

# The Pebble in My Pocket

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✓ Printable text • Modelling slides  Photocopiable text and questions • pages 34 to 37

This extract explains the history of the Earth through the journey of an ordinary pebble found by a young girl. The pebble device helps to make this information text accessible for children and will build their excitement and engagement. The journey starts with a volcano erupting 480 million years ago and follows the pebble's journey through the age of the dinosaurs, the last ice age, the appearance of Neanderthal families and, finally, to the present day.

## 1 Get ready

Discuss the **Key vocabulary** identified in the **Language toolkit** and then complete the vocabulary activities as desired. Please note that the selected vocabulary is a guide. Depending on the needs of your cohort, additional vocabulary discussion may be beneficial before, during and after reading. Next, display the text (pages 34 to 35) so the children can see the title and any illustrations, and encourage the children to discuss the following questions before reading.

### 1 Looking at the illustration, what do you think this text will be about?

The children should be able to suggest that the text is about prehistoric times. However, at this point, before having read it, it may not be clear to them whether the text is fiction or non-fiction.

### 2 What do you know about prehistoric times?

Answers will vary depending on the children's background knowledge. However, most of them should be able to contribute something to the discussion (e.g. information about dinosaurs; volcanoes; ice ages; mammoths). You could show on a timeline when the events in this text occur (between a million years ago and 12 000 years ago). See the **Reading list** for some suggestions.

### 3 What type of texts would you read to find out more about prehistoric times?

The children should be able to suggest that they would look at non-fiction (illustrated) information texts, or fiction set in prehistoric times. You could introduce the idea that non-fiction texts can have different formats and styles, just like the extract they will read in this unit.

## Language toolkit

### Key vocabulary

bison	blizzards	boulders
crevasses	glacier	gouges
graze	lumber	meadows
retreats	sculpting	wallow

### Vocabulary discussion questions

- Which animal would be more likely to **wallow** in the water, a rat or a hippopotamus? Why?
- Why would a **bison graze** but a sabre-tooth tiger would not?
- In what kind of landscape might you find **blizzards** and a **glacier**? What about **meadows**?
- What are the different meanings of **lumber**?
- What is the difference between pebbles and **boulders**?

### Vocabulary activities

- This text mentions several animals that the children may be unfamiliar with (e.g. **bison**, 'sabre-tooth tigers', 'mammoth', 'hippos'). Show pictures of these animals and discuss their distinctive features.
- This text uses some unusual verbs (e.g. **sculpting**, **gouges**, 'scouring') that you may wish to explore with the children, perhaps by acting them out and looking at synonyms.