

# ADVENTURE IN ÇATAL HÜYÜK

## CHARACTERS

**Narrator Jackie Bobby Dr. Digg Ms. Boerang**

**NARRATOR:** Jackie and Bobby doze in their world history class while their teacher, Ms. Boerang, talks about the ancient city of Çatal Hüyük (*chuh-TUL hoo-YOOK*) in Turkey. Jackie is snoring softly. Bobby's mouth is open. But moments later, both students wake up in a strange city.

**JACKIE:** Whoa—where are we, Bobby?

**BOBBY:** Oh, man, it looks like some alien planet out of a *Star Wars* movie. Do you think we time-warped to another planet?

**JACKIE:** This is a totally weird place. Look, none of the buildings have doors.

**BOBBY:** That dude's climbing a ladder to get to the roof. Let's follow him.

**NARRATOR:** After Jackie and Bobby climb the ladder, they find themselves on a very flat roof. They can see many people climbing in and out of holes in the roofs and using ladders to get from one rooftop to another since the roofs are at different levels. A large group of people are entering one particular hole.

**BOBBY:** What do you think is going on over there?

**JACKIE:** I don't know. Let's check it out. Maybe it's a party or something.

**BOBBY:** Awesome! Party on.

**NARRATOR:** Jackie and Bobby travel across the roofs until they reach the hole that everyone had been climbing in and out of. Smoke pours out of the hole.

**JACKIE:** Do you think this is a chimney, Bobby?

**BOBBY:** Cool! It's like we're Santa Claus or something!

**NARRATOR:** Jackie and Bobby don't realize that in Çatal Hüyük, the holes, used as "doors" to homes, also serve as chimneys where smoke from the fires below can escape to the outside. Gasping and choking from the smoke, Jackie and Bobby climb into the hole and down to a dark room below.

**JACKIE:** This is an awfully small house—only two rooms.

**BOBBY:** Yeah, and look—they don't even have furniture. Just those benches built into the walls.

**JACKIE:** Everyone here looks so sad. I don't think this is a party after all.

**BOBBY:** That woman lying on the bench next to you? Does she look . . . does she look dead to you?

**NARRATOR:** Suddenly, a tall man appears out of nowhere.

**BOBBY:** Whoa, dude! Who are you?

**DR. DIGG:** Dr. Digg, archaeologist, sent into your dream to explain what's going on since you two obviously don't listen in class.

**JACKIE:** So, anyway, Dr. D., why does that woman over there look dead?

**DR. DIGG:** Because she is. This is a funeral. She'll be buried under that platform. In this culture, they bury their dead relatives in their homes.

**BOBBY:** I don't think so. That's totally gross. I'm getting out of here.

**NARRATOR:** Bobby and Jackie hurry up the ladder to the roof. Dr. Digg magically appears beside them again.

**DR. DIGG:** Did you notice the paintings on the wall? The room you were in was the family shrine, a place of worship. There are many shrines here; in fact, it's become the religious center of the valley. Çatal Hüyük has become quite self-sufficient. These people grow enough food to feed themselves; they don't have to depend on others for their survival.

**JACKIE:** Maybe so, but somebody should clue them in about cemeteries.

**DR. DIGG:** The people here do many things, since not everyone has to hunt and farm. They make needles, beads, and fishhooks. They weave cloth, make baskets, and do leather work. I'd love to show you around more, but it's time to . . .

**MS. BOERANG:** . . . close your books and take out a pen for today's quiz.

**JACKIE AND BOBBY:** (*Sleepily*) Huh? What's going on?

**MS. BOERANG:** Sit up, please. I hope you two were paying attention.

**NARRATOR:** Jackie and Bobby wake up in Ms. Boerang's classroom with a pop quiz in front of them. Glancing at the first question, both are surprised to discover that they actually know the answer. Grinning at each other, they eagerly pick up their pens and finish the quiz before anybody else in the class.

# "ADVENTURE IN ÇATAL HÜYÜK"

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- How does Çatal Hüyük compare with the early hunting and gathering communities of the Ice Age, such as the one at Terra Amata?
- How did the community of Çatal Hüyük solve problems of a large, permanent population?

## ACTIVITIES

### CONSTRUCTION SITE, C. 6000 BC

Invite students to study the architectural layout of houses in Çatal Hüyük. In pairs or small groups, they may work collaboratively to construct a model of a building or group of buildings. Students should be able to describe the materials that would have been used in the construction and the functions of different rooms.

### EARLY HUMANS' WALL STREET: THE NECESSITY OF TRADING

After exploring life in Çatal Hüyük, set up a mini Wall Street in your classroom to help students understand how trading began. Break the class into small groups of students and provide each group with different amounts of materials needed to make a simple object, like a paper snowman. For example, one group receives only white circles; another receives glue; a third receives paper carrot noses, and so on. Make sure some groups have a surplus of supplies while others have a scarcity. Then invite groups to trade with one another and compete to be the first group to make a complete snowman. This activity lends itself to a discussion about renewable resources (like glue) versus nonrenewable resources (like paper) and how scarcities and surpluses dictate the value of materials and the final product.

### TOOLMAKING AT ÇATAL HÜYÜK

Encourage students to analyze illustrations of various tools crafted by the self-sufficient city dwellers at Çatal Hüyük. They may design a pamphlet that pictures and describes the uses of these tools. The pamphlets should explain how these objects affected daily life in Çatal Hüyük.

## RESOURCES

### BOOKS

*The First Civilizations (History of Everyday Things)* by Giovanni Caselli (Peter Bedrick, 1998)  
*The Rise of Cities (Timeframe)* by TimeLife editors (TimeLife, 1991)

### WEBSITE

21St C Art, CE-BC, A Context by Jan Haag, Heinrich Klotz, and Jeffrey Shaw  
(<http://students.washington.edu/jhaag/osch.htm>)

This site offers images of early printed cloth designs and fascinating virtual reconstructions of interior spaces of Çatal Hüyük.