Exploring the Ancient Forest with Finn

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

Read the text carefully and answer the questions below. Use your knowledge of geography to locate the landmarks on the grid.

Finn the dolphin has traded the ocean for a hiking adventure in the Whispering Woods. To find his way, he uses a special map divided by a grid. Each square is identified by a four-figure grid reference. To find a location, Finn first looks at the numbers along the bottom of the map, called eastings. He moves his finger right until he reaches the correct line. Next, he looks at the numbers up the side, called northings, and moves his finger up. Where these two lines meet is the bottom-left corner of the grid square he needs. For example, the ancient stone circle is located at 12 04. Finn knows that if he wants to find the crystal waterfall, he must look at the grid square 14 06. By mastering these coordinates, he can navigate through the densest part of the forest without getting lost. Mapping skills are essential for every explorer, whether they are swimming through deep currents or trekking across hilly terrain. Finn loves how a simple set of numbers can reveal hidden paths across the landscape.

Word bank: grid reference · easting · northing · landmark · topography · map key

1. According to the passage, what are the numbers along the bottom of the map called? (1 mark)

2. What is the four-figure grid reference for the ancient stone circle? (1 mark)

3. Why is it important for Finn to find the bottom-left corner of the grid square? (2 marks)

4. Based on the text, what might happen if Finn did not understand how to use grid references? (2 marks)

5. Do you think learning to use grid references is a useful skill for children today? Give a reason for your answer. (2 marks)

Draw: Draw a simple 4x4 grid map of the Whispering Woods. Include a symbol for the stone circle at grid reference 12 04 and the crystal waterfall at 14 06, ensuring you label the eastings and northings.

Extension challenge: Imagine you are designing your own park. Create a 5x5 grid and place five different attractions (like a playground, a café costing £5.00 for a snack, or a pond) in different grid squares. Write down the four-figure grid references for each of your attractions.