

Kid's KOrner

Coral Caverns — The Wonderfule Underground World

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Have you ever visited a cave or a cavern?

A cave is an opening under the ground which is large enough for humans to enter and walk around. A cavern is a large cave.

These caves were formed by underground rivers which have now disappeared.

When a cave or a cavern is particularly interesting or quite pretty, it is often made safe enough for visitors to pay money to see.

Caverns were formed before the hills or valleys of the region were even there. They are often found in limestone country. Such is the case with Coral Caverns located near Manns Choice in Bedford County.

While the Coral Caverns were tucked snugly into the hills, probably even when dinosaurs roamed the earth, they were not discovered by humans until 1928.

Many of your grandparents or even great-grandparents were children at that time.

There are formations in the Coral Caverns called stalactites and stalagmites. The stalactites occur when water drips from the ceiling and they look like colorful icicles. The stalagmites occur when the liquid drips from the ceiling onto the floor of the cave and causes it to build up.

It is believed that Coral Caverns is 400 million years old and was formed when this part of the coun-

try was covered by the Appalachian Sea.

They contain the only known coral reef in existence today. Geologists (these are people who study formations in caves) say that nowhere else in Pennsylvania are there stalagmites and stalactites of the beauty, color and unusual shapes found in the Manns Choice cavern.

There are formations that, with a little imagination, look like bats, elephants, old Rip Van Winkle, fried eggs, and even Cinderella's ballroom. The guide also likes to tell stories about dinosaurs which used to roam about in the cave. Sometimes, he is only kidding.

There is a towering fossil wall in Coral Caverns which contains remains of sea creatures buried 410 million years ago.

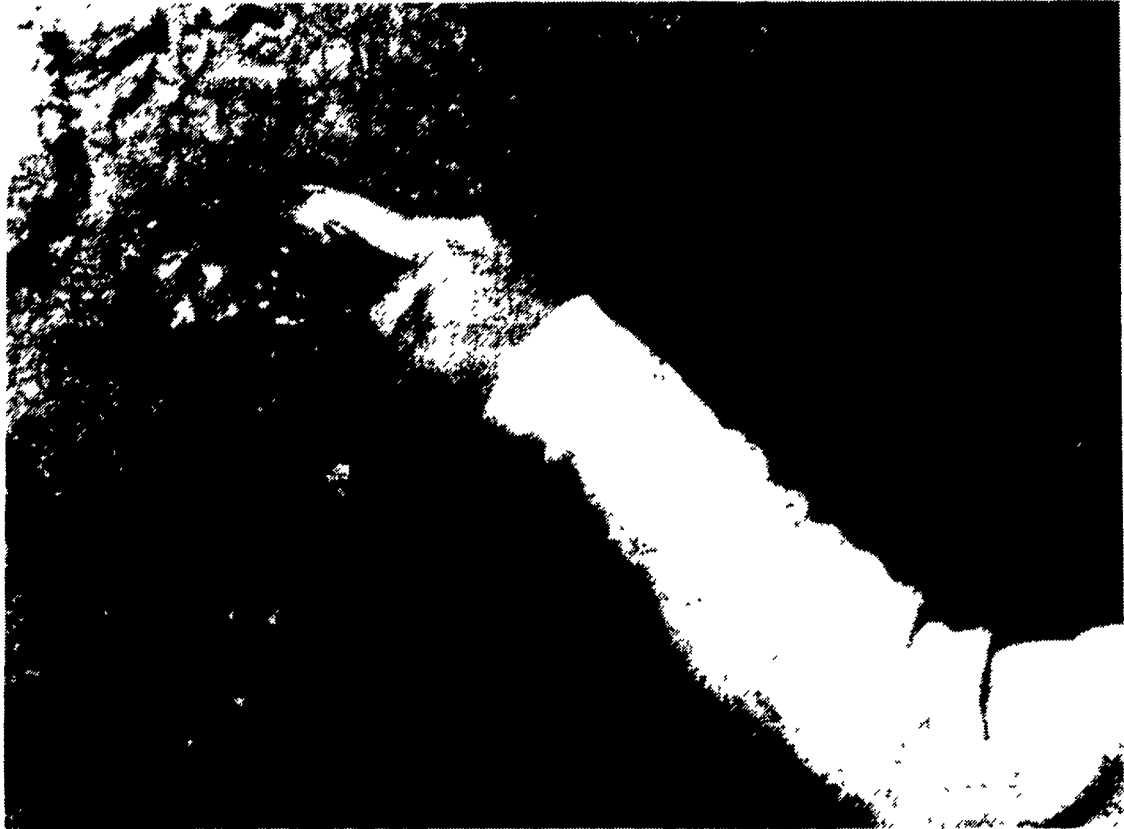
At one point, the guide turns out all of the cave lights and you can see what it would be like to live underground. It is quite black. You cannot even see your hand in front of your face.

Coral Caverns is not the only cavern in Pennsylvania. Ask your parents to see if there is a cavern close to your home that you might visit on a Sunday afternoon.

They are fun to visit on hot days or cold days because the temperature beneath the ground is always exactly the same.

Most caverns also have gift shops where you can purchase small pieces of stone that might have come from the cavern.

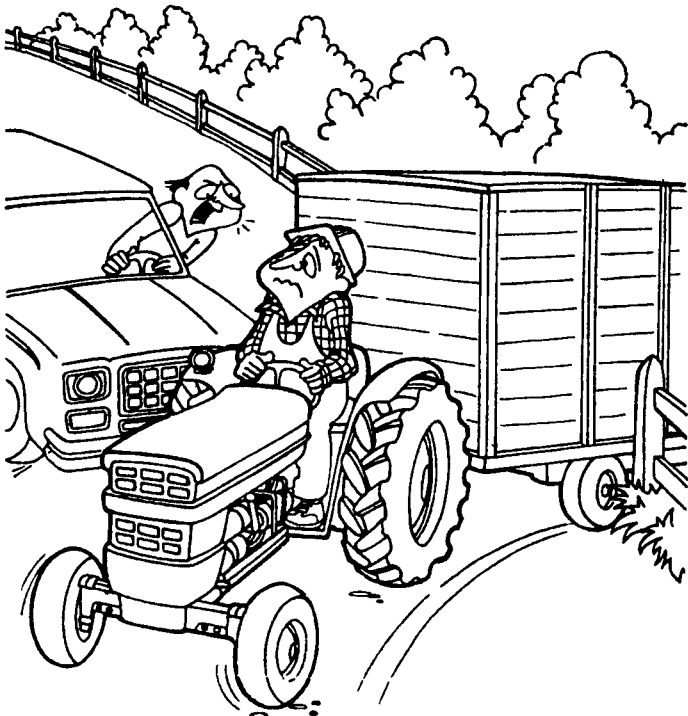
It is a good way to learn more about the world in which we live.



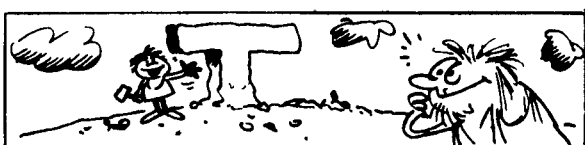
Visitors are allowed to touch this spot only while touring the Coral Caverns. The fried egg formation has become shiny from the many visitors who touch it.



Coral Caverns contains the only known coral reef in Pennsylvania.



Know the highway safety rules before travelling along roads



The letter T is the second most frequently used letter in books, newspapers and other printed material in English.