

IN BRIEF

How the First Letter Was Written from *Storytime* Issue 73 is an amazingly fun story set in the Stone Age. It's about what happens when a little girl 'draws' a letter to her Mum – and it gets badly misunderstood!



LITERACY LESSON IDEAS

- If you don't know some of the words in this issue of *Storytime*, use the **Glossary** to look them up! This is a great way to learn new words.
- Did you enjoy *How the First Letter Was Written*? See if you can answer the **Class Discussion Sheet** questions about what it means.
- In this month's story, Tegumai went hunting for fish in the river. Now you can hunt for adjectives, a possessive and an onomatopoeia on the **Reading Comprehension Sheet!**
- How would you describe the characters in *How the First Letter Was Written*? Choose which adjectives (describing words) on the **Character Description Sheet** you would use to talk about Taffy and the Terawa!
- How does our Stone Age story work? Fill in the boxes on the **Story Structure Sheet** to find out.
- Taffy has got the events of her adventure all mixed up on the **Story Sequencing Sheet**. Can you put them in the right order?
- Rewrite the story of *How the First Letter Was Written* in your own words! Use the pictures on the **Storyboard** sheets to help you.
- The colourful **Story Cards** can help you create your own story about Taffy and her family. Start writing your tale, and when you aren't sure what will happen next, pull out a Story Card to see who shows up.
- What would *How the First Letter Was Written* be like if it was told by the Terawa? Write down his version of the story on our **Terawa's Tale** sheet!



HISTORY & GEOGRAPHY LESSON IDEAS

- The Stone Age is one of the most interesting eras in all human history – find out about it on the **10 Fun Stone Age Facts** sheet!
- Learn about **Stone Age Animals** on this sheet – and spot the animals that are still around today! If you find a particular Stone Age animal interesting, why not find out more about it in a book about extinct animals from the library?



DESIGN & TECHNOLOGY LESSON IDEAS

- Stone Age people came up with a lot of **Amazing Inventions** to make their lives easier. On the worksheet, see if you can work out which tool they used for which job.
- What would you make if you went back to the time when Taffy and her family were around? Draw it on the **Invent a Stone Age Tool!** sheet. Give it a name and write in what it does. Remember, in the Stone Age people had to make things out of stone, wood, leather and bone – no metal, plastic or electronics!
- Stone Age people made clothes and even wore jewellery! Print out the **Stone Age Style!** sheet and then cut out the paper doll of Taffy's friend Belumai and her clothes and accessories. You can then fold over the tabs on the fashion items and put them on the paper doll to give Belumai a unique and cool look!



ART LESSON IDEAS

- Want to draw your own 'letter' like Taffy did in **How the First Letter Was Written?** Use the **Draw Your Own Letter** sheet to create your message, then give it to a friend to see if they can work out what it means!
- Are you up for a BIG challenge? Then print out and colour in the mammoth on the **Colour In a Mammoth!** activity sheet.

STORYTIME GLOSSARY

1 OF 2

Look up the meanings of words used in *Storytime* Issue 73 here!

The War of the Crabs (Page 6)

- ▷ **Burrows** – holes animals live in
- ▷ **Clashed** – banged together
- ▷ **Racket** – loud noise
- ▷ **Poked** – jabbed
- ▷ **Lance** – spear
- ▷ **Jeered** – laughed in a mean way
- ▷ **Approaching** – coming towards them
- ▷ **Ancestors** – relatives from long ago

How the First Letter Was Written (Page 9)

- ▷ **Spear** – catch with a spear
- ▷ **Sapling** – young tree
- ▷ **Grumbled** – complained
- ▷ **Resin** – sap from a tree
- ▷ **Mendy-bag** – bag holding repair stuff
- ▷ **Dabbled** – dipped
- ▷ **Bark** – tough skin of a tree
- ▷ **Loincloths** – short skirtlike clothing
- ▷ **Stumbled across** – accidentally found
- ▷ **Breechcloths** – see Loincloths
- ▷ **Miffed** – mildly upset
- ▷ **Chuckle** – little laugh
- ▷ **Misunderstood** – wrongly understood
- ▷ **Symbols** – small marks or designs

Tinker Bell and the Forest in the Sky (Page 14)

- ▷ **Outfit** – set of clothing
- ▷ **Vessel** – ship
- ▷ **Towered** – stood tall

- ▷ **Beneath** – underneath
- ▷ **Glided** – flew without flapping his wings
- ▷ **Wended** – went slowly and carefully

Bamse the Sea Dog (Page 16)

- ▷ **Outgrew** – grew too big for
- ▷ **No exception** – no different
- ▷ **Herding** – guiding
- ▷ **Burly** – big and strong
- ▷ **Wagging** – waving back and forth
- ▷ **Anti-aircraft gun** – gun for shooting planes
- ▷ **Courageously** – bravely
- ▷ **Foreign land** – another country
- ▷ **Relied on** – depended on
- ▷ **Tirelessly** – in a determined way
- ▷ **Hind** – back
- ▷ **Forepaws** – front paws
- ▷ **Ammunition** – things shot by weapons
- ▷ **Trimnings** – leftover bits
- ▷ **Voyages** – sea journeys

The Spellbook (Page 22)

- ▷ **Whirl and twirl** – spin around
- ▷ **Spare** – give her some extra
- ▷ **Squiggly** – twisty
- ▷ **Parchment** – paper made of animal skin
- ▷ **Primping** – adjusting hair and makeup
- ▷ **Twirling** – spinning
- ▷ **Trimmed** – edged
- ▷ **Gilded** – painted with gold paint
- ▷ **Thundered** – said in a loud angry way
- ▷ **Transformed** – changed

STORYTIME GLOSSARY

2 OF 2

- ▷ **Forbidden** – not allowed
- ▷ **Tiptoed** – walked quietly on her toes
- ▷ **Rafters** – wood beams that hold up roof
- ▷ **Lectern** – stand for holding a book
- ▷ **Rodent** – rat or mouse
- ▷ **Recited** – said out loud
- ▷ **Scooped up** – grabbed
- ▷ **Throughout** – all through

Daedalus and Icarus (Page 30)

- ▷ **Athenian** – from the Greek city of Athens
- ▷ **Troops** – soldiers
- ▷ **Inescapable** – unable to be escaped from
- ▷ **Tyrant** – cruel and strict ruler
- ▷ **Blazing** – burning brightly
- ▷ **Flapped** – waved his wings up and down
- ▷ **Warnings** – advice to be careful
- ▷ **Temple** – building used for worship

Freddie's Fabulous First Day! (Page 34)

- ▷ **Banner** – strip of cloth
- ▷ **Freckly** – covered with freckles
- ▷ **Fumbled with** – lost his grip on
- ▷ **Tossed** – threw
- ▷ **Tightrope** – rope for walking on
- ▷ **Somersault** – a head-over-heels flip
- ▷ **Juggling** – throwing and catching many things at once

- ▷ **Baggy** – loose
- ▷ **Unicycle** – one-wheeled bike
- ▷ **Swerved** – turned sharply
- ▷ **Skidded** – slid roughly
- ▷ **Bonked** – hit

Urashima Taro (Page 38)

- ▷ **Skilled** – good at doing something
- ▷ **Poking** – pushing with something
- ▷ **Ancient** – very old
- ▷ **Cast** – threw out
- ▷ **Deed** – thing you have done
- ▷ **Tides** – rising and falling of the sea
- ▷ **Curtseyed** – bent over to show respect
- ▷ **Bowed** – bent over to show respect
- ▷ **Beneath** – underneath
- ▷ **Sea-folk** – people who live in the sea
- ▷ **Homesick** – sad because he missed home
- ▷ **Carved** – cut
- ▷ **Sash** – wide piece of cloth worn as belt
- ▷ **Sprout** – grow like a plant
- ▷ **Wrinkled** – marked with folds and lines

CLASS DISCUSSION SHEET

TEXT QUESTIONS

Did you enjoy reading the story about Taffy, Tegumai and the Terawa? Answer these questions to explore the ideas behind the story.



1. *How the First Letter Was Written* is a story about what happens when people don't understand each other correctly. Who were two people who didn't understand a message that they were given?
2. Why do you think the Terawa didn't understand what Taffy was saying?
3. In the time when this story was set, how do you think people got their clothes, tools and weapons? Why do you think this?
4. In the story, one character makes a rash decision when they don't understand something. Which character is this, and what do you think they could have done instead?
5. The story is set in the Stone Age, but even in modern times we can still not understand each other. Can you think of any times this has happened to you?

INVENT IT!

How the First Letter Was Written includes the names of other families in Tegumai's tribe. Can you make up a cool name for your Stone Age family?

Answers: 1. The Terawa and Teshumai; 2. The Terawa probably didn't understand the language that Taffy spoke; 3. People made their own clothes, tools and weapons – Tegumai fixes his own spear and Teshumai sews clothes and bags; 4. It was Teshumai, and she should have thought things through before deciding the Terawas had attacked Taffy and Tegumai.

NAME _____

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READING COMPREHENSION SHEET

Read the short extract from the story below, and then see if you can answer the questions about the different words used in it.

This gave Taffy an idea! She went to a nearby birch tree and pulled off a large sheet of white bark, and used a shark's tooth to scratch a drawing on it. She began chattering to the stranger, who did not understand what she was saying but sat next to her so he could see what she was doing. He was a Terawa, as I have said before, and they are a polite people.

1. Two **adjectives** (describing words) are used to talk about the sheet of bark Taffy peels off the birch tree. What are they?
2. A **possessive** is a kind of word that shows that something belongs to something else. You usually make a possessive by adding an apostrophe and an 's' to the end of a word. Can you find a **possessive** in the extract?
3. An onomatopoeia is a kind of word that sounds like the thing it is describing. Can you find an **onomatopoeia** in the extract? (Hint: It is a verb that is used when one of the character speaks.)
4. What is the **adjective** used to describe what people from the Terawa tribe are like? It is used in this extract and several more times in the story!

DESCRIBE IT! In the story, Taffy writes a letter because she wants the Terawa to get her father's fine black spear. Fine and black are both adjectives, or describing words – can you think of three more adjectives that you could use to describe a spear?

Answers: 1. large, white; 2. shark's; 3. chattering; 4. polite. Describe it! Possible adjectives are sharp, long or pointy.

NAME _____

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CHARACTER DESCRIPTION SHEET

Circle the three adjectives you think suit the characters best!



TAFFY

Mean

Happy

Angry

Cheerful

Sad

Funny

Quiet

Greedy

Angry

Polite

Fierce

Scary

Weak

Friendly

Tired

Rude

Nice

Bossy



THE TERAWA

WRITE IT!

How did Teshumai
feel when she read
the letter brought
by the Terawa? Write
three adjectives here.



Answers: Taffy is Happy, Cheerful and Funny; The Terawa is Polite, Friendly and Nice. Write It! Words that could describe how Teshumai felt are angry, worried and upset.

NAME _____

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STORY STRUCTURE SHEET

Where is the story set?

When is the story set?

Who are the main characters in the story?

What is the main problem in the story?

What is the solution?

How does the story end?

NAME _____

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STORYTELLER'S CORNER: HOW THE FIRST LETTER WAS WRITTEN



STORY SEQUENCING SHEET

Taffy tried to tell her mother about her adventure, but got the events all jumbled up. Can you put them in order?

Taffy drew a complicated picture about what had happened and what she wanted, and then gave it to the Terawa.

Tegumai broke his spear, and Taffy said they should send a message to her mother, asking her to bring another spear.

After everything was explained, everybody laughed and invited the Terawa to dinner.

Teshumai and her friends grabbed the Terawa and gathered the rest of their tribe. They all went down to the Wagai river to save Taffy.

Tegumai told Taffy that one day people will invent writing so they will be able to write letters that can be easily understood!

The Terawa thought this was a present, so he accepted it and left. After running for a while, he found the cave where Teshumai lived.

When Teshumai and the tribe arrived at the river, they found Taffy and Tegumai safe and sound.

Just then, they met a man from the Terawa tribe, who did not understand their language.

Teshumai did not understand Taffy's picture – she thought it showed her husband being stabbed by the Terawa and his tribe!

The Terawa thought that Teshumai looked like Taffy, so he showed her the picture Taffy had given him.

One day, Tegumai went down to the Wagai river to hunt for fish. His little daughter Taffy came with him.

Taffy explained what had happened, and told them what she had tried to show in her letter.

NAME _____

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HOW THE FIRST LETTER WAS WRITTEN: STORYBOARD

1 OF 2



Can you retell the story of Taffy and her letter?
Write what happened under the pictures.

1



2



3



4



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HOW THE FIRST LETTER WAS WRITTEN: STORYBOARD

2 OF 2



5



6



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STORY CARDS

Do you want to create another story about Taffy and her adventures?
Start making up a story, and then when you aren't sure what happens
next, pick a card to see who (or what) turns up!

TAFFY



TEGUMAI



TESHUMAI



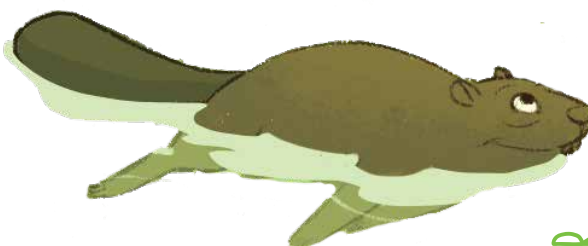
THE ERAWA



MENDY-BAG



BEAVER



A cartoon illustration of a man with brown skin and curly hair, lying on his side with his head resting on his hand. He is wearing a green leaf skirt and arm bands. The background is white with horizontal lines and a green star border at the bottom.

CLASS

10 FUN STONE AGE FACTS



1

The Stone Age lasted for a very long time! It started around 3.3 million years ago, and a few tribes still live a 'stone age' lifestyle.

2

The early part of the Stone Age is called the Palaeolithic, which means 'old stone age'. It began even before modern humans like us evolved!

3

During the Palaeolithic, the Earth went through an 'ice age', when the planet got very cold and ice caps covered a lot of the land. Modern humans like us evolved during this time.

4

Palaeolithic humans usually lived in small family groups that moved around a lot and hunted animals for most of their food. Luckily there were lots of big animals to hunt – like mammoths and woolly rhinos!

5

During the Ice Age, the world's sea levels went down. This created 'land bridges' that let our ancestors walk from Asia to Australia and the Americas!

6

About 15,000 years ago, the Palaeolithic (and the ice age) ended and the Mesolithic or 'middle stone age' began. At this time humans began to live in larger groups and did more fishing and gathering food from plants.

7

Following the Mesolithic came the Neolithic or 'New Stone Age'. At this time, people started living in tribes, began farming crops and herding animals and even built settlements.

8

The best stone tools were either made out of obsidian (a kind of glass found near volcanoes) or a kind of stone called flint. When these were chipped, they produced edges sharper than a steel blade!

9

People of the Stone Age created many huge monuments that can still be seen today. Perhaps the most famous is Stonehenge, a circle of huge standing stones in Wiltshire, England.

10

People who lived in the Stone Age are often called 'cavemen', but they usually lived in tents rather than caves. However, many interesting items left behind by our ancestors have been preserved in caves!

STONE AGE ANIMALS

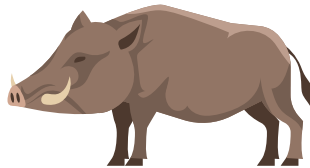
Our early ancestors were great hunters – and they hunted many animals that are now extinct! Circle the six Stone Age animals that you don't find any more...



Sabre-toothed cat



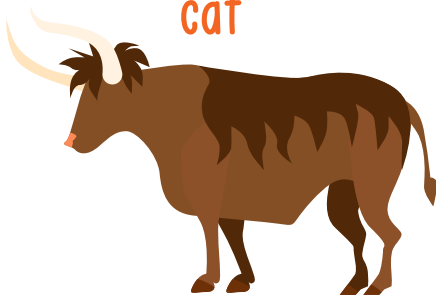
Monkey



Wild boar



Giant sloth



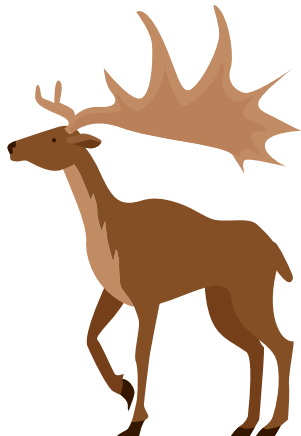
Aurochs



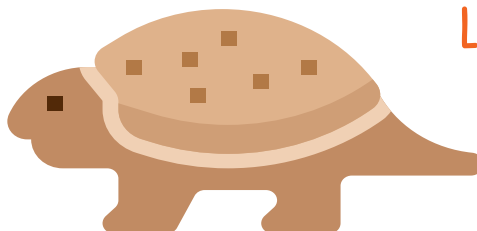
Mammoth



Leopard



Irish elk



Glyptodon



Rhinoceros

DID YOU KNOW?

Our Stone Age ancestors were good hunters and helped make many of these creatures extinct!!

Answer: The Mammoth, Irish elk, Aurochs, Glyptodon, Sabre-toothed Cat and Giant sloth are creatures that lived in the Stone Age but are now extinct.

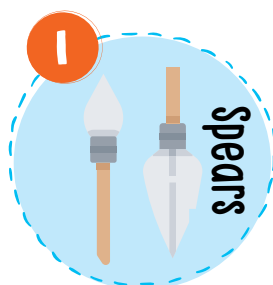
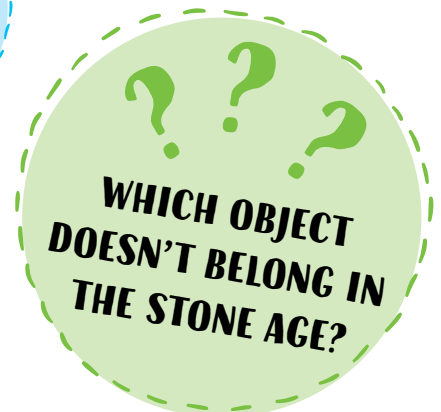
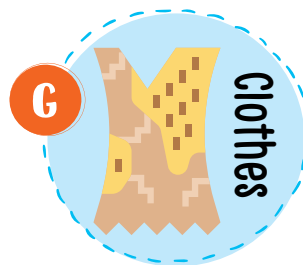
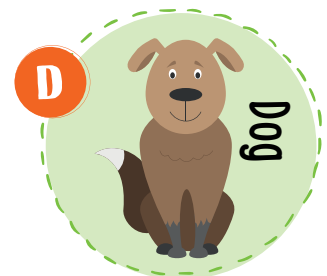
NAME _____

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AMAZING INVENTIONS

Stone Age humans didn't have metal tools – but they did invent a lot of things that we still use today! Which tool was used for which job?

1. We used this to cook food!
2. We tamed this animal to help us hunt!
3. These weapons were used to hunt and fish!
4. This was used to chop wood!
5. We wore these to keep warm!
6. We used this to decorate our caves!
7. We used this to keep warm and dry at night!
8. This was useful for cutting meat!
9. We wore this to look stylish!



Answers: 1. E, 2. D, 3. I, 4. B, 5. G, 6. J, 7. A, 8. H, 9. C. Which Object Doesn't Belong in the Stone Age? F.

INVENT A STONE AGE TOOL

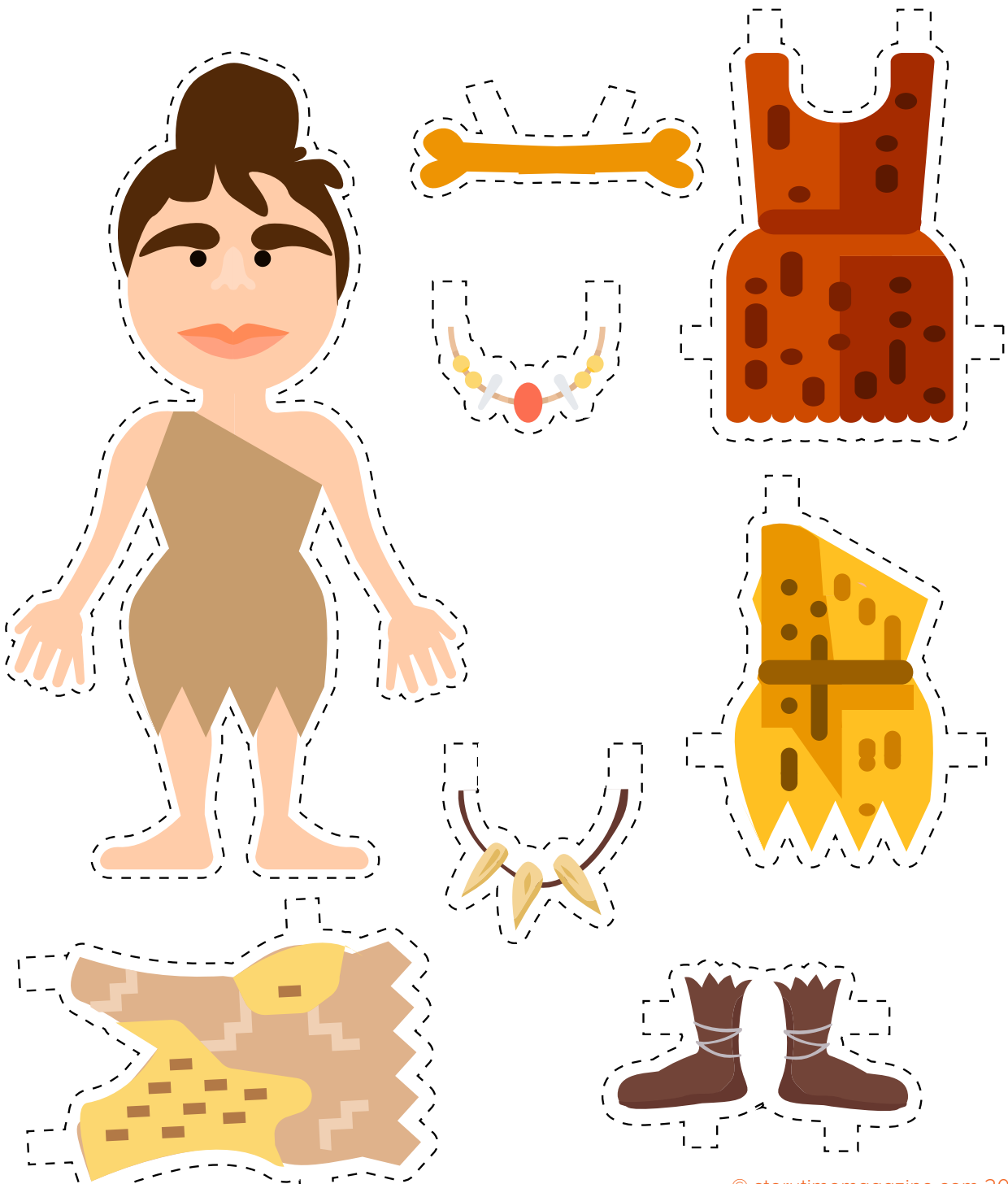
MY TOOL IS CALLED: _____

IT'S USED TO: _____

NAME _____ CLASS _____

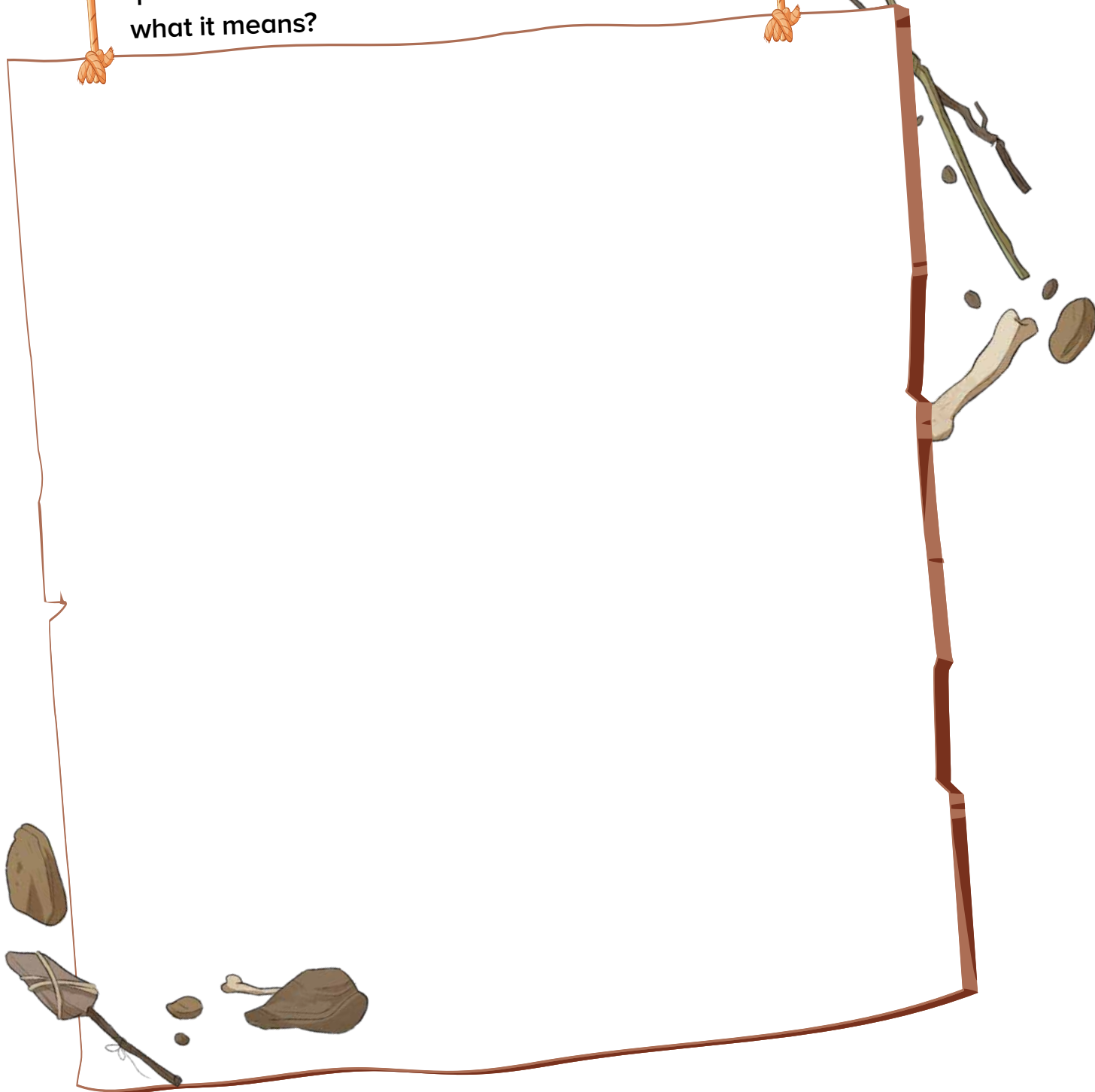
STONE AGE STYLE!

Print out this sheet and cut out the paper doll of Taffy's friend Belumai and clothes and jewellery. Then fold over the tabs on the fashion items to attach them to Belumai and give her a Stone Age makeover!



DRAW YOUR LETTER!

On the sheet of bark below, draw your own 'picture letter' to a friend. Can they work out what it means?

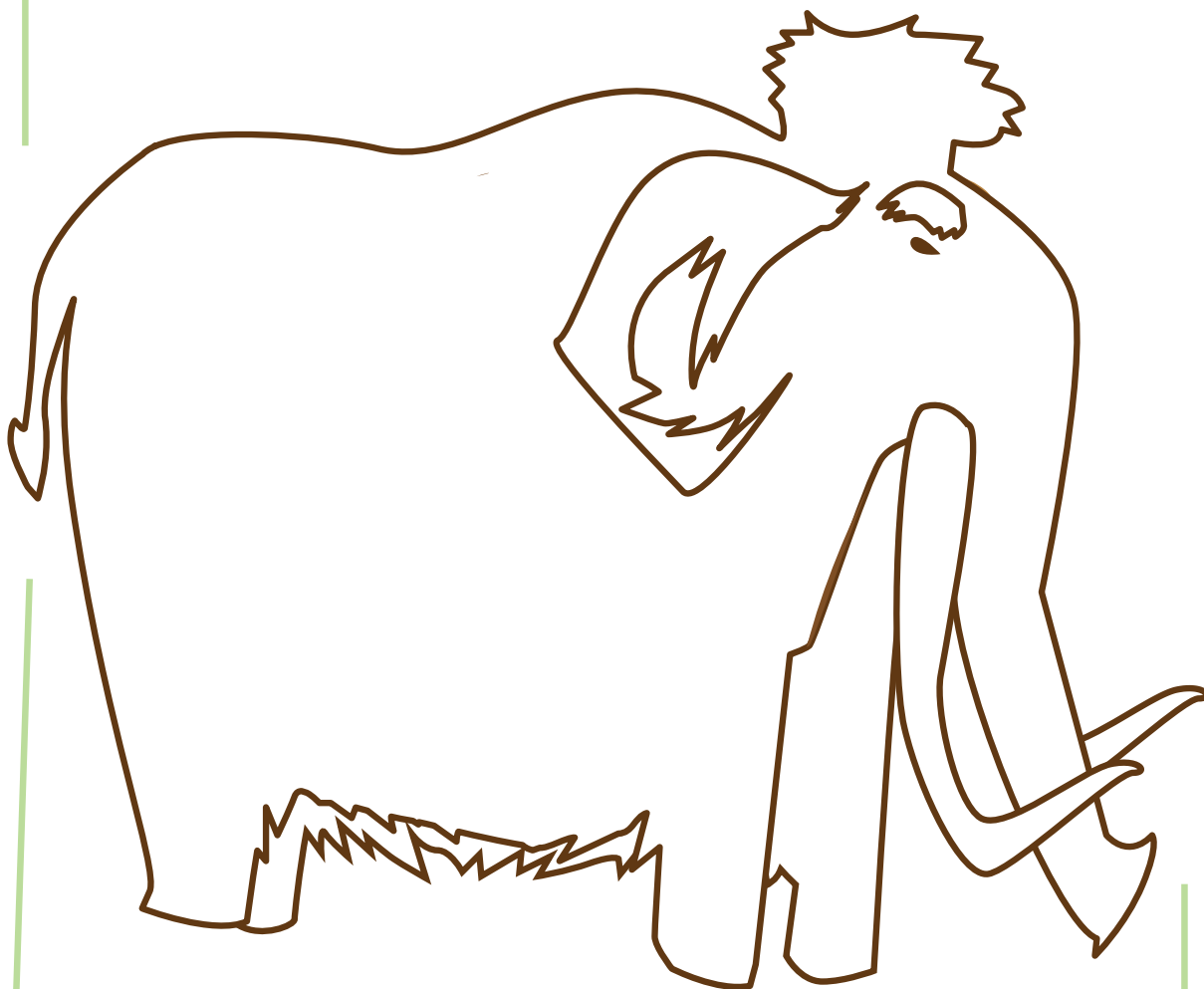


NAME _____

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COLOUR IN A MAMMOTH!

Stone Age artists liked to paint pictures of giant elephantlike animals called Woolly Mammoths in their caves. Now you can make your own 'Stone Age' art by colouring in this picture. Mammoths had brown fur – but try mixing in red and orange too!



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