

Novel Resource #2

Book: Journey to the Bottomless Pit: The Story of Stephen Bishop and Mammoth Cave

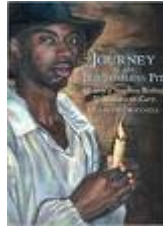
Author: Elizabeth (Betsy) Mitchell

Illustrator: Kellyn Alder

Publisher: Penguin Group

Copyright Year: 2004

Young Hoosier Book Award Nominee



Genre: Nonfiction

Themes: slavery, caves, hard-work, anger, adventure; The story of how Stephen Bishop discovered many new sites within Mammoth Cave.

Point of View: Third person (told by narrator: Elizabeth Mitchell)

Main Characters:

- ❖ Stephen Bishop: seventeen years old, slave, tour guide
- ❖ Franklin Gorin: Stephen's first owner (master), person who taught Stephen about Mammoth Cave, owner of Mammoth Cave
- ❖ John Croghan: doctor who purchases Mammoth Cave, Stephen new owner
- ❖ Charlotte Bishop: another slave, marries Stephen/becomes his wife
- ❖ Thomas Bishop: Stephen and Charlotte's son

Setting: Kentucky, Mammoth Cave, 1838-1857

Conflict: The conflict in this story is external (struggle between Bishop and the slavery laws). Stephen Bishop is a slave trained to take tourists through Mammoth Cave. Along his adventures, Stephen is the first to discover many new findings within the cave. However, Stephen was never recognized for the new discoveries because he was just the slave. The tourist or the owner was always given the credit and recognition.

Resolution: Stephen continues to work hard and make new discoveries. He holds in his angry feelings and never speaks of the hurt. By the end, Stephen is rewarded for his hard work. He is allowed to get married and live with Charlotte. Also, when his master dies, he is granted freedom after seven years by his will.

Interest Levels: Grades 4-8

Reading Levels: ages 9-12

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(Book talk)

Have you ever wondered what it would be like to go on a tour through a cave? What about actually discovering new places within a cave? Have you ever thought what life would be like if you were a slave? Stephen Bishop was a seventeen year old slave who could answer all of those questions. He was the first person to discover many new areas of Mammoth Cave in Kentucky. Bishop was the first tour guide for the cave. He was also the first person to create a map with all of his discoveries plotted in writing. However, don't be surprised when Bishop is not given credit for any of his work. Take a tour with Stephen Bishop to learn all about the history of Mammoth Cave and the times of slavery.

(Annotation)

Elizabeth Mitchell writes a narrative piece about the true events in Stephen Bishop's many discoveries of Mammoth Cave. Mitchell tells the story of the exciting adventures Bishop went on in order to discover new tunnels and rooms. The story also depicts the hardships that occurred due to the ways of slavery. However, Mitchell ends the book by telling the positive aspects of Bishop's life when he passed away.

Mitchell's story is written so well, that the reader would never know that she hadn't actually been on the tours with Stephen Bishop if she hadn't mentioned it in the beginning of her story. She explains the adventures with such detail and feeling that you can actually imagine being with Bishop as he makes his discoveries. Although there are very few pictures, Kellyn Alder chooses a few passages from the story to illustrate. They allow the reader to picture exactly what the scene would look like if they were standing in Mammoth Cave with Stephen Bishop. When the story and illustrations are put together, they allow the reader to escape to Mammoth Cave back in 1838 to join the many tours.

About the Author: Elizabeth (Betsy) Mitchell



Author/Editor's Homepage: unknown

Publisher's Homepage: <http://us.penguin.com/>

Interesting Facts/Background:

- ❖ Grew up in Omaha, Nebraska
- ❖ Has a degree in Journalism from University of Nebraska/Omaha
- ❖ Currently lives in New York with her family
- ❖ An award winning Editor-in-Chief of Del Rey Book in 2002 (edits science fiction books for adults)
- ❖ Became interested in Mammoth Cave when her grandparents took her as a child
- ❖ Wrote Journey to the Bottomless Pit: The Story of Stephen Bishop and Mammoth Cave after she took her son and read an article there about Stephen Bishop (his story "intrigued" her)
- ❖ Previously edited for Warner, Bantam Spectra, and Baen

Books Edited By Betsy Mitchell

- ❖ Armageddon's Children by Terry Brooks
- ❖ Time Dancers by Steve Cash
- ❖ Echelon by: Josh Coniser
- ❖ Judas Unchained by Peter F. Hamilton
- ❖ Black Powder War by Naomi Novik

Awards Received for Journey to the Bottomless Pit: The Story of Stephen Bishop and Mammoth Cave:

- ❖ Young Hoosier Book Award Nominee
- ❖ 100 Titles for Reading and Sharing (New York Public Library)
- ❖ Louisiana Young Reader's Choice Award Nominee 2007 Grades 6-8

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Discussion Questions

Pre-reading:

- ❖ Make a KWL chart based on what we already know about caves and what we want to know about caves.
- ❖ Make a KWL chart based on what we already know about slavery and what we want to know about slavery.
- ❖ Ask the students, "How would you feel if you were doing something that could make you a famous person, but someone else took the credit?".

During reading:

Chapter 1:

- ❖ Why do you think Stephen Bishop was excited and worried about his new job? (page 1)
- ❖ What did you learn about the air in Mammoth Cave? (page 3)
- ❖ Do you think that Stephen will be able to remember all of the information and stories that Mr. Miller is telling him?
- ❖ Why is it important that he remember them? (page 4)

Chapter 2:

- ❖ How does Stephen compare himself to other slaves in Kentucky? (page 13)
- ❖ Why is the main room in this chapter called the Church? (page 14)
- ❖ What words would you use to describe Stephen at this point?
- ❖ What is a stalagmite? (page 20)
- ❖ What is a stalactite? (page 20)
- ❖ Why was Stephen scared after Mr. Miller started to respond to his question? (page 21)

Chapter 3:

- ❖ How would you say Stephen's first tour went? (page 25)
- ❖ Why did people have to wear special clothing to tour the cave? (page 28)
- ❖ What was Stephen's first discovery in Mammoth Cave? (page 37)
- ❖ How did Stephen have time to make this discovery? (page 33)

Chapter 4:

- ❖ What did the cave's owner name the discovery? (page 39)
- ❖ Why did this upset Stephen? (page 39)

- ❖ What was Stephen's next discovery? (page 51)
- ❖ Who did he make this discovery with? (pages 41-52)
- ❖ Why was this such a daring adventure? (page 44)
- ❖ What was Stephen's reward for this trip? (page 52)

Chapter 5:

- ❖ What was the law that concerned Stephen when he received his reward? (page 53)
- ❖ Why was Stephen so upset about the article that Mr. Gorin wrote? (page 54)
- ❖ Who received credit for his discovery? (page 54)
- ❖ Why does Dr. John Croghan become an important person? (page 56)
- ❖ What do you learn about slavery laws in this chapter? (page 59)
- ❖ What discovery does Stephen make? Why is it so different from the others? (page 60)

Chapter 6:

- ❖ What was the new way to take people on a tour through the cave? (page 65)
- ❖ What is the new discovery that Stephen makes? Was he able to do it alone? What made him decide to try this adventure? (page 69)
- ❖ Was the story from long-ago true? (page 69)

Chapter 7:

- ❖ Why was the Underground Hospital created? (page 71)
- ❖ Why do you think people couldn't go in that part of the cave when people were living there? (page page 71)
- ❖ Why do you think the experiment was cancelled? Was it a success? (page 75)

Chapter 8:

- ❖ What was Stephen's new job? (page 77)
- ❖ Compared to his thoughts about the guide job, what do you think Stephen thought about this job?
- ❖ What else changes in Stephen's life? (page 84)
- ❖ Why do you think the master granted Stephen's request?

Chapter 9:

- ❖ What is going on with the slavery laws? (page 85)
- ❖ What do you think made Stephen different from other slaves? (page 87)

- ❖ What feelings do you think Stephen had about Dr. Croghan's death? (page 90)
- ❖ How did Stephen and Charlotte come into money? What did they spend it on? (page 93)
- ❖ How old was Stephen Bishop when he passed away? (page 93)

Chapter 10:

- ❖ How has technology changed since 1838? (page 94)
- ❖ What are the new known facts about Mammoth Cave? (page 95)

Post-reading

- ❖ As a class, finish both KWL charts based on what the students learned.
- ❖ Ask the students, "What are your thoughts about the events that took place in this story?"

Vocabulary List

- (page 2) cavern: a large cave
- (page 2) lard: pig fat; grease
- (page 3) cascaded: falling or dropping from a small, steep waterfall
- (page 4) stagecoach: a horse-drawn coach that carried people on trips
- (page 5) narrow: small in width; not wide
- (page 8) rotunda: a round building, hall, or room
- (page 10) crevice: a narrow opening caused by a crack or split
- (page 11) stout: strong; sturdy
- (page 12) oblige: to do a favor or service
- (page 14) pulpit: a raised platform where someone preaches
- (page 18) blockade: any blocking action to isolate something
- (page 18) sulphur: a pale-yellow, nonmetallic chemical element
- (page 24) basin: a round, wide, shallow container for water
- (page 27) provisions: something provided or supplied
- (page 33) chasm: a deep crack in the earth's surface
- (page 33) molasses: a thick dark-brown syrup made during refining of sugar
- (page 36) meager: poor quality
- (page 39) shaft: a column; the main part between the ends of a column
- (page 43) teetered: to totter; to wobble
- (page 49) misery: a condition of great suffering
- (page 58) geology: science dealing with the physical nature and history of the earth
- (page 59) abolished: to decay little by little

- (page 62) bizarre: very odd in manner or appearance
(page 63) tureen: a large, deep serving dish with a lid
(page 64) dwelling: a place to live in
(page 70) tuberculosis (consumption): an infectious disease
(page 84) chambermaid: a woman whose job is to take care of bedrooms
(page 93) emancipated: to set free
(page 94) legacy: money or property left to someone by a will
(page 95) ecology: branch of biology for living organisms and their environment
(page 96) kerosene: a thin oil distilled from petroleum

Read-Aloud Passages

Passage 1:

Passage 1 (pages 53 and 54—ending at “He would never feel the same about that day.”)

I chose this passage because I think it gives the students a huge insight of what it was like to be a slave with no rights at all. I think it gives a different picture than most of the textbooks do. This passage shows how slaves do the work, but they get no credit and most of the time no pay. I think that this would give the students that gut feeling to help them connect to the slaves from a personal perspective.

Passage 2:

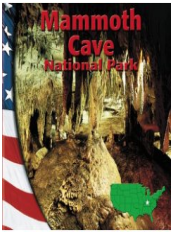
Passage 2 (pages 85-86—stopping after “Stephen was one of them.”)

I chose this passage because students seem to hold an interest in the Underground Railroad theme. I think the mystery and sneaky aspect of it keeps them intrigued. I think that this passage would not only keep them interested in the text, but also teach them more about the Underground Railroad and why it was used.

Anticipation Statements

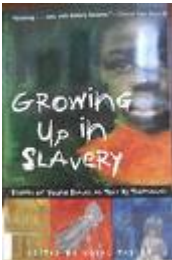
<u>Before</u> True/False What do you think?	<u>Anticipation Statement</u>	<u>After</u> Were you correct? Why or why not?
	Hundreds of years ago, Mammoth Cave was lit by electricity.	
	The Underground Railroad was a railroad leading from the south to the north.	
	A stalactite forms from the ground and grows up to the ceiling.	
	A stalagmite forms from the ground and grows up to the ceiling.	

If you enjoyed reading Journey to the Bottomless Pit: The Story of Stephen Bishop and Mammoth Cave, you'll love...



Mammoth Cave National Park By: Mike Graf

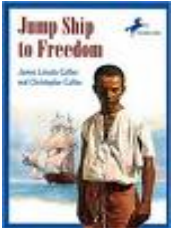
Mike Graf writes a nonfiction book about the facts of Mammoth Cave.



Growing Up in Slavery: Stories of Young Slaves as Told By Themselves

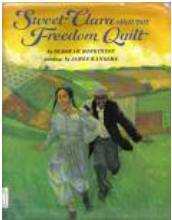
By: Yuval Taylor

Like Stephen Bishop, these youngsters have a story to tell about their life in slavery. These are also real stories from around the same time Bishop was alive.



Jump Ship to Freedom By: James and Christopher Collier

Daniel is a fourteen year old slave who is seeking freedom for his family. This story tells of his hard fight to get his family away from his evil master.



Sweet Clara and the Freedom Quilt By: Deborah Hopkinson

Clara is a young woman living the life of slavery. She has been separated from her own mother. She creates a quilt that is a map of the Underground Railroad to help other slaves escape.

Indiana State Standards: Language Arts

Grade 3: 3.1.2, 3.1.3, 3.1.4, 3.1.5, 3.1.6, 3.1.7, 3.2.2, 3.2.3, 3.2.4, 3.3.1, 3.3.3, 3.3.4, 3.3.8

Grade 4: 4.1.1, 4.1.2, 4.1.3, 4.1.5, 4.1.7, 4.2.2, 4.2.3, 4.3.1, 4.3.2, 4.3.3, 4.3.6, 4.3.7

Grade 5: 5.1.1, 5.1.6, 5.2.3, 5.2.4, 5.3.1, 5.3.2, 5.3.3, 5.3.4, 5.3.8

Grade 6: 6.1.4, 6.2.7, 6.2.9, 6.3.1, 6.3.2, 6.3.5, 6.3.6, 6.3.8, 6.3.9

Indiana State Standards: Social Studies

Grade 3: 3.1.4, 3.1.5, 3.1.7, 3.1.8, 3.2.5, 3.3.1, 3.3.2

Grade 4: 4.1.7, 4.1.8, 4.1.11, 4.1.13, 4.1.15

Grade 5: 5.3.2, 5.3.3

Grade 6: content not within standards

Across the Curriculum Connections

Activity 1: Art

- ❖ Students will create a collage after reading Journey to the Bottomless Pit: The Story of Stephen Bishop and Mammoth Cave. The collage will be based on the feelings, emotions, thoughts, and facts that the students were given from the book. This collage is based on what they learned and felt while reading.

Materials Needed:

- The book

Mitchell, Elizabeth. The Journey to the Bottomless Pit: The Story of Stephen Bishop and Mammoth Cave. Penguin Group, 2004.

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- A variety of magazines
- Paper for the background
- Paper for cutting/artwork
- Glue
- Scissors

Art Standards:

Grade 3: 3.1.2, 3.1.3, 3.3.1, 3.3.2, 3.6.1, 3.6.2, 3.7.2, 3.12.1

Grade 4: 4.3.2, 4.6.1, 4.6.2, 4.7.2, 4.7.3, 4.12.2

Grade 5: 5.1.3, 5.3.1, 5.3.2, 5.7.1, 5.7.2

Grade 6: 6.3.2, 6.6.2, 6.7.1, 6.7.2

Activity 2: *Geography*

- ❖ Students will do their best to create a map of their own Underground Railroad. The book Sweet Clara and The Freedom Quilt should be read as well.

Materials needed:

- The book

Hopkinson, Deborah. Sweet Clara and the Freedom Quilt. Dragonfly Books, 1995.

- Construction paper
- Maps to look at for examples
- Scissors
- Glue

Geography Standards:

Grade 3: 3.3.1, 3.3.5, 3.3.8

Grade 4: 4.3.2, 4.3.3, 4.3.4, 4.3.11

Grade 5: 5.3.2, 5.3.3

Grade 6: 6.3.3, 6.3.5

Resources to Supplement Activities

Mammoth Cave. 21 Apr. 2008. National Park Service.
<http://www.nps.gov/macac/>

*A website that has many interesting details, information, and photos about Mammoth Cave.

America's National Parks: A Video Tour of All 55 National Parks. DVD.
Questar, Inc., 2001.

*A 2-set DVD that not only shows a tour of Mammoth Cave, but all of the other national parks in America.

Book Activities

Activity #1: Journal Entry, Individual Assignment

Directions: You have to have read the book Journey to the Bottomless Pit: The Story of Stephen Bishop and Mammoth Cave. Write a one page journal entry. The entry should discuss your feelings and thought about the adventures and hardships of Stephen Bishop.

*Be sure to use neat handwriting and the grammar rules learned in class!

State Standards:

Language Arts:

Grade 3: 3.4.3, 3.4.9, 3.4.6, 3.4.7, 3.4.8, 3.5.2, 3.5.7, 3.6.1, 3.6.2, 3.6.3,
3.6.4, 3.6.5, 3.6.7, 3.6.8

Grade 4: 4.4.2, 4.4.10, 4.4.11, 4.4.12, 4.5.1, 4.5.2, 4.6.1, 4.6.2, 4.6.3, 4.6.4,
4.6.6, 4.6.7, 4.6.8

Grade 5: 5.4.2, 5.4.8, 5.4.9, 5.4.10, 5.5.1, 5.5.2, 5.6.8, 5.6.3, 5.6.4, 5.6.6,
5.6.7

Activity #2: Create a Dialogue, Individual Assignment

Directions:

- ❖ Pretend that you are Stephen Bishop. What would you say to the group of fourth graders sitting in front of you?
- ❖ Create a two minute discussion. Include details about you (Stephen Bishop), Mammoth Cave, and slavery.
- ❖ The facts that you have should either come from the book we read or another source you have found. The facts **MUST** be true!
- ❖ Try to memorize what you have written down to say. You want to present this as if you are Stephen Bishop.

State Standards:

Language Arts (Speaking):

Grade 3: 3.7.2, 3.7.5, 3.7.6, 3.7.7, 3.7.8, 3.7.13

Grade 4: 4.7.2, 4.7.15, 4.7.5, 4.7.8, 4.7.9, 4.7.11

Grade 5: 5.7.2, 5.7.4, 5.7.5, 5.7.6, 5.7.13, 5.7.9, 5.7.11

My Informal Bibliography

Website: Book Review:

<http://www.state.lib.la.us/empowerlibrary/JOURNEY%20TO%20BOTTOM%20LESS%20PIT.pdf>

Author's (Betsy Mitchell) Biography Website:

<http://nesfa.org/boskone/b41/mitchell.html>

Editor Watch Website:

http://www.sfeditorwatch.com/index.php/Betsy_Mitchell

Book reference: <http://amazon.com>

Indiana Department of Education (Standards) Website:

<http://ideanet.doe.state.in.us/standards/welcome.html>

Dictionary:

"Michael Agnes." Webster's New World College Dictionary. 4th ed. 1999.