

*Story:*

**Guff's Journey**

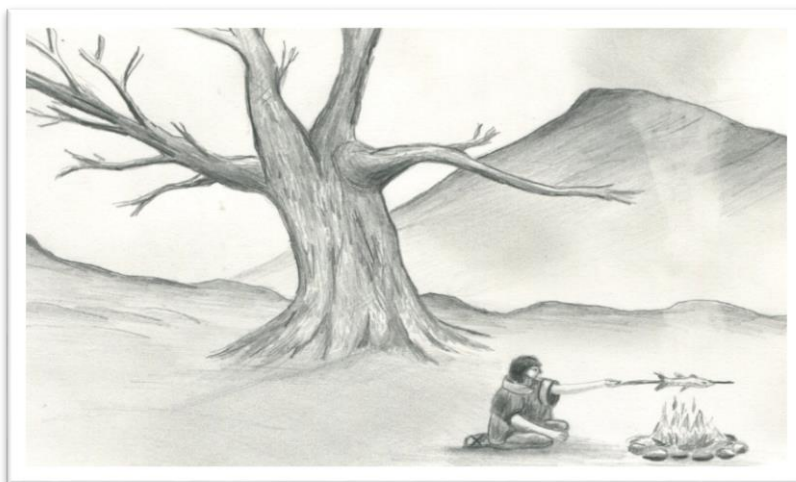


## Guff's Journey

The Guff's Journey story was developed and written specifically for this workbook. Guff's Journey is an original story that has many of the features and complexity of commercially available story books. The text has been written for children between the ages of 9 -12 years of age. Younger readers can also read and enjoy the story, though some of the story's themes may need to be scaffolded due to complexity. The Fleisch Kincaid (available on Word 2007, 2010 and 2013) places the story's complexity in terms of sentence length and complexity of language as approximately grade 4.

The story has a simple, linear plot and features several key characters, such as the main protagonist Guff, and Guff's father, Utha. The story also boasts a mighty bull mammoth known as a muloth by the Neanderthal people in the context of the story, and a truly frightening saber-toothed cat. We gain insight into Guff's world through his observations, sensations and experiences of the harsh prehistoric world that he and his tribe are a part of.

The story is written in a style which is relatively easy to use as a language teaching tool. The language in the story is complex at times and figurative language is used to provide colour to dramatic scenes. Illustrations are utilized to provide a visual reference to the story's setting - the wilderness of prehistoric earth, somewhere in modern day Europe. Students are encouraged to read the story independently. Alternatively, Guff's Journey can be read by both the clinician and the student together. The Guff's Journey story is used as the example text for each chapter in this workbook.





**Story:** *Guff's Journey* - Words and illustrations by David Newman

**Description:** Guff is a Neanderthal boy who, due to a hunting misadventure, becomes separated from his tribe. Guff relies on his wits, courage and ability to adapt in order to survive in a harsh environment. Guff is resourceful and is a good problem solver.

**Reading Age:** 9 – 12 years

**Fleisch Kincaid Level:** Grade 3.3

**Total Words:** 2077

### **Instructions for Reading and Reading Comprehension Assessment based on Guff's Journey**

The student is required to read a passage of the text or the entire text, depending on the student's level of reading competency. For readers who struggle with the text's complexity, it is recommended that only one scene be completed at a time. Each scene is long enough and contains enough information to obtain both a reading error analysis and reading comprehension analysis. Multiple examples of reading and reading comprehension analysis are provided in chapter 3.

### **Instructions for Shared Reading of the Entire Guff's Journey Story**

Read the story aloud with the student, with either you or the student reading, or a combination of the two. Pause at different points in the story to comment on important plot developments, character motivations, or interesting language. Review chapters 8 and 9 for tips and strategies on how to engage students with the Guff's Journey text.

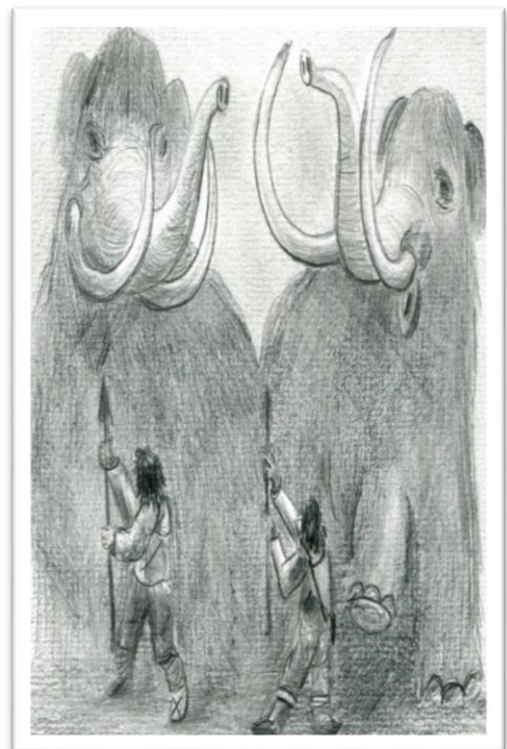
### Scene 1

The dry grass pressed fierce into Guff's legs as he lay in the dirt, but he did not complain. Guff was on his first hunt with the elders and he needed to be quiet as a field mouse. Above the hunters loomed a mighty bull muloth, its tusks curved and lethal. Sweat beaded Guff's forehead though the day was cold. Guff's father, Utha, anxious for Guff, searched Guff's eyes and then smiled. Utha's arm muscles were tense and corded as if carved from oak. He lay flat beside other men of the tribe a short spear toss from Guff. Between the tribe's spears and fat calves was the bull.

Guff's heart flipped like a fish when the bull suddenly stomped close to where he lay. The brute had located a rich cluster of long grass that unhappily was just above Guff's head. The snort of the giant's breath rippled Guff's hair, while the stink of its shaggy mane filled his nostrils. The muloth tore out chunks of grass and crushed it in its jaws. Another mouthful and Guff's cover would be gone. Guff's hands trembled as he gripped his stone-tipped spear. He could not breathe well. This was happening too fast. His heart thumped like a leather drum beaten with a stick. The pounding was so loud in Guff's ears that he was certain the bull would hear.

### Scene 2

What happened next were swift, fleeting actions and blasts of noise - men shouting and the furious peal and roar of the muloths. Spears buzzed through the air like insects. Guff stood though had no memory of getting to his feet. Something big hit him in the side and he soared through the air, weightless. The next instant the air was ripped from his chest when he struck the hard dirt. The big sky whirled. He could hear Utha above the confusion, howling, 'Guff, Guff'. He tried to call to his father but his mouth failed to form the words.





Guff scrambled to his feet as blood surged to his head. His thoughts were jumbled, so he ran. His father and tribe were gone, scattered. Guff sensed something enormous shadow him. He felt the rhythmic crunch of its hooves impact the ground just behind him, its breath a series of loud bursts. Soon it would crush him. Guff's chest was a torment from fatigue as he strained to keep running. In his panic, Guff failed to see that the ground had suddenly vanished from under him. He shrieked and fell into blackness down a steep hill.

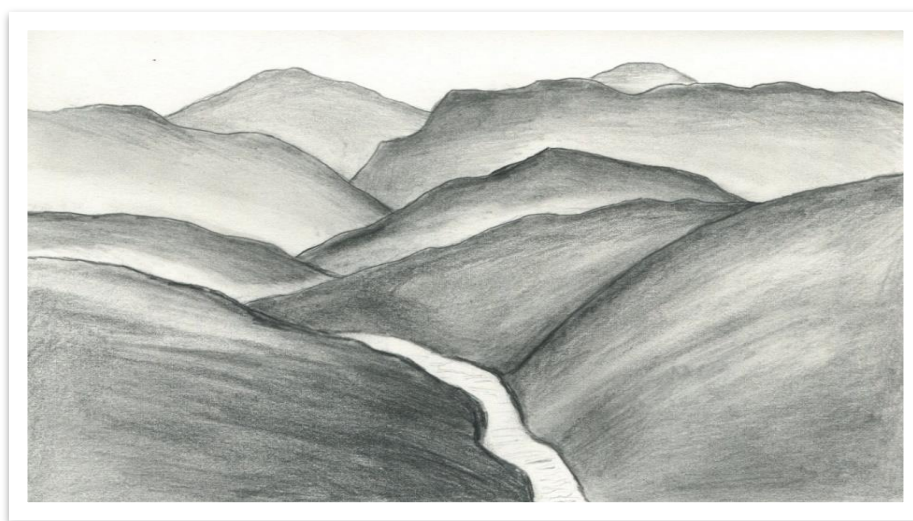
Much later, Guff slowly opened his eyes and winced. Sunlight trickled in. His thoughts were murky. He could make out shadows and shapes and saw that the sun was about to leave the big sky. The muloth was gone. The half-light before dark crept with long fingers across the land. Guff's foggiess cleared. He saw for the first time that he lay in a ditch. His back ached but he could move his limbs. His spear lay beside him, undamaged. Guff's stone blade, wrapped in its leather pouch, was still attached to his leggings. His father would be pleased. He slowly poked his head above the ditch. He was in a deep ravine. Mountains rose sharp and pitiless on all sides. In the half-light, the peaks were cold, vast and glowing. The last wisps of gold and warmth clung to the tops of the harsh crests. Too soon, the threads of light faded to nothing and the evening gloom deepened. Guff was alone in the dark for the first time in his life.

### Scene 3

Guff huddled and shivered beneath the great night orb. His father's words bounced in his head. "If lost at night. Make no sound. Be not seen nor heard." Guff was indeed lost. The search for his tribe would begin with first light, but first he had to survive the night. Guff wrapped himself in his furs but the cold defeated him. He stayed awake through the long dark, fearful of making the smallest sound

as night animals hunted. He prayed silently to his ancestors while his ears strained for sounds of great beasts; the throaty snort of the great bear, the piercing roar of the monster with teeth like long blades.

The dawn found Guff with his head buried within his cloak, ice in his hair. Short puffs of mist escaped from his mouth. When the sun rose above the sharp peaks, Guff felt joy. Despite his aching back, he had faith that he would find his father today. Guff lifted himself from the ditch and walked to the river at the bottom of the ravine. He scooped water in his hands and drank for a long time. He was terribly thirsty and the water was cold and delicious. Guff could feel strength return, the panic of the previous day wash away. He gripped his spear and began to trot across large flat stones that warmed in the morning sun. Guff's father had said that when lost, a river could lead you home. Guff's people could be camped on the banks of this river.



#### Scene 4

Guff followed the curve of the river. His leg throbbed which slowed his pace as he watched for beasts that may be at the water's edge. Apart from a few otters, with eyes like black pebbles, Guff saw nothing. Later that morning, Guff climbed to the top of a cliff that blocked his path and saw much that frightened him. Mountains stretched out to a vast distance, all the way to the big sky. Guff felt like an ant standing upon a newly cured and stretched skin of a muloth. Guff climbed back down into the ravine and once again followed the snake-like river.



He trotted along the river's edge until the mist had left the valley. The sun was directly above Guff when he reached the shore of a large lake. He hoped that the river continued again further down. The lake's surface was calm. Mountain peaks reflected in the lake's icy water and a thin vapour whispered up from the water's surface. The sight of the lake was soothing. Guff's breath was ragged from fatigue and his injured leg throbbed. He was hungry and had not eaten for days. Guff felt he needed to keep moving but he was also very tired. He sat near the lake's surface to rest. His eyes scanned the banks of the lake for movement, but the area was quiet. No bears, no big cats. Near to where Guff rested, were the bones of an elk. It had lain there a long time for the bones were clean and bleached white. Guff lay his head upon a flat stone and closed his eyes.



### Scene 5

Guff awoke to the sound of tiny splashes, like flat stones skipped across water. He tracked the sound and glimpsed fish darting and breaching the lake's surface to feed on insects. Guff needed a fishing spear, a water spear. He walked slowly to the elk bones; nursing his sore leg. Guff picked out rib bones. These he honed and carved with his blade so that both ends were sharp. Guff cut the bindings of his spear and removed the stone spear tip. He cut new notches into the spear's shaft and attached the newly sculpted rib bones to the wood. Guff then shaped and slotted the bones neatly into the grooves and bound the bones with twine. The spear now featured spikes of sharp bone.



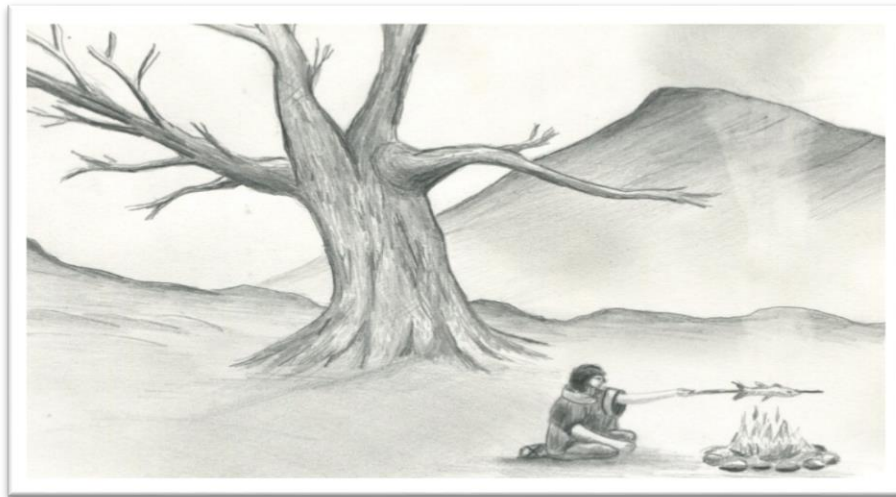
Guff stepped into the bitterly cold water and raised his spear. He balanced and waited, careful not to move. The water nipped his legs, like sharp teeth piercing his skin. He could not stand in this water for long. Guff scanned the surface of the lake for movement. Suddenly, a hint of fin stabbed the surface close to where he stood. Guff launched the spear. Guided by luck, mostly, and some skill it sliced into the flesh of a fish the size of his forearm. Guff hauled the fish into the air and droplets of water sprinkled in his hair. He whooped with excitement and flicked the spear. The fish landed flapping on big stones near the water's edge, its scales glistening in the sun. Guff was relieved to haul his legs from the frigid water. His teeth chattered as he struck the fish's head with a rock. He then removed its scales with his blade. By the time Guff had finished preparing the fish, the sun was low in the sky and the shadows were long. He would travel no further today. Guff did not wish to sleep huddled in the cold this night chewing raw fish. He knew the dangers, but he would cook the fish.



### Scene 6

Guff gathered leaves, bark and branches from the base of an old tree. He possessed a dark stone that hung safe from his neck, stuck to leather twine by pitch. The stone was sharp and shaped like a leaf. The stone's value was greater than his spear or blade, for the stone made fire. Guff selected a flat rock and placed dried grass on it. He struck the rock with the dark stone. The stone struck at an angle so that sparks landed in the tufts of dry grass.

After some effort, a wisp of smoke appeared. Guff blew on the twist of smoke until a flame stretched and curled. Excited, he layered more grass and thin strips of bark on the tiny flame until it grew. Guff skewered the fish onto a sharpened stick and wrapped it in green leaves from a nearby water plant. He then roasted the fish over the flames. Its aroma made his stomach rumble. Guff removed the fish from the flames, unwrapped the now blackened leaves and picked the flesh from the fish's bones. The flesh was hot and singed Guff's fingers, but it was delicious - charred on the outside, sweet in the middle. Guff finished eating and threw a large branch on the fire. He watched sleepily as sparks and smoke climbed into the twilight air.

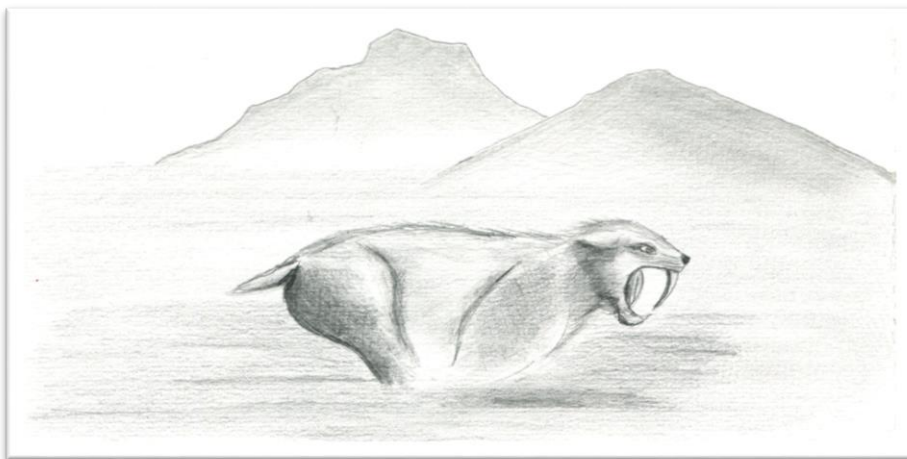


### Scene 7

A shadow loomed. Guff could see it out of the corner of his eye. Though Guff could only sense the shadow's dark outline, he felt a spike of pure fear that pierced his heart. The beast prowled slowly, sniffing the air, tracing Guff's scent through the smoke. The creature's head took shape beyond the shroud of smoke. It opened its jaws to reveal terrible long teeth. Guff felt the blood drain from his face. Here was death, a short stone toss from where he sat. If Guff moved too quickly, the beast would see him instantly. Guff never took his eyes off the monster as he slowly sorted his limbs and silently prepared his spear. Guff realized to his dismay that the spear was now only useful for stabbing fish.



Guff's only chance was to reach and climb the old tree. He gave a short prayer to his ancestors and leapt to his feet. Guff then threw the spear at the beast with all his strength. The spear flew true and struck the side of the great cat, just below its shoulder. The force caused the bones bound to the spear to break and scatter like a dandelion seed in a gust of wind. The spear failed to pierce the beast's thick hide. But for a moment, the big cat was off balance. It snarled. Its ears flat against its head. It saw Guff and its yellow eyes narrowed, its muscles tensing. The beast roared and then leapt.



Guff lunged for the tree. In a few strides, he reached the base of the tree. He grasped blindly at the branches above his head. Guff's fingers gripped thick bark and he frantically pulled himself up. An instant later, the tree shuddered as the heavy animal slammed into it. But Guff was just out of reach and the beast could only bellow in frustration. It lurked at the tree's base and stared up at Guff with its fierce eyes.

In the distance, Guff could hear voices, his name called. His name, the most beautiful sound in the world. Startled, the big cat bounded away. Guff looked down through the branches and saw his father and other men from their tribe sprinting to the tree. They had been tracking Guff and had seen the smoke from his fire. A wave of emotion like clear water washed through Guff. He climbed down from the tree and was embraced by his father. They returned that night, weary, to the tribe's camp and Guff's father watched Guff as he slept by a big well-tended fire and was still there when Guff woke the next morning.

