

- 1) Fill in the blanks (1 to 20)
- 2) Be ready to tell this story without reading it!

Irish Folklore, Myths & Legends.

Finn McCool & the Giant's Causeway

Once upon a time in a (1) place called Ireland, there was a mythological Irish giant called Finn McCool, also known as Fionn Mac Cumhaill (or Fionn Mac Cool). One of Ireland's most prominent mythological characters was Fionn MacCool the Giant (of Giant's Causeway fame).



Hiking along the mythic Giant's Causeway in search of Finn

The story goes like this...

Once upon a time, there was a mythological Irish giant called Finn McCool who got himself into a spot of trouble with a (2) Scottish giant called Benandonner who (3) Finn's island of Ireland.

Enraged at Benandonnar's claim to Ireland, the giant Finn McCool starts (3) throwing (4) into the sea (5) the Antrim (6) in Northern Ireland. Inspired by the way they fell into the water, Finn decided to use his boulders to make (7) or a causeway – a Giant's Causeway – all the way to [Scotland's Isla of Staffa](#). Using his causeway to Scotland, he could (8) his (9) to a proper duel (10) of Ireland.



Finn's Giants Causeway stretching out towards the horizon and Scotland's Isle of Staffa.

In a mythical world where size dictates winners and losers, Finn realises he has (11) his enemy – Benandonner is giant even for a giant! (12) won't work on him – so Finn quickly returns to Ireland via his Giant Causeway and decides the best way to beat Benandonner is to (13).

Leaving the Giant's Causeway for Benandonner to find, Finn McCool's wife (14) him as a baby. When his rival arrives, he finds Finn's wife Sadhbh (pronounced "Siive") (15) her enormous baby giant. Realising that if Finn's child was (16), Finn himself must be *huge*!



Welcome to Fingal's Cave on the Isle of Staffa. Look familiar?

The Scottish giant Benandonnar hurries away, (17) to Scotland with his tail between his legs. As he hurries home, he (18) away bits of the causeway, (19)all (20) between Scotland and Ireland to prevent Fionn McCool following him as he retreats to the Fingal's Cave on the Isla of Staffa.

Incidentally, Fingal's Cave shares a similar geology and appearance to the Giant's Causeway!

He is determined to leave Ireland and stay away from the giant Finn McCool, who regains (21) over Ireland once more.

Thus, the myth of the Giant's Causeway was born.

Beyond the Myth



Waves crashing on the legendary Giant's Causeway

It's a nice story, isn't it? And clearly, (22)– at least culturally, as the myth of the giant Fionn McCool is mirrored in the name: the Giant's Causeway.

But if you'd consider yourself more of a scientist, perhaps you like the alternative (and easier to prove!) scientific version of the birth of the Giant's Causeway?

The (23) is the result of an ancient (24) some 60,000 years ago. The burning and quick cooling of the (25) left a series of impressive 40,000 (26) columns hugging the northern Irish coastline forming the Giant's Causeway, one of Ireland's (27) and impressive landscapes, as

well as basalt columns of the tiny Scottish Isle of Staffa, remote an uninhabited (28).(29) story you prefer, well, the Giant's Causeway is a place that you have to see to (30) believe. So what are you waiting for?

- 1) underestimated
- 2) a bridge
- 3) angrily
- 4) severing
- 5) volcanic explosion
- 6) rival
- 7) con him
- 8) truly
- 9) brute force
- 10) high-tempered
- 11) disguise
- 12) undisputed control
- 13) boulders
- 14) UNESCO World Heritage
- 15) coastline
- 16) interconnected basalt
- 17) had made a claim for
- 18) off
- 19) frantically tears
- 20) volcanic lava
- 21) retreating back
- 22) challenge
- 23) faraway
- 24) most iconic
- 25) ties
- 26) this big
- 27) over the fate
- 28) whichever
- 29) it holds some truth
- 30) but for birdlife

