that numerous books and films have been made about it.

Where is the Bermuda Triangle?

6 The Bermuda Triangle is a large area of ocean between Miami, Bermuda and Puerto Rico.

7 The area, which measures roughly 1.3 million square kilometres, contains the deepest point in the Atlantic Ocean and has volcanic activity. Could these be the reasons for the mysterious disappearances? Some people believe these strange events are caused by supernatural forces, such as sea monsters and UFO activity. Others say that extreme weather, human error or bad luck is responsible.

Popular theories

8 There is no single theory that can explain these disappearances. However, one theory has attracted much attention in recent years. According to scientists, gas bubbles trapped under the sea floor may be responsible. How could this be?

9 Released by underwater volcanoes and earthquakes, huge bubbles of gas rise to the surface. When the gas gets released, it changes the water density and causes floating ships to sink. Scientists also believe that planes are affected by the gas bubbles when they get into the atmosphere. The gas can create explosions, which causes planes to crash.

10 Another possible theory is that undiscovered, gigantic sea monsters might be to blame. Take the giant squid for example. For centuries, fishermen told tales of a terrifying sea creature with giant tentacles. Then in 1857, myth became reality when the giant squid was discovered. Weighing approximately 275 kilograms and with a length of more than 13 metres, this huge creature proves that the ocean is still a big mystery to us. Perhaps we have yet to uncover other large sea creatures that could be responsible for the disappearances in the Bermuda Triangle.



A scientist explains!

Some objects float in water and others don't. An object floats if its density is less than the density of water.

density of bamboo = 350 kg/m^3

density of water = $1,000 \text{ kg/m}^3$

Therefore, bamboo floats.

Gas bubbles lower the density of water, which can cause floating objects to sink.



Check your understanding

A Answer the questions using information from Text 1. For multiple-choice questions, blacken one circle only.

1 What is the mystery of the Bermuda Triangle?



2 Which of the following is NOT true about the Bermuda Triangle?

A It forms a triangle that connects Miami, Bermuda and Puerto Rico.

B It is a popular film and book topic.

C It is also known as the 'Devil's Triangle'.

D It is located off the coast of Mexico.

A B C D
○ ○ ○ ○

3 According to paragraph 7, which of the following are possible reasons why ships and planes disappear in the Bermuda Triangle? (Tick (✓) the possible reasons.)

a) alien activity

☐

b) attacks by sea creatures

☐

c) deep waters

☐

d) mysterious rocks

☐

e) thunderstorms

☐

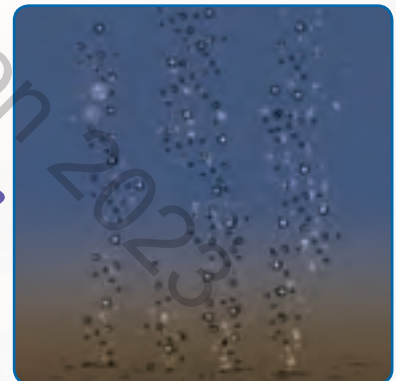
4 In your opinion, explain how humans can be blamed for the disappearances in the Bermuda Triangle.

5 Complete the following flow chart using information from paragraphs 8 and 9.

Underwater ^(a) _____
and earthquakes release gas.

Huge gas bubbles change the
(b) _____.

Gas is released into the
(d) _____.



(c) _____.



(e) _____.

Look at the title of the story and the photo. How do you think the photo is connected to the story?

Scan the text. Who are the three main characters in the story?

Do you believe in sea monsters? Perhaps you will after reading this short story.



Text 2

A Deep Sea Monster



- 1 'I'm so excited about seeing the pink dolphins,' said Mandy to her two friends, Sakura and Andy.
- 2 'Harrumph,' grunted Andy. 'You know you never see any dolphins on these trips, right? It will be boring and a waste of a hundred dollars.'
- 3 Ignoring Andy, Mandy turned to Sakura. They exchanged grins. 'It's going to be great,' agreed Sakura happily.
- 4 It was a beautiful, clear day in Tai O. As the boat left the creaky, old, wooden pier, the three friends admired their surroundings. Amazed by the beautiful Lantau scenery, they took hundreds of photos.

- 5 Peering into the water, Andy complained to the boatman that he couldn't see any fish. 'Mm,' replied the boatman. 'All the fish in this area seem to have disappeared recently. And we don't know why!'
- 6 Finishing the tour around the stilt houses, the boatman gently steered the boat towards the open sea. As they left the harbour, the sea got a bit rougher.
- 7 Rocked about by the big waves and feeling a bit seasick, Mandy leaned over the side of the boat. Then she saw it. A huge shadow passed under the boat. Had she imagined it? No, a few seconds later, it happened again.
- 8 This time, the sea creature moved faster, and knocked the boat as it passed. 'Shark!' Mandy screamed in fright.



9 The boatman saw it too. 'That's not a shark,' he
 30 said nervously. Alarmed, he started looking around
 anxiously. Suddenly, he saw a long, slimy, black arm
 come out of the water right next to him. And then
 another. Defending himself with a stick, the boatman
 turned the boat around and zoomed off at full speed.

35 10 The three friends looked at each other in
 disbelief. 'Whoa! That was really scary!' gasped
 Sakura.

11 On land, relieved that they were all safe, she
 joked, 'You got your money's worth today, Andy.'

40 12 Looking flushed with fear, he replied, 'I'm never,
 ever going on a boat again!'

Check your understanding

A Answer the questions using information from Text 2. For multiple-choice questions, blacken one circle only.

1 Where does the story take place? _____



2 a) In line 3, Andy says 'harrumph' because he feels ...

- A content.
- B disappointed.
- C enthusiastic.
- D unhappy.

A B C D
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

b) Give TWO reasons why Andy feels this way.



3 Read paragraphs 4–7 and number the following events in the correct order. Write 1–4 on the blanks provided.

Mandy feels seasick. _____

The boat heads out into the open sea. _____

The boat leaves the pier. _____

The boatman takes Mandy and her friends on a tour of Tai O. _____

4 a) How does Mandy feel in paragraph 8?

- A excited
- B relaxed
- C scared
- D upset

A B C D
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

b) Why does Mandy feel this way?

5 In paragraph 9, why does the boatman feel nervous?

Synonyms

Synonyms are words with the same or almost the same meaning. When we write, we can use synonyms to make our writing more interesting and less repetitive.

We can use a thesaurus to find synonyms.

- The following words appear in Texts 1 and 2. Find synonyms for them in the texts. Use the hints in brackets to help you.

	Word	Synonym(s)
Text 1	large (line 22)	(1) _____, (2) _____, (3) _____, (4) _____ (paragraph 10)
	grinned (line 10)	(5) _____ (paragraph 4)
	mysterious (line 27)	(6) _____ (paragraph 7)
Text 2	surroundings (line 11)	(7) _____ (paragraph 4)
	peering (line 14)	(8) _____ (paragraph 9)
	nervously (line 30)	(9) _____ (paragraph 9)

- In story writing, there are many synonyms used to describe how people walk. Look at the following verbs describing ways of moving. Then match each word to its meaning by writing the correct letters (A–H) in the spaces provided. Use a dictionary to check your answers.

- | | | | | |
|---|---------|-------|---|--|
| 1 | crawl | _____ | A | to walk slowly and with difficulty |
| 2 | creep | _____ | B | to walk in a slow, relaxed way |
| 3 | limp | _____ | C | to move along on your hands and knees |
| 4 | march | _____ | D | to almost fall while walking |
| 5 | pace | _____ | E | to walk quickly and with firm, regular steps |
| 6 | stomp | _____ | F | to put your foot down heavily and noisily |
| 7 | stroll | _____ | G | to move in a quiet, careful way |
| 8 | stumble | _____ | H | to walk with slow, steady steps |

- Complete the sentences using the correct form of the synonyms for 'walk'. Use each synonym once only. Make sure your answers are grammatically correct.

- My little brother _____ under the bed and hid there for hours.
- Frustrated by the slow-moving traffic, he _____ his feet on the floor of the car.
- The robber _____ off after hitting his knee on a bench.
- Flora _____ up and down outside the principal's office feeling worried.
- She _____ past the sofa, trying not to wake up her mum.
- They were _____ around the park when they heard a loud scream.
- We _____ around in the dark looking for the door.
- Amy _____ into the room and demanded to know how the plane went missing.

Always check the meaning and usage of a synonym in a dictionary before you use it.

Writing story dialogue

Stories often contain dialogue (**direct speech**). Story dialogue helps to make a story more interesting and lively. It also tells us more, for example, about the characters' personalities and their relationship to one another.

Story dialogue is made up of spoken words and a reporting phrase. The reporting phrase often consists of:

- the speaker's name (or a suitable pronoun).
- a reporting verb (and sometimes an adverb).

spoken words	reporting phrase
'Ah, it's you?'	asked Kent.
'Yes, I'm a bit scared,'	replied his sister nervously.

In dialogue, we always apply the following punctuation rules:

- The spoken words are always put inside inverted commas.
- The spoken words are separated from the reporting phrase with a punctuation mark (e.g. a question mark, an exclamation mark or a comma).
- The reporting phrase can be put at the beginning, in the middle or at the end of a sentence. If it is in the middle of a spoken sentence, it is followed by a comma and the rest of the sentence usually begins with a lower case letter.
- If the spoken words are the start of a new sentence, the first word usually begins with a capital letter.
- Start a new line for a new speaker.

Inspector Lee said, 'It's dark in here. Can you turn on the lights?'

'Oh no,' Inspector Fong replied, 'they're not working.'

'I have a torch in my bag. Let me get it,' said Inspector Lee.

'Look!' said Inspector Fong. 'What's that white thing floating in the corner?'



Complete the story extract below by adding appropriate punctuation marks or capital or lower case letters in the spaces provided. Insert a '[' for a new line where necessary.

__What's that over there__ asked Tommy worriedly. __ __t looks like a spaceship.
Let's go and have a look__ suggested Peter.

As they got closer, they saw two small, orange creatures jumping off the spaceship.
__Oh no, they're looking at us__ cried Tommy. __ __hat shall we do__

5 __They're looking this way__ said Peter__ __ut I don't think they can see us.
They have no eyes__

__Let's go before they find us__ suggested Tommy. __ __That's a good idea__
agreed Peter, as they crept quietly away.

TASK

Write a story

Do you know an interesting story about the unexplained — aliens, ghosts, magical powers or monsters? Share one with others!

VOCAB V Read the poster below about a story writing competition organised by the English Club.

Short Story Writing Competition

Theme: **The Unexplained**

Write about one of these kinds of mysteries:



aliens



ghosts

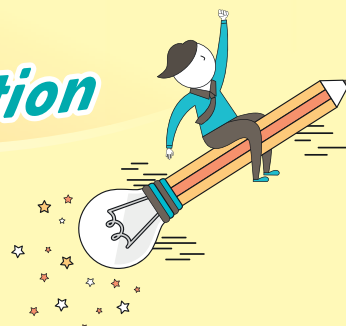


magical powers



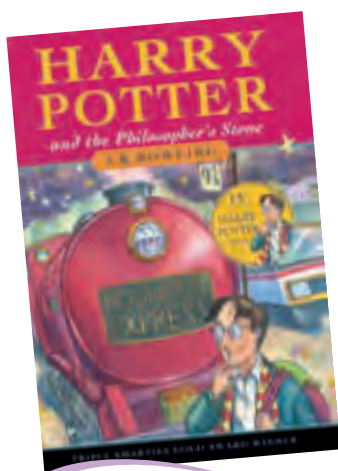
monsters

For details, visit the English Club website.



You have decided to enter the competition. To get started, think about stories of the unexplained in novels or in films that you know or have heard about. Some of these may be based on real incidents. Some may be completely fictional.

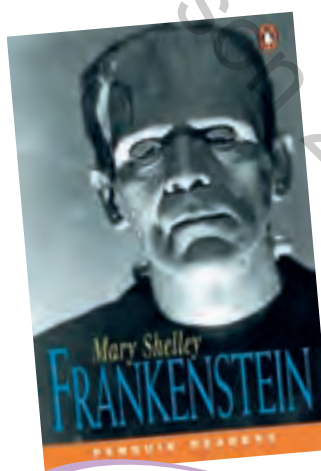
A Look at these images of popular books and films about mysteries. Have you heard about them, or read or seen them? What do you think they are about? Match the images with the labels.



1



2



3



4

a monster

an alien

ghosts

magical powers

VOCABULARY ROUNDUP



Verbs of speaking

agree (<i>v</i>) p. 6	beg (<i>v</i>) p. 11	cry (<i>v</i>) p. 10
declare (<i>v</i>) p. 11	exclaim (<i>v</i>) p. 2	explain (<i>v</i>) p. 3
gasp (<i>v</i>) p. 7	grin (<i>v</i>) p. 2	grunt (<i>v</i>) p. 6
joke (<i>v</i>) p. 7	murmur (<i>v</i>) p. 11	reply (<i>v</i>) p. 6
say (<i>v</i>) p. 6	scream (<i>v</i>) p. 6	shout (<i>v</i>) p. 11
sigh (<i>v</i>) p. 11	suggest (<i>v</i>) p. 10	tease (<i>v</i>) p. 11
whisper (<i>v</i>) p. 11	yell (<i>v</i>) p. 11	

Add more!

What other useful words and phrases have you learnt? Add them to the appropriate lists.

Adverbs of manner to describe how people talk

angrily (<i>adv</i>) p. 11	excitedly (<i>adv</i>) p. 11	happily (<i>adv</i>) p. 6
impatiently (<i>adv</i>) p. 11	loudly (<i>adv</i>) p. 11	nervously (<i>adv</i>) p. 7
proudly (<i>adv</i>) p. 11	worriedly (<i>adv</i>) p. 10	

Adjectives describing feelings

alarmed (<i>adj</i>) p. 7	amazed (<i>adj</i>) p. 6	amused (<i>adj</i>) p. 2
frightened (<i>adj</i>) p. 12	frustrated (<i>adj</i>) p. 9	relieved (<i>adj</i>) p. 7
scared (<i>adj</i>) p. 10	worried (<i>adj</i>) p. 9	

Adjectives describing people or things

bright (<i>adj</i>) p. 13	bulky (<i>adj</i>) p. 2	creaky (<i>adj</i>) p. 6
fascinating (<i>adj</i>) p. 2	frightening (<i>adj</i>) p. 17	giant (<i>adj</i>) p. 3
hairy (<i>adj</i>) p. 14	haunted (<i>adj</i>) p. 1	mysterious (<i>adj</i>) p. 3
scary (<i>adj</i>) p. 7	slimy (<i>adj</i>) p. 7	strange (<i>adj</i>) p. 3
terrifying (<i>adj</i>) p. 3		

