

Navigating the Whispering Woods with Finn

Learning objective: To develop map-reading skills including understanding grid references, scale, and identifying geographical features.

Read the text carefully and answer the following questions in full sentences. Pay close attention to the vocabulary used to describe map features.

Finn the dolphin is not just an expert in ocean currents; he is an accomplished cartographer who enjoys mapping the landscape beyond the shoreline. Recently, Finn visited the Whispering Woods to create a detailed map for his friends. He used a compass to align his parchment with the north and carefully marked the dense canopy with green shading. To ensure his friends could navigate the terrain, Finn included a clear legend. This key explained that the small blue symbols represented bubbling brooks, while the brown, wavy lines—known as contour lines—indicated the steepness of the hills. Finn's map also featured a precise grid, allowing explorers to find specific locations using letters and numbers. He calculated the scale carefully, ensuring that every two centimetres on his map represented exactly one kilometre in the real world. By observing the landscape from the highest oak tree, Finn ensured his map was both accurate and easy to follow. With his compass in hand and his grid perfectly aligned, Finn turned the complex wilderness into a masterpiece of navigation, ready for his next grand adventure.

Word bank: topographic · cartography · grid reference · legend · scale · contour lines

1. According to the passage, what do the brown, wavy lines on Finn's map represent, and why are they useful for an explorer? (2 marks)

2. If two centimetres on Finn's map equals one kilometre, how many kilometres would four centimetres represent? (2 marks)

3. Explain why Finn chose to include a legend on his map. What might happen to an explorer if the legend were missing? (3 marks)

4. Why is it important for a cartographer to use a compass when creating a map of a new area? (2 marks)

5. Justify why Finn’s decision to climb the highest oak tree was an effective strategy for his task as a map-maker. (3 marks)

Draw: Draw a map of your local school playground or garden. Include a compass rose pointing North, a scale bar, and a legend with at least four different symbols for features like trees, benches, or paths.



Extension challenge: Compare and contrast a paper map with a modern digital satellite map. In a short paragraph, justify which one you think is more reliable for a hiker lost in a forest, and explain your reasoning using terms like 'scale' and 'grid reference'.