

# Stig of the Dump

Barney is bored at Grandmother's house and decides to visit the local chalk pit. When the ground at the edge of the pit gives way, Barney plunges into the hole and meets Stig, a boy from the Stone Age. Although they cannot use speech to communicate, they become friends and have lots of fun improving Stig's den, collecting firewood and hunting. Nobody believes that Stig is real until he has to defend Barney.

## Author

Clive King was born in Richmond, Surrey, in 1924. He grew up in Ash, Kent, where *Stig of the Dump* is set. He enjoyed writing as a child and studied English at university. Afterwards, Clive King served in the Royal Navy, towards the end of the Second World War. *Stig of the Dump* was published in 1963 and has been very successful. The book has been made into a play and two television series.

## Stone Age

Stig's clothing, appearance and flint tools suggest that he is from the Stone Age, a period in history that started between c750,000–c2500 BC. During this time, people used simple stone tools, produced artwork and took part in spiritual and religious activities. They moved from place to place, hunting and gathering food. Later in the Stone Age, people settled in one place and built monuments, such as Stonehenge.



## Characters

### Barney

Barney is an adventurous, friendly eight year old boy. He enjoys learning new skills from Stig and becomes good friends with him. Barney is sometimes too trusting of characters who do not deserve his trust.

### Stig

Stig is a Stone Age boy who lives in the dump. He loves collecting objects that other people have thrown away and using them to make something new. Stig is very protective of Barney and rescues him at several points in the story.

### Lou

Lou is Barney's older sister. She doesn't believe that Stig is real at first and teases Barney about him. Finally, she meets Stig and realises that Barney is telling the truth.

### Grandmother

Like Stig, Grandmother is protective of Barney. She warns him to stay away from the chalk pit and is unhappy when he goes out alone in the dark. She also believes that Barney has imagined Stig.

## Themes

- adventure and exploration
- family
- friendship
- recycling
- teamwork

## Settings

### Ash, Kent

Ash is a real village in Kent and is the setting for *Stig of the Dump*. In the book, the area is described as being surrounded by fields, woods, gardens and an orchard.



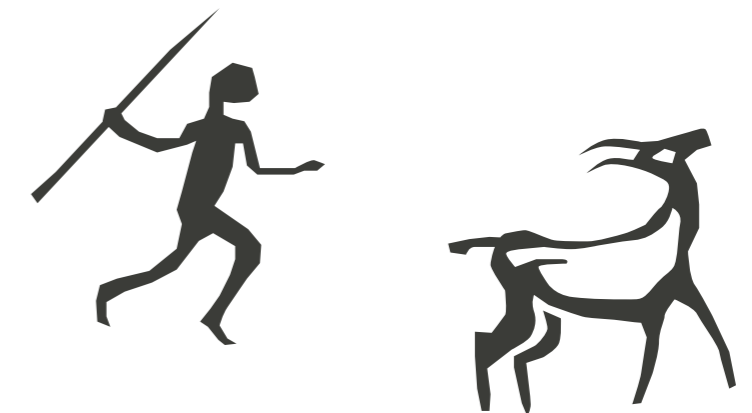
### Grandmother's house

Barney and Lou are staying at Grandmother's house in Ash. Barney often wanders away from Grandmother's house.



### The dump

The dump is at the bottom of a pit where people once mined chalk. People from the surrounding area leave things that they don't want anymore in the pit. Stig lives there and enjoys collecting and reusing the abandoned items.



## Story timeline

These are some of the key chapters in the novel. When you read the chapters, use the questions as starting points for discussion.

### Chapter 1

Barney falls into the chalk pit and meets Stig. What are your first impressions of Stig?

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### Chapter 3

Barney goes to visit Stig in the cold winter. They cut down a tree and build a fire to keep warm. What has Stig learned from Barney by this point of the novel? What has Barney learned from Stig?

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### Chapter 4

Barney goes hunting with Stig and Lou goes fox hunting on her horse. When Lou sees Stig, she thinks that she has imagined him. Why does she still believe Stig is not real?

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### Chapter 6

Stig protects Barney and chases away some burglars. Do Lou and Grandmother believe in him? Why?

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### Chapter 9

Barney and Lou travel through time to the Stone Age. How do they feel about their experience?

## Language

In *Stig of the Dump*, the settings are described in detail so that the reader can imagine each scene. For example, from the edge of the chalk pit, Barney notices the trees: *'The roots looped over the edge, twined in the air and grew back into the earth. Some of the trees hung over the edge, holding on desperately by a few roots.'* Simple noun phrases are used to give further information about parts of the setting, such as *'rough grass'*, *'white chalk'* and *'crumbly brown earth'*.

## Structure

The story is told in chronological order and takes place over about eight months, from autumn to midsummer the following year. It is written in the third person and focuses on how Barney sees the events.

## Magical realism

*Stig of the Dump* is set in the real world of Kent in the 1960s but the book also has magical and fantastical elements. Barney and Lou time travel to the Stone Age and Stig is a boy from this prehistoric period who lives in the modern day.



## Literary terms

### chronological order

If a story is written in chronological order, it means that it is written in the order that the events happened.

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### fantasy

Fantasy stories involve magic, good and evil characters and adventures. For example, Barney is an adventurous child who discovers that a person who should have lived thousands of years ago is living in the local dump.

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### magical realism

A magical realism story usually has elements of magic and fantasy in a real world setting.

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### noun phrase

A noun phrase is a group of words that contains a noun, such as *'cracked egg cup'* and *'springy television aerial'*.

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### third person

A text in the third person is written about a character or object, but is not told from their point of view. For example, *'Barney could see strange bits of wreckage among the moss and elder bushes and nettles'*.

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### time travel

Time travel is travelling backwards into the past or forwards into the future.

