

Warwick School



**Extract from 'Stig of the Dump' by Clive King
(11+ Entrance Examination – Section A
Comprehension 2018/19)**

This is an extract from Stig of the Dump by Clive King. In this extract, Barney has fallen through a hole in the ground whilst exploring and is now hanging by his ankles in this unusual place where a man named Stig lives.

- 1 Using the hard knife to chip with, Stig was carefully flaking tiny splinters off the edge of the flint, until he had a thin sharp blade. Then he sprang up, and with two or three slashes, cut through the creeper that tied Barney's feet. Excited, and somewhat relieved, Barney sat up.
- 2 'Golly!' he said. 'You are clever! I bet my Grandad couldn't do that, and he's very good at making things.' Stig grinned. Then he went to the back of the cave and hid the broken knife under a pile of rubbish. 'My knife!' **protested** Barney. But Stig took no notice.
- 3 Barney got up and peered into the menacing darkness of the cave. He'd never seen anything like the collection of bits and pieces, odds and ends, that this Stig creature had lying about his den. There were stones and bones, fossils and bottles, skins and tins, stacks of sticks and spools of string... The place looked as if a bomb had hit it.
- 4 'I wish I lived here,' said Barney.
Stig seemed to understand that Barney was approving of his home and his face lit up. He took on the air of a householder showing a visitor round his property, and began pointing out some of the things he seemed particularly proud of.
- 5 It was dark in the back of the cave. Stig went to the front where the ashes of a fire were dancing faintly, blew on them, picked up a book that lay beside his bed, tore out a page and rolled it up, lit it at the fire, and carried it to a lamp set in a niche in the wall. As it **flared** up Barney could see it was in fact an old teapot, filled with some kind of oil, and with a bootlace hanging out of it for a wick. In the light of the lamp Stig went to the very back of the cave and began to thump the wall and point, and explain something in his strange **grunting** language. Barney did not understand a word but he recognized the tone of voice – like when grown-ups go on about: 'I'm thinking of tearing this down, and building on here, and having this done up . . .' Stig had been **excavating** into the wall, enlarging his cave. There was a bit of an old bed he had been using as a pick, and a baby's bath full of loose chalk to be carried away.
- 6 Barney made the interested sort of noises you are supposed to make when people tell you they are going to put up plastic wallpaper with pictures of mousetraps on it, but Stig reached up to a bunch of turnips hanging from a poker stuck in the wall. He handed Barney a turnip, took one for himself, and began to eat it. Barney sat down on a bundle of old magazines done up with string and **munched** the turnip. The turnip at least was fresh, and it tasted better to him than the cream of spinach he'd hidden under his spoon at dinner time.
- 7 Barney looked at Stig. Funny person to find living next door to you, he thought. Stig did not seem much bigger than himself with a grubby nest perched on his head and dark

burrowing eyes. But he looked very strong and his hands looked cleverer than his face. But how old was he? Ten? Twenty? A hundred? A thousand?

8 'You been here long?' asked Barney.

Stig grinned again. 'Long,' he said. 'Long, long, long.' But it sounded more like an echo or a parrot, than an answer to his question.

'I'm staying at my Grandmother's house,' said Barney. Stig just looked at him. Oh well, thought Barney, if he's not interested in talking I don't mind. He stood up.

'I better go now,' he said. 'Thank you for having me. Can I have my knife back, please?'

Stig still looked blank.