

The Legend of Finn McCool

The Irish legend of Finn McCool was first written down in the 1840s. However, like all tales and legends, there are several versions of the story about the Irish giant.

Irish folk tales say that the Giant's Causeway was created by giants moving these huge rocks, these giants were Finn McCool and Benandonner.

Benandonner was a Scottish giant who wanted to challenge Finn McCool to a fight. It was said that Finn built the Giant's Causeway so they could meet and do battle. As Finn made his way across to Scotland, he spied Benandonner, who looked much bigger, taller and stronger than he did from across the water. He decided he would not challenge the giant any longer and rushed back home.



Did You Know...?

Finn McCool's name in Irish is 'Finn mac Cumhaill'. It comes from a nickname meaning 'fair' and 'pale'.

There are two famous rock formations found at the Giant's Causeway: 'the Organ' and 'the Giant's Boot'.

When he reached home, Finn told his wife Oonagh about the Scottish giant. She came up with a clever plan to hide Finn in their baby son's cot and dress him up as a baby. Benandonner came to Ireland to battle Finn but he was nowhere to be seen. Instead he found, what he believed to be, Finn's enormous baby. He was now afraid to meet the father of this baby, who had to be much bigger and stronger than him. He returned home and never bothered Finn McCool again. Scientists now know, the Giant's Causeway, which is located on the north-eastern coast near the town of Bushmills, Northern Ireland, was created when lava poured out of the earth and cooled into different rock shapes, including the hexagon shaped rocks you can see there today.



The Legend of Finn McCool Answers

1. What was the nickname for Finn? Tick one.

- ☐ fair and calm
- ☐ kind and strong
- ☐ fair and pale

2. Where is the Giant's Causeway located? Tick one.

- ☐ north-eastern coast near Belfast
- ☐ north-eastern coast near Bushmills
- ☐ north-eastern coast near Scotland

3. Where was Finn McCool's enemy from? Tick one.

- ☐ Northern Ireland
- ☐ England
- ☐ Scotland

4. Can you find and copy a word which means the same as a 'smart'?

5. What are the names of the two famous rock formations found at the Giant's Causeway?
