

Classic Novel Opening Studies 2 – Stig Of The Dump

IF you went too near the edge of the chalk-pit the ground would give way. Barney had been told this often enough. Everybody had told him. His grandmother, every time he came to stay with her. His sister, every time she wasn't telling him something else. Barney had a feeling, somewhere in his middle, that it was probably true about the ground giving way. But still, there was a difference between being told and seeing it happen. And today was one of those grey days when there was nothing to do, nothing to play, and nowhere to go. Except to the chalk-pit. The dump.

- 1) What does the writer mean when he tells us Barney had a feeling 'somewhere in his middle'?
- 2) According to the text, why do most people fear the chalk-pit?
- 3) In the real world we have to think about risk and measuring whether the level of risk is too great. Why does Barney consider taking the risk of going to the chalk-pit?
- 4) What other famous children's novels begin with the concept of boredom as a catalyst for adventure?
- 5) 'Barney is a solitary little boy, given to wandering off by himself'. How far do you agree with this statement?



Writing Task

Write your own opening like this one by selecting your own forbidden place and inquisitive character.