

English in Mind Second edition

Level 5 Unit 1
WorksheetTHE
INDEPENDENT

Fossils: Myths, Mystery and Magic

Lead-in

1 Look at the title of the article and discuss the questions below with a partner.

- 1 Why do you think fossils fascinate people?
- 2 Have you seen any films and exhibitions or read any books about prehistoric times?

Vocabulary: words in context

2 The words in (1) to (10) (or forms of them) appear in *italic* in the text. Find them and use the complete sentences to help you guess what each word means. Now match the words with their definitions in (a) to (j). One example has been done for you.

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| 1 <i>millennia</i> (n) | a referring to times before there were written records |
| 2 <i>folklore</i> (n) | b thousands of years |
| 3 <i>seek</i> (v) (<i>sought</i>) | c shelter |
| 4 <i>emerge</i> (v) | d to search for something, especially something that is not physically an object |
| 5 <i>prehistoric</i> (adj) | e no longer existing |
| 6 <i>roam</i> (v) | f the traditional stories and culture of a group of people: |
| 7 <i>extinct</i> (adj) | g to move about or travel, especially without a clear destination; to wander |
| 8 <i>refuge</i> (n) | h the weather, usually bad |
| 9 <i>the elements</i> (n-pl) | i minor illness |
| 10 <i>ailment</i> (n) | j to become known |

Reading comprehension (1): scanning

3 Read paragraph 1 carefully and answer the following questions:

- 1 Before the scientific explanation for fossils came to be accepted, how did people account for fossils?
- 2 Why do you think such explanations were important in prehistoric times?

Reading comprehension (2): understanding detail

4a Look at the fossils below that are discussed in the article. These fossils were surrounded by myths and legends. What do you think people thought they represented? Discuss your ideas with your partner.

A big heap of bones with a large skull on top

Fossilised sharks' teeth

Fossils of different types of shells and molluscs

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b Now read paragraphs 2 to 7. Complete the chart, then answer the questions that follow.

Object / Fossil	Myth surrounding it	Other details
1 Skull on top of bones		
2 Fossilised sharks' teeth		
3 Fossilised shell of ammonites (marine molluscs)		
4 Fossils of mollusc-like brachiopods		

- Why were fossils used for potions in early medicine?
- What was Steno's 'eureka' moment?

Grammar (1): modals of deduction in the past

5 Look at the following sentences and match the words in bold type to their meanings (a) to (c).

- 1 It is easy to see how the myth of cave-dwelling dragons ... **might have come about**.
- 2 Ammonites **must have been** puzzling objects to people who were unfamiliar with a similar living animal in the Indian Ocean.
- 3 Recipes **can't have used** 'dragon's teeth' – these didn't exist.

- a** Logically it was certain that this was true or happened.
b Logically it was possible that this was true or happened.
c Logically it was certain that this was not true or happened.

Complete the following statement about modals with either a or b.

4 We use 'modals of deduction' when we:

- a** know that this is fact and are 100% certain
b have made an assumption based on evidence

Now complete the following rule:

Modals of deduction in the past = modal + _____ + _____

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6 Practice (1). Complete the sentences with a modal verb plus the verb in the brackets. There may be more than one answer. An example has been done for you.

Example:

'I've never seen the sea before'

You (see) it! You're 50 years old!

You **must have seen** it! You're 50 years old.

1 'I'm ever so worried. Jane set off across the desert two weeks ago and we've not heard anything since. She (get lost) or someone (take her hostage).'

'Don't be silly! She (get lost) – she's got a GPS and as for someone taking her hostage, well that's ridiculous!'

2 'He drank two large glasses of coke and got drunk!' 'No way! He (have) some whisky.'

3 I spoke to him last night, I swear I did.' 'That's impossible. You (speak) to him – he was with me all night.'

4 I'm not really sure where he went. He (go) into town to buy a few things, but he never said.

5 I've looked everywhere for my bag, but it's nowhere to be found. I (leave) it in the gym as I bought a drink afterwards. I wonder if it's still in the car.

Grammar (2): deduction and probability

7 Discuss the difference, if any, between the following pairs of sentences.

1 a He could have found out the results by now.

b He might have found out the results by now.

2 a He could have told me the truth – I'd have understood.

b He might have told me the truth – I don't really know.

3 a He will have arrived by now.

b He must have arrived by now.

4 a The robbery couldn't have taken place in the afternoon – someone was at home.

b The robbery can't have taken place in the afternoon – someone was at home.

Now work with a partner and decide if the above sentences show:

certainty
uncertainty
possibility (which didn't happen)
possibility
logical certainty

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8 Practice 2. Re-write the sentences using a modal verb in the past. There may be more than one answer. An example has been done for you.

- 1 Andrea says she argued with David at the party the other night. (He wasn't there).

She can't have argued with him - he wasn't there

- 2 We walked from Big Ben to Piccadilly in 15 minutes. (It's too far).

- 3 There's a man with a pizza at the door. (Alanis ordered one).

- 4 All the biscuits have gone! (your younger sister ate them).

- 5 She says she went to Camden Market on Saturday or Sunday – she can't remember. (It was a long time ago).

Discussion

9 Discuss the following questions in pairs/small groups.

- What legends and myths do you know of? How did they come about?
- Can you see any connection between the urban myths of today and folklore of the kind described in the article about fossils?
- What relics do you think we will leave for future generations? What will they say about us and our way of life?

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