

CHAPTER 2

ON WEDNESDAY MORNING, I ARRIVED AT MY OFFICE AND found a letter from Professor Challenger on my desk. He had agreed to be interviewed at his house at ten o'clock. I quickly gathered my notes and took a cab to the professor's house in Enmore Park. When I arrived, I knocked on the door and the professor's butler answered it.

'Do you have an appointment?' he asked.

'I have a letter,' I said, as I handed it to him.

The butler nodded and showed me in. I followed him to the end of a passage; he tapped lightly on a door and I heard the professor shout from inside. The butler pushed open the door and there was Professor Challenger, sitting behind a large table covered with books, maps and diagrams. His appearance made me gasp: he had a red face and a black beard, and his blue-grey eyes were framed by thick black eyebrows. He was a large man with broad shoulders and a wide chest, and his enormous hands were covered in long black hairs.

'Well?' he said. 'What is it?'

I cleared my throat nervously. 'Good morning, Professor Challenger, I'm Edward Malone from the *Daily Gazette*.'

Challenger nodded. 'Yes, yes... Sit down.'

I did as I was told. 'Thank you for agreeing to see me today,' I said.

Challenger put on his spectacles. 'I presume you want to talk about my trip to South America?'

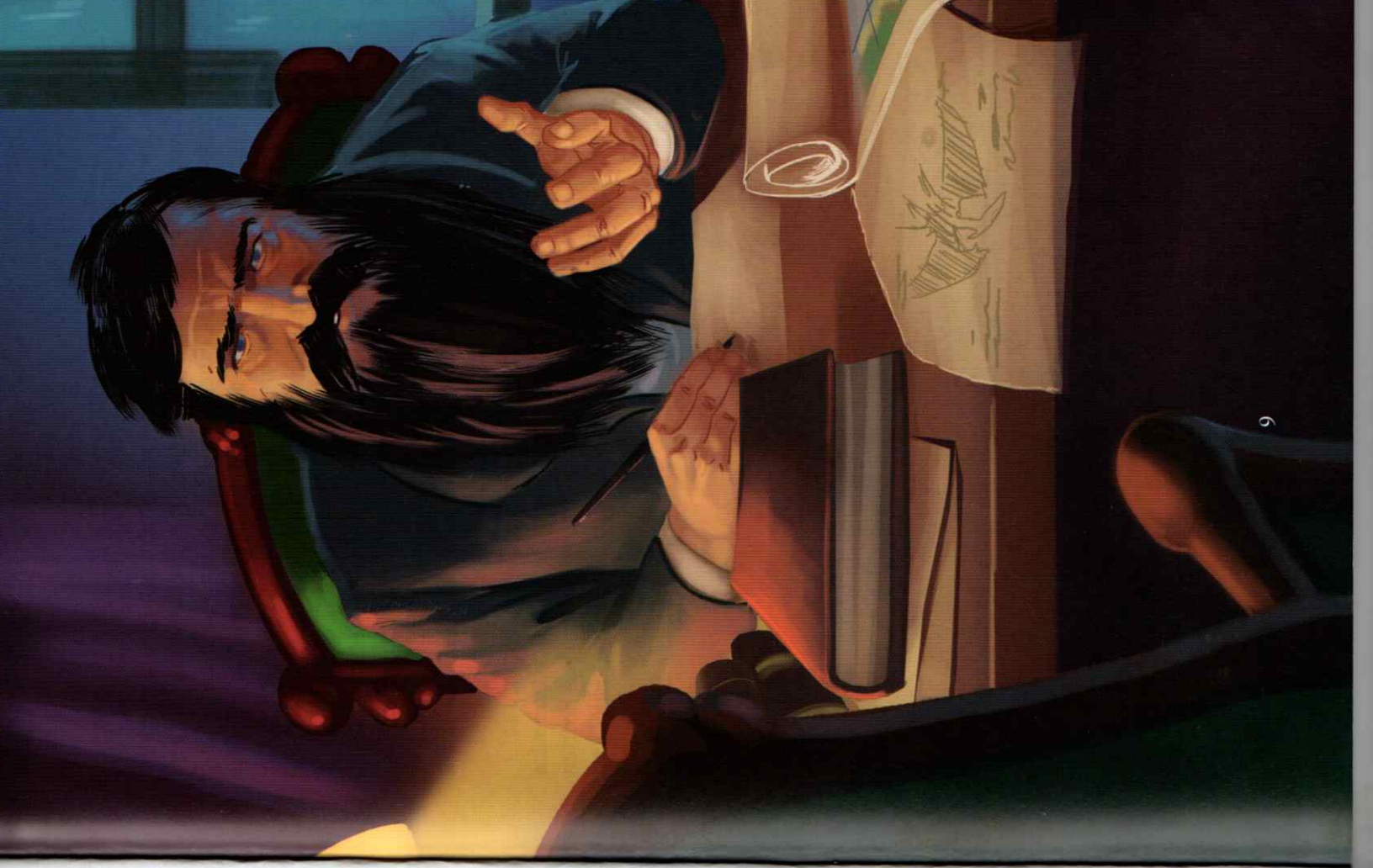
I nodded.

'First, let me say this: the only reason I agreed to do this interview is because I like your newspaper. If you dare call me a liar, I'll punch you like I did the other fellow – am I making myself clear?'

I nodded. 'Yes, sir.'

I removed a notepad and a pencil from my pocket, and began my interview with Professor Challenger. 'Why did you travel to South America?' I asked.

'I went to South America to study the animals of the Amazon. After many months of research, I made my way back down the river, and spent a night at a small Indian village inhabited by Cucama



Indians. I had visited that village before, and had given the Indians some medicine, so they knew me well. The following morning, the chief woke me up and took me to a hut to help a man who was very ill. Unfortunately, by the time I arrived, the man was already dead. I was surprised to see that the man was white, not Indian. He was dressed in rags and, according to the Indians, had arrived at the village in a terrible state of exhaustion.

'The man's knapsack was lying on the bed and I opened it and looked inside. There was a name written on the tab: Maple White, Lake Avenue, Detroit, Michigan. The knapsack contained pictures of a river, chalk, paint, paintbrushes, a bone, a gun and a few cartridges. The bag also contained this...' Professor Challenger removed a sketchbook from his desk drawer and placed it on the table.

'Open it,' he said.

I opened the sketchbook: on the first page was a picture of a fat man in a green jacket – the name 'Jimmy Colver' was written underneath it. The book contained drawings of Indians, turtles and

other animals, as well as a drawing of a series of red cliffs. On the last page of the book was a sketch of the most extraordinary animal I had ever seen: it had the head of a bird, the body of a lizard and a spiked tail.

'Well, what do you think of that?' asked Challenger.

'I'm not quite sure,' I said. 'It looks like a dinosaur...'

The Professor leaned back in his chair. 'It is a dinosaur.'

'But what makes you think this Maple White fellow actually saw a dinosaur?' I asked. 'Perhaps he imagined it?'

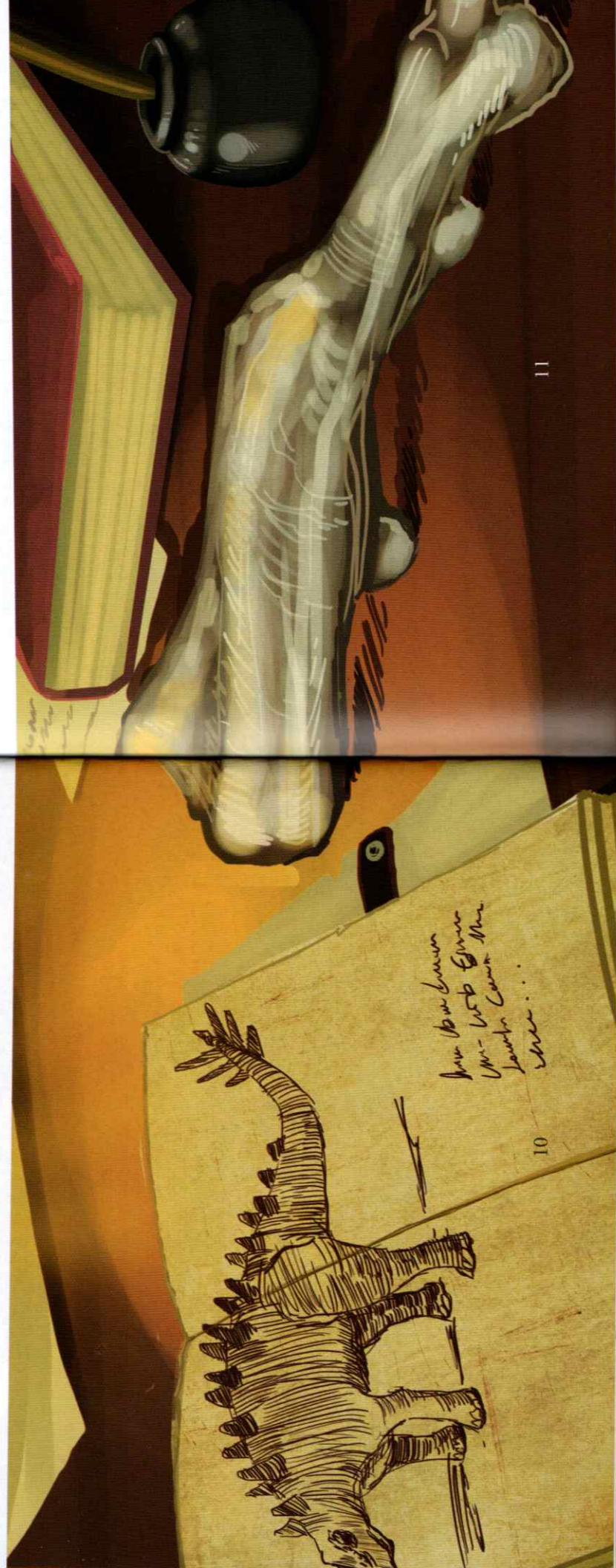
Challenger sighed. 'Then what do you make of this?' He took a bone out of a leather bag and handed it to me. 'This bone was in Maple White's knapsack. Can you identify it?'

I examined the bone carefully. 'Is it a human collarbone?' I asked.

'The human collarbone is curved; this is straight,' said Challenger impatiently.

'Perhaps it belongs to an elephant?' I said.

Challenger shook his head. 'This bone belongs to a dinosaur.'



'I'm afraid I'm going to need more proof, Professor,' I said.

'All right,' said Challenger, 'then I'll continue with my story. Once I'd seen Maple White's dinosaur sketch, I decided to explore the area further. I asked two of the Indians to guide me to the red cliffs that Maple White had drawn in his book. They were reluctant at first; the Indians believe that evil spirits called *Curupuri* haunt the cliffs, but I persuaded them to help me. After a long and difficult journey up the river and through the forest, we finally arrived at the red cliffs.'

Challenger removed a photograph from his desk drawer and placed it on the desk. The photograph was badly damaged, but I could still see the outline of the red cliffs.

'Unfortunately, our boat overturned on the return journey, and my camera and film were ruined so I don't have much proof of what I saw,' he explained. 'I only have a couple of damaged photos, but everyone thinks they're fake.'

Challenger showed me another photo, this one of a strange bird in an enormous tree.

'What is that?' I asked. 'A bird?'

The professor shook his head. 'No, it isn't a bird. I shot it so that I would have proof of my experiences.'

'You have it here then?' I asked.

'I had it,' said Challenger. 'Unfortunately it was lost in the same boat accident that ruined my photos... All I have left is part of its wing...'

Challenger reached into a leather bag and pulled out the upper part of what looked like the wing of a large bat.

'That's a bat wing!' I exclaimed.

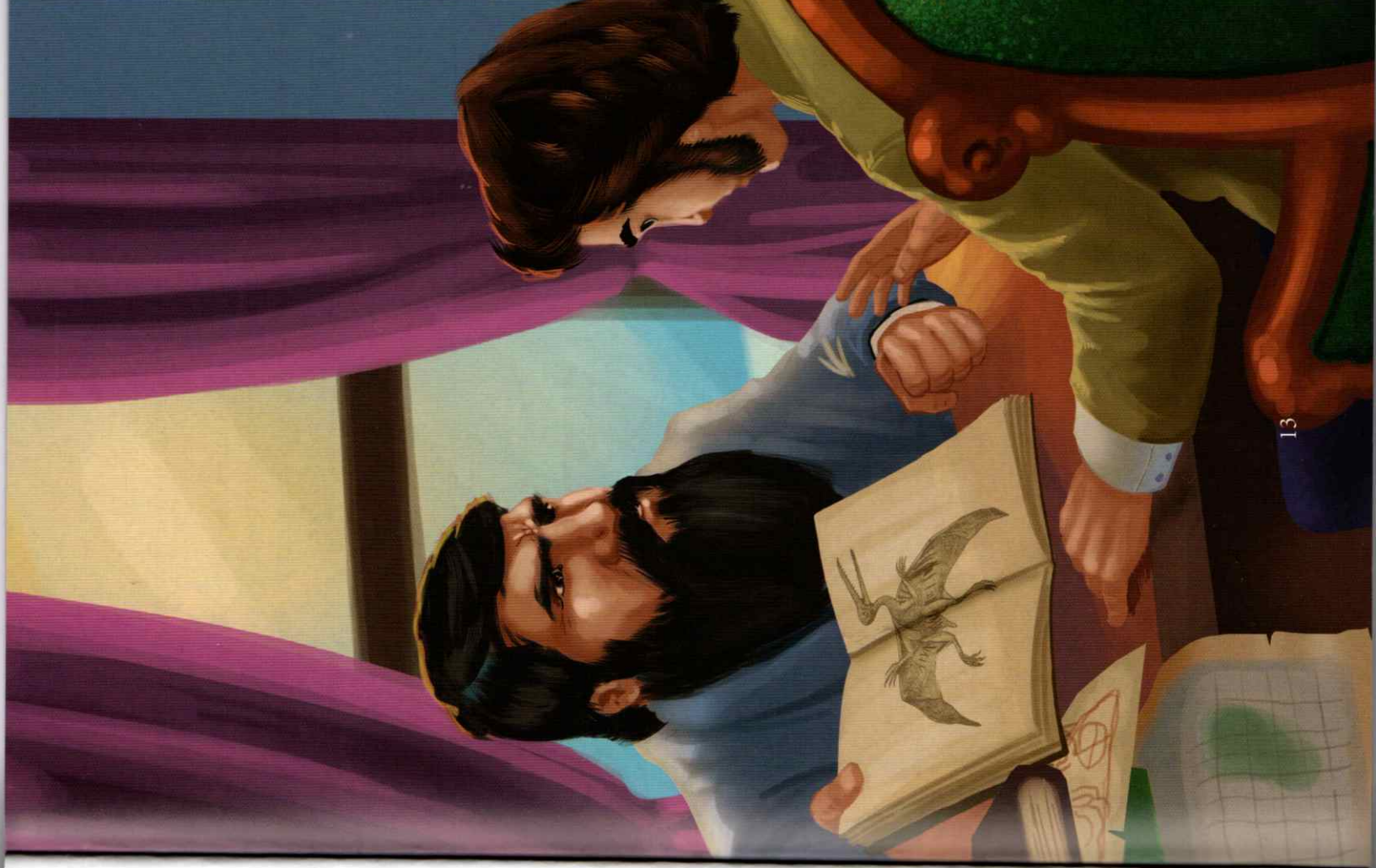
The professor looked at me squarely. 'This wing belongs to a pterodactyl, a flying reptile of the Jurassic period.'

Challenger opened a book and showed me an illustration of a pterodactyl. The wing looked exactly like the wing that was on the desk.

Suddenly, there was no doubt in my mind that the professor was telling the truth about what he'd seen. I told him that I believed him and he leaned back in his chair and smiled warmly.

'But where did Maple White see the dinosaur?' I asked.

'I think he managed to climb to the top of the cliffs... I didn't



have time to do that,' said Challenger.

'But Professor, this wing is proof of your encounter – why won't anyone believe you?' I asked.

Challenger shrugged. 'I don't know,' he said. 'People are either stupid or jealous. Tonight, I'm going to the Zoological Institute to give a talk about my experiences in the Amazon. The talk starts at eight o'clock – you're very welcome to come.'

'Thank you, Professor,' I said. 'I will.'

With that, the interview ended and I quickly made my way back to the office.



CHAPTER 3

WHEN I RETURNED TO THE OFFICE, MCARDLE WAS AT HIS desk. 'Well,' he asked, 'how did it go?'

'Better than I expected,' I said.

McArdle leaned back in his chair. 'So, do you believe the professor's nonsense about discovering dinosaurs?'

'Actually,' I said, 'I think Challenger might be telling the truth about what he saw in South America.'

McArdle's jaw dropped open. 'You can't be serious?' he said. 'Does he have any proof?'

I shook my head. 'His camera and most of his films were destroyed, so he doesn't have much proof. He did, however, show me a wing which he says belonged to a pterodactyl.'

McArdle twisted his moustache thoughtfully. 'Malone, people don't make enormous discoveries and then lose the evidence. I'm convinced he's lying.'

'Well, the professor is going to discuss his findings at the Zoological Institute tonight,' I said. 'He's invited me to go. Perhaps you should come too?'

'All right,' said McArdle, 'I will.'

CHAPTER 2

Reading Comprehension

1 Match the two halves of the sentences.

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. Professor Challenger was a large man | a. on the last page of Maple White's sketchbook. |
| 2. The professor went to South America | b. at the village in a state of exhaustion. |
| 3. Maple White had arrived | c. give a talk at eight o'clock that night. |
| 4. A sketch of a very strange animal was | d. the professor is telling the truth. |
| 5. The professor showed Edward | e. the wing of a flying reptile of the Jurassic period. |
| 6. Edward believes that | f. with enormous hands which were covered in long black hairs. |
| 7. Professor Challenger was going to | g. to study the animals of the Amazon. |

2 Complete the following sentences with the names in the box.

Professor Challenger Edward Malone Maple White
The Indians The Indian chief The professor's butler

- _____ found a letter from the professor on his desk.
- _____ took the professor to a hut to help a sick man.
- _____ opened the door at the professor's house to let Edward in.
- _____ was dressed in rags when he died.
- _____ guided the professor to the red cliffs.
- _____ showed Edward a photo of a strange bird in an enormous tree.

Vocabulary

3 Choose a, b or c to complete the sentences below.

- Her new shoes were quite expensive, but they were made of the finest _____.
a. chalk b. leather c. paint
- The zoologists are _____ the birds' eggs that they found in the forest.
a. inhabiting b. exploring c. examining
- You can borrow my paintbrushes, but please do not _____ them.
a. damage b. identify c. persuade

- I _____ with you, Mum; I must study harder next year if I want to get into medical school.
a. gather b. continue c. agree
- I really love chocolate cake, but the piece she gave me was _____; I couldn't eat it all.
a. wide b. enormous c. broad
- My father is a big man with broad _____ and large hands and feet.
a. chest b. collarbones c. shoulders
- I found this mobile phone in the gym. Does it _____ to you, Shelly?
a. belong b. cover c. remove

4 Find words in Chapter 2 which mean the same as:

- Moved the head up and down _____ (page 8)
as a sign of understanding _____ (page 8)
- Another word for glasses _____ (page 10)
- Pieces of old and/or torn cloth _____ (page 10)
- A bag that you carry on your back _____ (page 10)
- A person _____ (page 11)
- Evidence to support the truth _____ (page 12)
of a statement, theory, etc.

Follow-up activities

5 Discuss.

- How do you think Edward felt on his way to the professor's house? How would you feel? Why?
- What do you think about Professor Challenger's appearance? Would you be as surprised as Edward if you met him?
- Do you think that Maple White really did see a dinosaur? Do you think that it is possible for dinosaurs to exist? Why / Why not?
- The Indians believed there were evil spirits haunting the cliffs. Do you believe in the supernatural? Why / Why not?
- Why do you think that people did not believe Professor Challenger? Are you surprised that Edward believed him? What do you think about the proof he has to support his claim? Is it enough or not?

- #### 6 Imagine that you are Edward and you are keeping a diary. Write a page about your interview with Professor Challenger. (100-120 words)