

Navigating the Wild Woods with Finn

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

Read the passage carefully and use your knowledge of map coordinates to answer the questions below. Remember to always go along the corridor before you go up the stairs.

Finn the dolphin has traded his fins for a sturdy pair of hiking boots to explore the sprawling Wild Woods. To ensure he doesn't lose his way, Finn carries a detailed topographical map divided by a precise grid system. Each square on his map is identified by a four-figure grid reference. To find a location, Finn first locates the vertical grid line at the bottom of the square, known as the easting. Then, he identifies the horizontal grid line on the side, called the northing. Where these two lines intersect at the bottom-left corner of the square, he finds his reference. For example, if the Ancient Oak stands in the square where easting 24 meets northing 56, its grid reference is 2456. Finn finds this system incredibly useful for mapping hidden streams and rocky outcrops. By mastering these coordinates, Finn can confidently traverse the landscape, ensuring he always finds his way back to his base camp before the sun sets over the horizon.

Word bank: coordinates · grid lines · eastings · northings · topographical · intersection · landmark

1. According to the text, what are the two specific names given to the vertical and horizontal grid lines? (2 marks)

2. What is the four-figure grid reference for the Ancient Oak as described by Finn? (1 mark)

3. Why does Finn need to follow the rule of 'going along the corridor before going up the stairs' when using a grid reference? (2 marks)

4. What might happen if Finn confused his eastings and northings when plotting his route through the Wild Woods? (2 marks)

5. Justify why a grid system is more effective for a cartographer than simply describing landmarks like 'the big tree' or 'the large rock'. (3 marks)

Draw: Draw a 5x5 grid map of a fantasy forest. Label the bottom-left corner as 1010. Place a treasure chest at 1212 and a winding river that passes through squares 1113 and 1213.



Extension challenge: Compare and contrast a four-figure grid reference with a six-figure grid reference. Explain why a six-figure reference would be necessary for a professional surveyor mapping a very small, specific object, such as a rare wildflower.