

Mapping the Whispering Woods with Finn the Dolphin

Learning objective: To accurately identify and use four-figure grid references on a map.

Read the passage carefully, study the grid reference system, and answer the questions below. Use full sentences where appropriate.

Finn the dolphin has traded his ocean maps for an adventure in the Whispering Woods. To help his friends navigate the dense forest, he has created a special map divided into squares. To find any location, Finn explains that you must use four-figure grid references. First, you look at the bottom of the map to find the 'easting' number, which tells you how far to move across. Next, you look at the side of the map to find the 'northing' number, which tells you how far to move up. By combining these, you create a coordinate. For example, if the ancient oak tree is in the square starting at 04 across and 07 up, its grid reference is 0407. Finn warns that you must always go 'along the corridor' before you 'go up the stairs'. Using this clever method, explorers can pinpoint hidden ponds, rocky outcrops, and secret dens without ever getting lost among the towering trees.

Word bank: grid reference · four-figure · coordinates · easting · northing · topography

1. According to the passage, what are the two steps for finding a grid reference? (2 marks)

2. What is the grid reference for a location found at 04 across and 07 up? (1 mark)

3. Explain why Finn uses the phrase 'along the corridor' before 'up the stairs' when teaching map reading. (2 marks)

4. What might happen to an explorer who mixes up the eastings and the northings? (2 marks)

5. Justify why using a grid system is more effective for finding a location than simply describing the scenery. (3 marks)

Draw: Draw a simple 4x4 map grid of a forest. Place a 'hidden' treasure chest in square 0203 and a sparkling river in square 0101. Label your easting and northing axes clearly.



Extension challenge: Imagine you are an explorer. Create a set of three 'treasure hunt' clues for a partner using grid references. If the map were to change, what might happen to the accuracy of your grid references if the forest grew significantly? Write a paragraph justifying your answer using geographical vocabulary.