

## 29 Caves

26 Underground caves are exciting places to visit. Exploring a cave allows 41  
you to get a different view of the earth—the view underground! A cave is  
a hollow area in the earth. It is large enough for a person to enter. Some 42  
55 caves consist of just a single chamber. Others are vast networks of passages  
and chambers. 57

82 The inside of a cave is completely dark. With artificial light, a strange 70  
underground landscape is seen. A cave may have lakes, rivers, or water-  
falls. Odd-shaped rocks called speleothems loom inside. 89

99 Speleothems are formed by drops of water containing minerals. When ●  
water seeps into a cave, the minerals may crystallize. These crystal deposits 112  
124 build up to form speleothems. The best-known kinds of speleothems are  
stalactites and stalagmites. Stalactites look like icicles. They hang from the 135  
147 cave's ceiling. Stalagmites are pillars that rise from the floor. These two  
kinds of speleothems may join to form a column. 156

To view the inside of caves many people take up cave exploration, or  
"spelunking." Spelunking can be rather dangerous. A person should never  
go into a cave alone. An experienced spelunker should lead any group that  
is exploring a cave.

Like mountain climbing, spelunking requires proper equipment. Ropes ●  
and ladders should be used. Hardhats and heavy clothing are necessary.  
These will protect you from the sharp rocks which could cause injury, and  
from dripping water. Spelunkers should carry two sources of light. You  
should carry a flashlight. And a headlamp should be attached to your  
hardhat.

An important part of spelunking is to leave the cave as it is found. Don't  
leave trash or food in the cave. Be careful when touching speleothems.  
They are fragile and impossible to restore if broken or damaged. Try not  
to disturb the animal life in the cave. Well-known animals such as bears ●  
and bats sometimes live in caves. But there are also some very rare animals  
called troglobites in caves. Troglobites include certain kinds of beetles,  
spiders, and fish. They live in the darkest parts of most caves. There is no  
light or wind here. Most troglobites are blind and must rely on highly  
developed senses of smell and touch to survive.

Some caves have been explored many times. These may be open for  
tourists. There are well-lighted paths to walk on and displays to explain  
formations. These tourist attractions are good practice ground for a  
beginning spelunker.

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### Recalling Facts

1. A cave is a
  - a. man-made tunnel.
  - b. hollow place in the earth.
  - c. natural formation near water.
2. The unusual rocks inside a cave are formed by
  - a. crystallized minerals.
  - b. stagnant water.
  - c. clay deposits.
3. Cave exploring is also called
  - a. hiking.
  - b. spelunking.
  - c. stalagmiting.
4. A person exploring a cave should always
  - a. take along a detailed map.
  - b. carry two types of hardhats.
  - c. carry two sources of light.
5. Very rare animals living in caves are
  - a. troglobites.
  - b. stalactites.
  - c. bears.

### Understanding the Passage

6. Without artificial light, it would be
  - a. possible to see the inside of the cave.
  - b. impossible to see the inside of the cave.
  - c. easy to tell your location inside of the cave.
7. Speleothems cannot be
  - a. replaced.
  - b. broken.
  - c. reused.
8. Some speleothem formations may look like
  - a. waving flags.
  - b. small clay sculptures.
  - c. columns or pillars.
9. Most spelunkers are concerned about
  - a. electric lighting in caves.
  - b. pollution in caves.
  - c. wide paths in caves.
10. A person's first spelunking adventure should probably take place in a
  - a. cave with paths and displays.
  - b. museum devoted to cave explorations.
  - c. book dealing with hiking.