



ANGLÈS

Read the text carefully and answer the questions.

LASCAUX

The Lascaux cave paintings were discovered on Thursday, September 12, 1940, by four French teenagers. The news of the discovery quickly spread and soon archaeologists visited the site.

Shortly after World War II ended, the entrance to the cave was enlarged and the floor was lowered to enable easier access. Nearly 1,200 tourists visited the cave every day.

By 1955, it became apparent that the cave's popularity had begun to cause significant damage. A study showed that the primary cause was the high levels of carbon dioxide from the visitors' **breath** ¹.

A system was implemented to monitor carbon dioxide levels, but soon green algae on the walls and other damage began to appear. To protect the ancient site from further damage, the Ministry of Cultural Affairs closed the Lascaux cave to the public on April 20, 1963. The original climatic conditions were recreated, and the site is now in the state in which it was discovered in 1940.

A computerised system now monitors a variety of conditions in the cave, including temperature, moisture and carbon dioxide levels. To compensate for the great loss to the public in closing the cave, a detailed replica was created in 1980. The cave paintings were recreated by projecting images of the originals onto the replica wall. The recreated site, known as "Lascaux II," has been open to the public since 1983.

Inside the original cave, the first hall, called the Great Hall of the Bulls has a vast fresco, covering some 20 meters, composed of three groups of animals: horses, bulls and **stags** ².

The Great Hall of the Bulls cave painting begins with a unicorn-like figure who seems to be running after a herd of horses. This is linked with a large, partially drawn bull towards the back of the hall. On the opposite side, a similar illustration with three large wild oxen (now extinct) balances this composition.

The few symbols are limited to isolated or grouped dots, often black, and to variously coloured dashes. The colour black dominates the figurative works: only the group of stags, three bovines and four horses, of which three are incomplete, are coloured red.

The Painted Gallery, which is about 30 meters long, is a continuation of the same hall. Considered to be the pinnacle of Palaeolithic cave art, the Painted Gallery covers the entire upper reaches of the walls as well as the surface of the ceiling. The iconography is based on classical prehistoric animal themes: wild oxen, horses, ibexes, the stag and, at the back, the bison.

A second, lower, gallery, the Lateral Passage, opens off the **aisle** ³ to the right of Great Hall of the Bulls. It connects the Chamber of **Engravings** ⁴ with the Main Gallery and, at its extremity, with the Chamber of Felines, which is notably different from the other galleries. Its paintings are of smaller proportions, several felines are included, and the wild ox is absent.

Adapted from <http://www.sacred-destinations.com/france/lascaux-caves.htm>

¹ **breath**: alè, respiració.

² **stags**: cérvol.

³ **aisle**: passadís.

⁴ **Engravings**: gravats.



READING COMPREHENSION (1 mark for each question)

Answer the following questions. Try to use your own words and base your answers on the text.

Justify your answers. You must answer using (a) full sentence(s).

1. What were the negative consequences of Lascaux becoming a popular place?
2. What did the French government finally decide to do in order to conserve the cave?
3. Why was Lascaux II created?
4. According to the text, is there a great variety of colours in the cave figures in the Great Hall of the Bulls?
5. Which aspects make the Chamber of Felines be unlike the other chambers? In which way?

WRITING

Choose ONE of the three options below. Write 80 words. [5 marks]

Remember to write in an appropriate style. When you have finished check the grammar, punctuation and spelling.

1. Do you think Lascaux or other Palaeolithic caves should be visited by schools? Why? Why not? Why not? Write an **opinion** composition exposing your point of view.
2. Write an **informal letter** to a friend of yours from Lascaux. Tell him/her what you have seen and describe briefly your general impression of the place.
3. Write a **description** of your favourite painting/ statue/ work of art. Say what makes it special to you.
4. Imagine you are a young child who has just discovered a Palaeolithic cave by chance. You run home to tell your parents. Write a **conversation** between you and your parents in which you tell them about your discovery.

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