

**Tonto National Monument**

National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior



# Junior Ranger

Activity Book

A Door into the Past







## Welcome Junior Ranger, to Tonto National Monument!



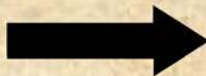
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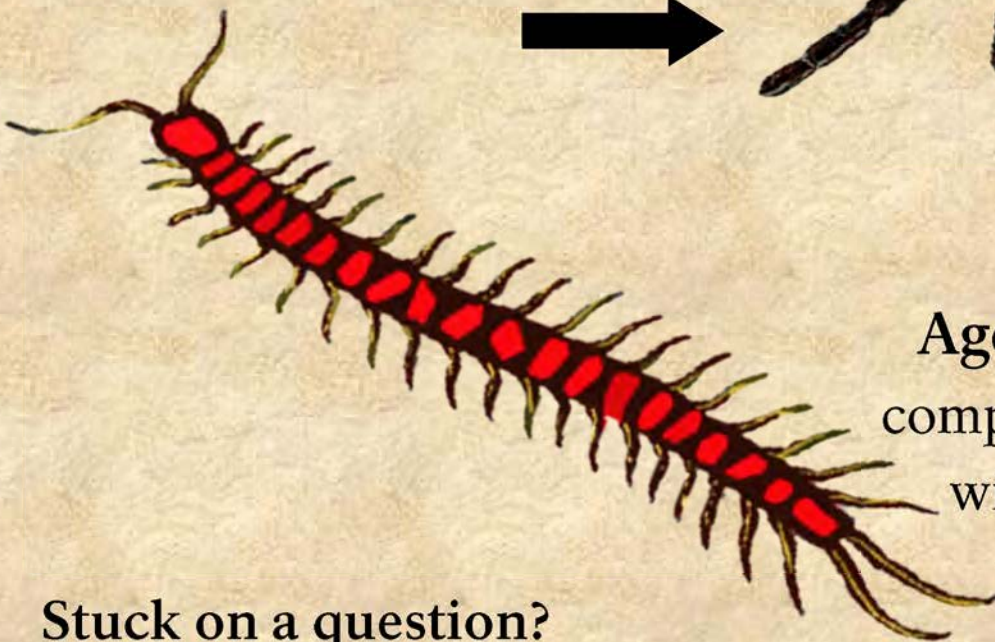
- 1) Explore and learn all you can.
- 2) Respect nature and historic places.
- 3) Drink water and have fun!

### Instructions:

**Ages 9 and younger:**  
complete at least 6 pages  
with the tarantula



**Ages 10 and older:**  
complete at least 6 pages  
with the centipede



Stuck on a question?

Ask Park Rangers, Volunteers, your family, or friends.



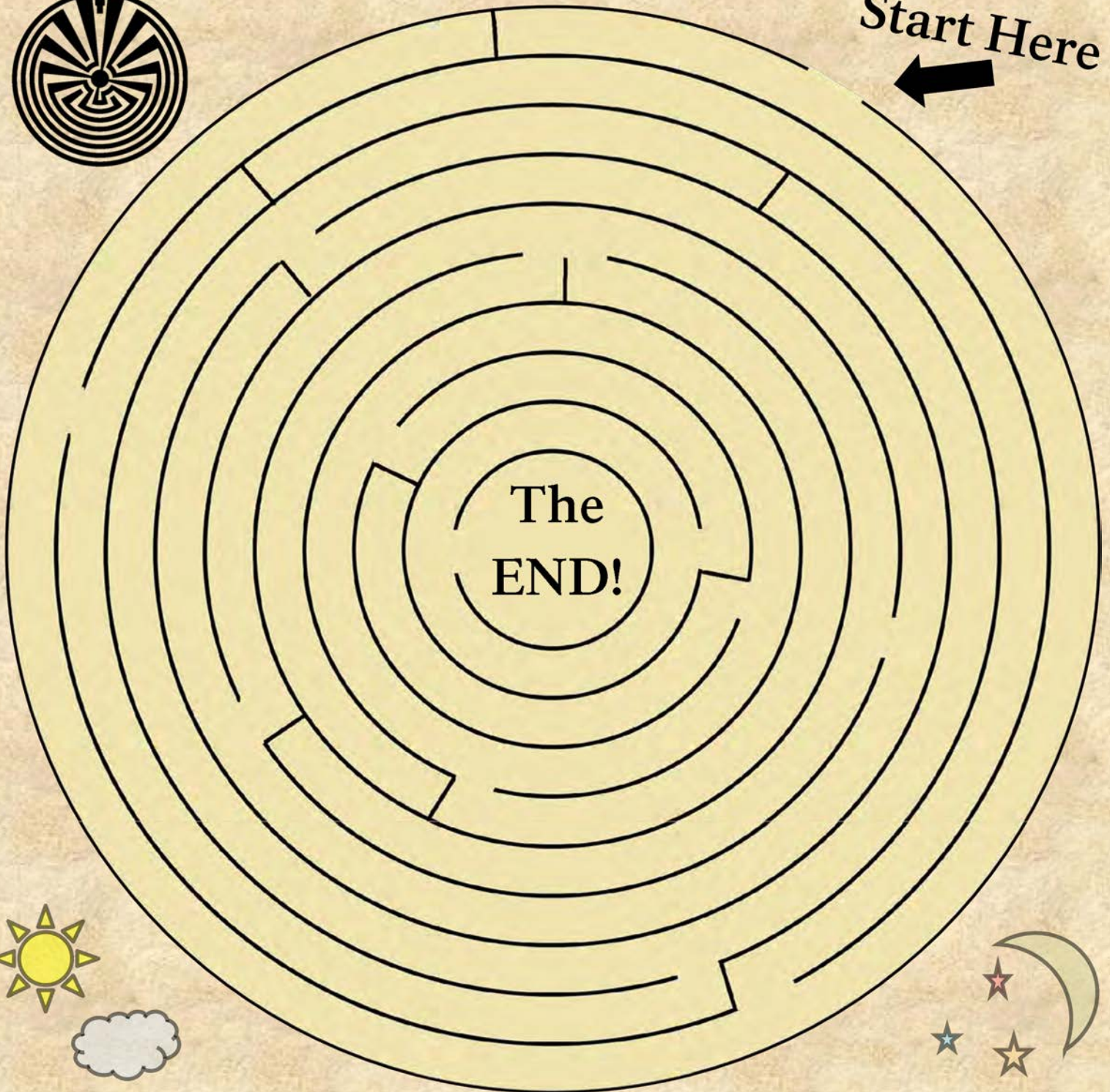


## Twist and Turn Adventure

A maze is a symbol of a journey for many Native Americans groups. This includes the Tohono O'odham whose ancestors' home was here. Each turn is a decision; sometimes we move forward, sometimes back. Find a way to the end!



*Start Here*







## **Draw Your Favorite Saguaro**

Each saguaro cactus is unique with a different shape and number of arms. These “Sentinels of the Desert” seem to stand tall and keep watch. Many Native American groups who call the Sonoran desert home greatly respect these giant cacti.

Pose like a saguaro cactus and think, what makes you unique?



Find your favorite cactus during your hike. Draw it below!

A large, empty rectangular area with rounded corners, outlined in black, intended for a child to draw a saguaro cactus.





## Use Your Senses

Find a place to sit for 10 minutes and discover the world around you.



What do you see to your  
right, left, up, and down?

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What do you smell?

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What do you hear?

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What does the weather  
feel and look like today?

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Remember to stay on the trail.  
Why should you?

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Remember to leave everything  
the way you found it! Why is  
this important?

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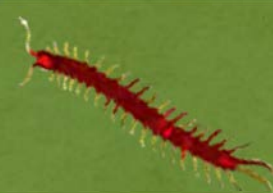
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## Design Your Own Pottery

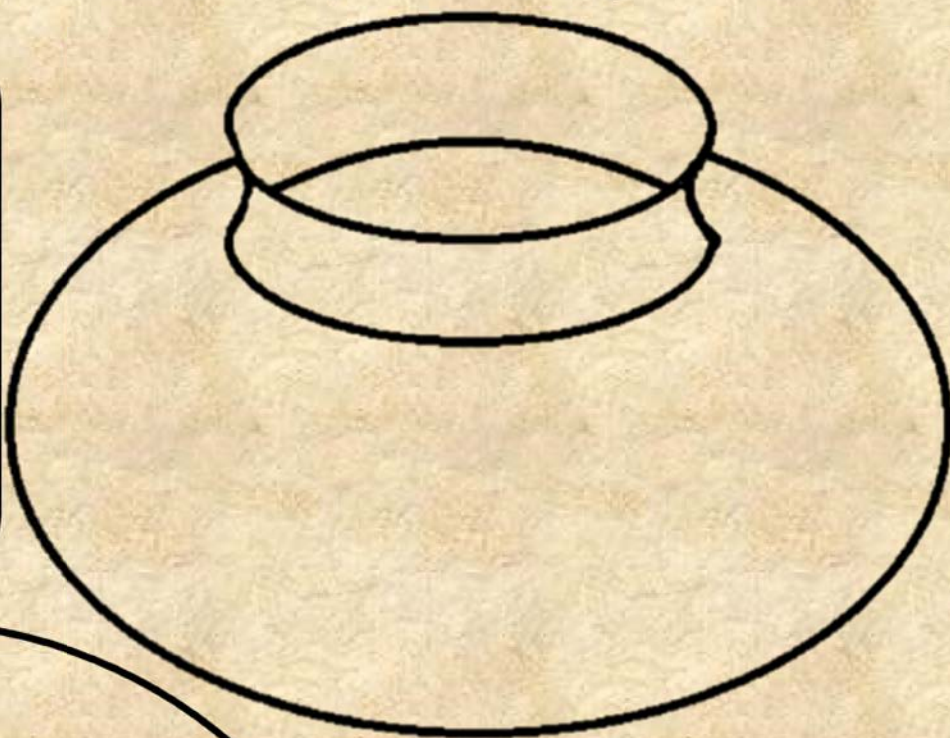
The Salado took time to paint complex designs on their pottery which held a special place in the home. Look for some in the museum. What the designs mean remains largely unknown. Add your own designs to these

### *Did you Know?*

Called an *olla*, these vessels carried water and stored food.



Bowls painted on the inside served food.



What do your drawings mean to you?

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What does someone else think they mean?

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## Wildlife Identification

The Sonoran Desert is home for many animals. Remember not to touch any wildlife and give these creatures plenty of room. Many lived here even before the Cliff Dwellings were built!

Match the letter  
of the animal  
with its picture.



Which two animals  
below are venomous?



A. Ground Squirrel

B. Diamondback  
Rattlesnake

C. Anna's  
Hummingbird

D. Javelina

E. Gila Monster

F. Grey Fox



### Did You Know?

Javelinas are animals that look like a pig but are not related. The name comes from their "spear-like teeth."



### Did You Know?

Venom is injected toxins, poison is eaten or absorbed toxins. Both are bad for you!





## Pueblo Poetry

How do you feel about the place the Salado called home? Poetry can be a great way to express yourself.

A haiku poem has three lines: the 1st line is 5 syllables, the 2nd has 7, the 3rd has 5. Try a 'free verse' poem where you write what pops into your head.

Example of a haiku poem with the syllables numbered:

1,2    3,4,5

Desert Sentinel

1,2    3,4    5    6,7

Watchful, Graceful, Green Cactus

1    2    3    4    5

Tall, strong, and live long

Your haiku poem:

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Your free verse poem:

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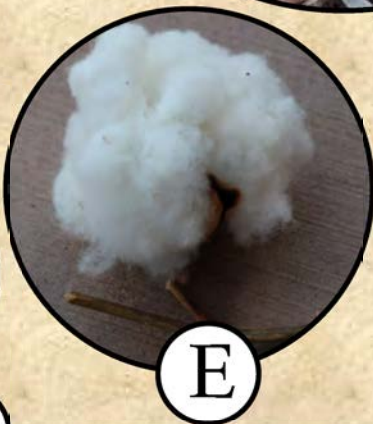
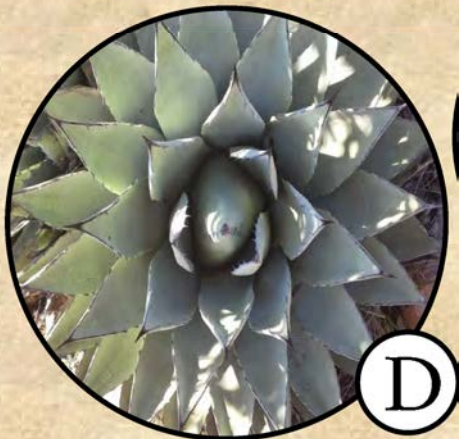
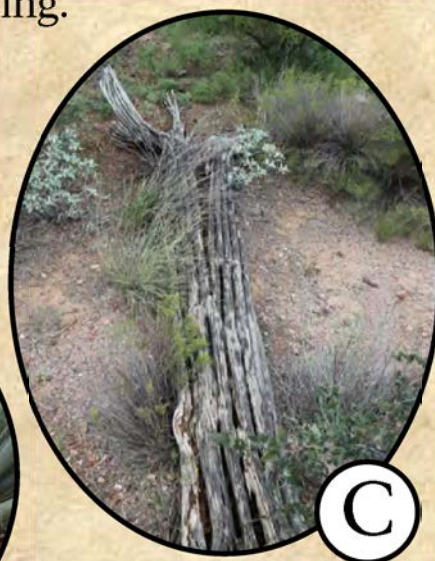




## Plant Uses (Ethnobotany)

The Salado used many plants everyday. Food, clothing, medicine, and tools came from gathering native plants and farming. Their supply store is all around you! Match the letter on the plant with how it was used.

- ☐ Mesquite burns slow and was used to cook and heat the home.
- ☐ Saguaro fruit was a sweet treat that ripens in the summer.
- ☐ Agave was gathered in the wild, roasted in a pit, and dried for food.
- ☐ Cotton was grown and spun into yarn for weaving.
- ☐ Saguaro 'ribs' were used for building roofs.
- ☐ Yucca fibers made strong rope and sandals.

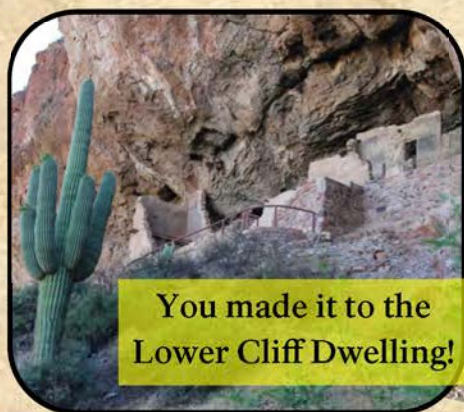






## Hike to the Lower Cliff Dwelling

Along the trail, take breaks to answer the questions below. Follow the arrows on this map from the Visitor Center to the Lower Cliff Dwelling and back down the Cactus Patch Trail.



You made it to the  
Lower Cliff Dwelling!

3. In the dwelling and surrounding area, what has changed from the Salado's time?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4. Why do you think the Salado lived up here?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Look around. Where could you farm in the desert?

\_\_\_\_\_

1. How tall is the biggest Saguaro you see? Take a guess.

\_\_\_\_\_

5. How many types of cactus can you find along the trail?

\_\_\_\_\_

Start at the Visitor Center!



Cactus Patch Trail





## Weaver's Corner

The Salado used cotton, agave fibers, and yucca leaves to make things like clothes and tools. The material was sometimes dyed to create different colors and woven to create designs. Match the words below to the pictures. Write the word on the line under the photo it matches. Use the museum for help!

### Word Bank

**Whorl & Spindle** (clay disk for spinning thread)

**Basket** (used to carry or hold things)

**Sandals** (used to protect feet)

**Weft-wrap** (design with small openings, like lace)

**Cotton** (white material spun into thread)

**Herringbone** (V-shaped woven design)

### Did You Know?

Some of the ancient cloth pieces found at Tonto have a herringbone weave, which is a V-shaped pattern. This weave pattern is still common today!

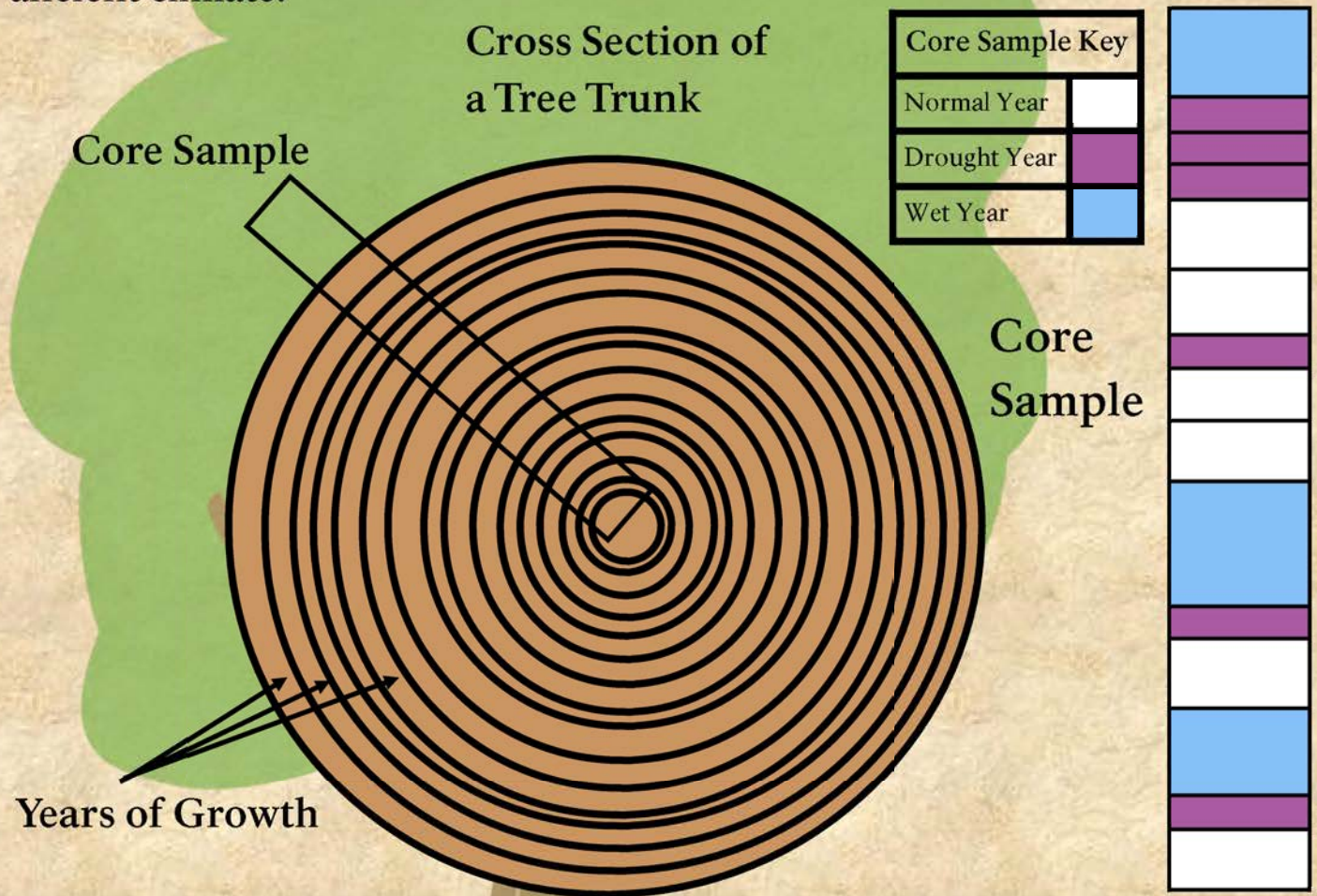






# Tree Ring Dating (Dendrochronology)

Many trees grow a ring every year they live. In a wet year the ring is wider and in a dry year the ring is smaller. Core samples taken from wood beams, found in homes, can help us better understand its age and the ancient climate.



1. How old is the wood from the core sample? (Count the number of rings or segments)

years old

2. Circle the longest drought from the core sample. How long was it?

years old





## Riddled Remains

Archeologists unravel the riddles of the past from what people leave behind.  
These clues tell the story of the Salado's home in the cliffs.  
Use the clues and answer me these riddles three...

What is white, black, and red in tone?  
Once mud, is now hard as stone.  
Its broken sherds should be left alone.

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1

*Did You Know?*  
Every artifact is important. Even its location helps tell part of the story.

*Did You Know?*  
Stone tool artifacts show that people lived here for thousands of years before the Salado built cliff dwellings.

2

What is fluffy as a cloud when found,  
yet grows from the ground?  
It's part of clothes you see all around.

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What grows ears on a stalk,  
and was ground on a block?  
It gives energy for your walk.

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3

*Did You Know?*  
With new scientific testing, archeologists can re-examine artifacts and find new insights. This helps reveal more of the story of these people and their home in the desert. There is always more to learn about the past!

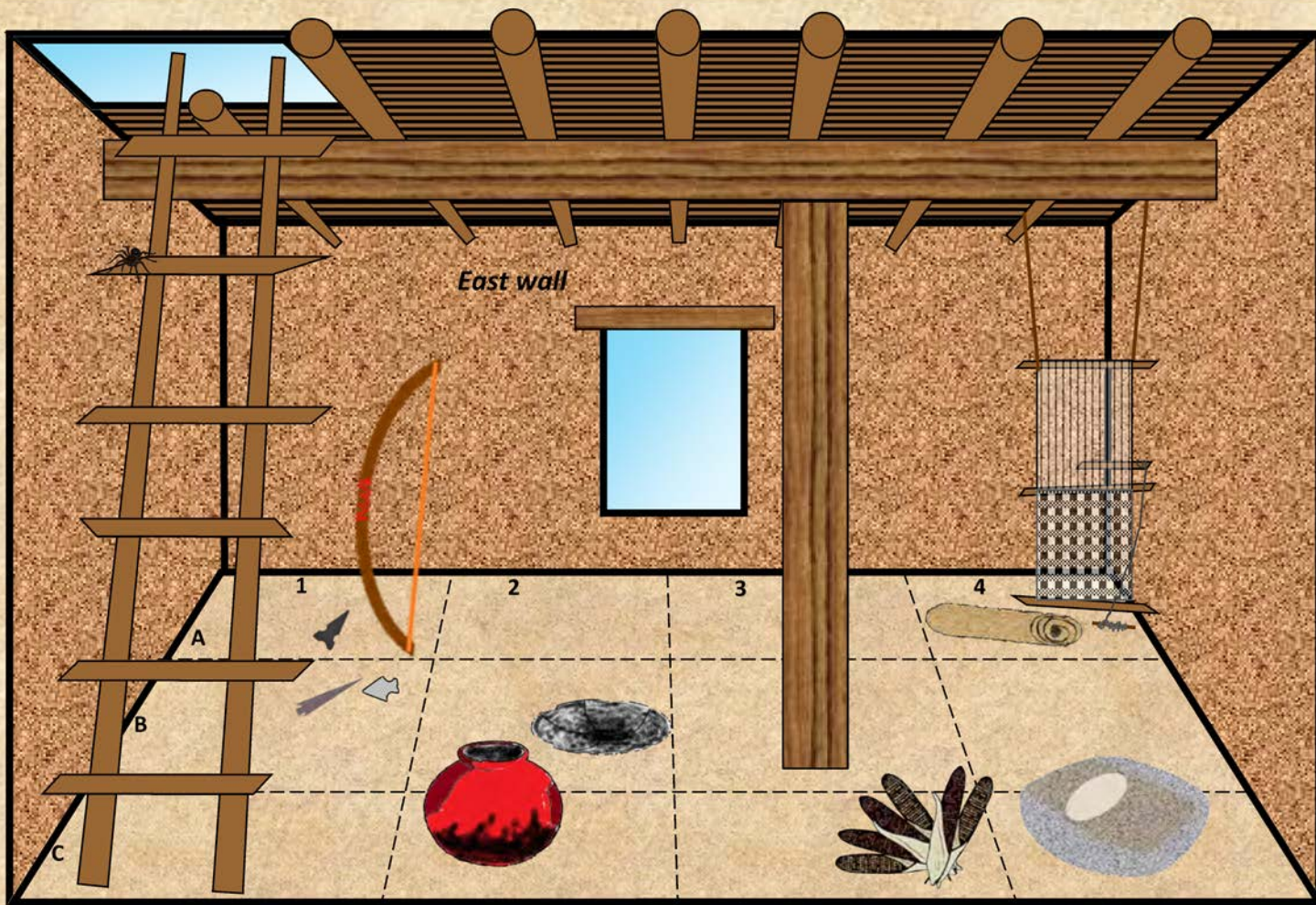




## Be an Archeologist

Archeologists use artifacts or what people left behind to tell a story. They document every artifact by describing and mapping its location. Context is key to telling the right story. What is the artifact close to? How many are there? Help fill out the site inventory of this ancient home.

Location	Description	Context
<i>Example: 2B</i>	<i>Hole in the floor</i>	<i>Near burned pot, probably a fire pit.</i>





# Junior Ranger Award

## Tonto National Monument

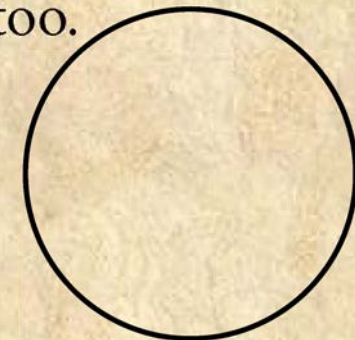


Awarded to: \_\_\_\_\_



As a Junior Ranger,  
I promise to tell others about what I learned today,  
always throw away my trash,  
and respect natural and cultural places  
so future generations can enjoy them too.

Certified by \_\_\_\_\_



Official Park Stamp



Thank you for visiting! We hope you enjoyed  
“*A Door into the Past*” at Tonto National Monument.  
It is just one of many Junior Ranger activity books  
available across the country.



**This book was printed with donations from  
visitors to Tonto National Monument.**

**Thank you for your support!**

Many National Park Service staff, volunteers, and Student Conservation Association interns collaborated on this book to engage visitors and help create future stewards of our public lands.

The National Park Service helps protect sites in every state. These include national parks, monuments, battlefields, historic sites, recreational areas, and preserves.