Reading Explorer 4, Third Edition
Video Worksheets

Unit 5: Cave Artists

Fill in the blanks with the correct words.

Narrator: Wooly mammoths, steppe bison, and other large mammals once [1]_____ alongside people across Eurasia.

Tens of thousands of years later, we may have a glimpse into this Ice Age world through the cave art left behind by early humans.

Around 400 art-filled caves and shelters, [2]_____ located in France and Spain, have been discovered so far. Some of the most elaborate prehistoric artwork exists in caves in France known as Lascaux Grotto and Chauvet-Pont d'Arc.

Cave art dates as far back as 65,000 years ago to the time of the Neanderthals. Though, radiocarbon dating and other methods have revealed most art to be less than 40,000 years old and created by Homo sapiens.

The majority of cave art [3]_____ animals that humans would have encountered or hunted during the Ice Age, such as mammoths, horses, lions, aurochs, and deer. Some human figures and other symbols have also been discovered.

Cave paintings were mostly created with red or black [4]_____ made from rocks. Some artworks were painted directly onto cave walls, while some were first [5]_____ into the stone with tools. Occasionally, the artists would follow the natural contours of the stone walls to accentuate an animal's features. Ever since the late 1800s, people have debated the meaning and purpose of cave art.

Some scholars think cave paintings were created by shamans, who would go deep into caves and enter a trance-like state, drawing animals they encountered in the spirit world.

[6]_____ repeated across artworks may indicate that those symbols had agreed-upon meanings among the artists. Thus, perhaps cave art also represents the earliest form of graphic communication.

In reality, cave art may have been created for a variety of reasons. While we may never know with absolute certainty why cave art was made or the meaning behind individual paintings, these works give us insight into the evolving minds of our [7]_____ ancestors and the world in which they lived.

By one view, cave artists were prehistoric naturalists. Their detailed drawings may teach us about the appearance and behavior of animals that have long been extinct.

But perhaps more significant—a part of our never-ending quest to find out who we are and where we came from—cave art may provide [8]_____ of a time when humans were first able to etch their thoughts in stone.

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