

Mission Control
Educational/Information TV Special
Written for Alabama Public Television

Following other opening logos, the familiar APT IQ Learning Network logo slides into frame.

ANNOUNCER

The following is a presentation of
Alabama Public Television's IQ
Learning Network.

The logo REMAINS as, behind it, its background calmly transitions, backed by an informing music cue-- first to BLACK, then to a STAR FIELD. As the stars begin to overtake, the IQ Learning Network HEAVILY zooms past camera, enhanced by a bassy sound effect-- revealing a star-filled COSMOS. We linger for a moment, before DORIAN'S EMOTICON pops into frame.

DORIAN

(os)

Hi, I'm Dorian!

He's followed by a flurry of other emoticons-- the rest of our cast-- CARMEN, LUKE, CHANDEL AND KAYLEY-- filling out the screen around Dorian's.

CARMEN

(os)

Carmen here!

LUKE

(os)

This is Luke, standing by!

CHANDEL

(os)

Here's Chandel!

KAYLEY

(os)

And I'm Kayley!

Dorian's emoticon gets BIGGER, left of frame, while the others "take a seat" near the bottom of frame. As Dorian explains, images to his right help explain.

DORIAN

(os)

We're interrupting your regularly
scheduled programming for a very
important reason.

(MORE)

DORIAN (CONT'D)

As members of the Scout-like organization the STEM Brigade, our mission is clear-- learn science, earn badges and help others to learn, too, along the way.

Carmen's emoticon swaps places with Dorian's.

CARMEN

(os)

See, we're about to learn all about the history and the science behind human spaceflight.

A graphic with six badges displays-- THE SPACE RACE; ROCKET BOOSTERS; SHUTTLE; LIFE SYSTEMS; FUTURE EXPLORATION; SPACE COMPUTER CONTROLS. Above, they are branded as forming the STEM BRIGADE - SPACE HISTORY & TECHNOLOGY UNIT.

Luke over takes.

LUKE

(os)

And as we sprint through this learning marathon, we'll try and earn six different merit badges-- The Space Race; Rocket Boosters; Shuttle; Life Systems; Future Exploration; and Space Computer Controls.

Dorian overtakes.

DORIAN

(os)

We'll be reviewing the badges we earn throughout the program, so pay attention and follow along-- and you too can be honorary virtual members of the STEM Brigade!

Kayley overtakes.

KAYLEY

(os)

We're ready to blast off! Mission Control-- do you copy?

We enter our OPENING SEQUENCE, zooming through a TIME FIELD, as images and sound from Space history-- Gagarin, Glenn, Armstrong, Field, The Shuttle, ISS, SLS-- fly past in an ether.

Archaeology Adventures
Educational/Information TV Special
Written for Alabama Public Television
Winner, Emmy for Outstanding Writing

ROTO

Hey-- why don't you be a good creator and let me do this my way?

BACK TO LIVE ACTION

Clarence rolls his eyes. Dawn and Quin laugh. Clarence glares.

BACK TO ROTO

ROTO

One of the most important French allies during the French and Indian War was the Creek Confederacy, a closely related group of Native American tribes from the Southeast that banded together as a political entity in the 18th century. Although many of the original Creek Indians were forcibly removed from their lands, their legacy still has a lasting presence in modern Alabama. The Poarch Band of the Creek Indians, descendants of a segment from the original Creek Confederacy, still live on their tribal lands in the Southwestern part of Alabama. A stop at their archives should give you guys some amazing insight into how Native American's lived during the 18th and 19th centuries.

BACK TO LIVE ACTION

CLARENCE

Wow-- talk about a direct connection to the past. What do you say girls?

DAWN

I think that's an awesome idea, Roto!

QUINLAN

No, it's a TREMENDOUSLY AWESOME idea!

DAWN

You just, stole my word.

QUINLAN

Nu-uh! I made it better.

DAWN

You can't just-- add an adverb to my word and say its your word.

QUINLAN

Yeah-huh!

DAWN

It's still the same word-- get a thesaurus!

QUINLAN

Thesaurus?! My my, what a big word for you to learn. How long did it take you to find out that wasn't a dinosaur?

The back and forth continues. Clarence just sighs.

CLARENCE

Okay Roto. Let's punch it.

The portal OPENS behind him. He turns to it, as the camera ZOOMS IN to it.

***.

EXT. POARCH CREEK INDIAN ARCHIVES - DAY

Clarence, Dawn and Quinlan walk.

DAWN

Wow! That was awesome!

QUINLAN

You said it!

CLARENCE

Even I gotta admit that was pretty great. But we still don't know HOW Alabama became a state.

Clarence taps on his watch.

CLARENCE

Roto! You there?

ROTO

Yessireeeebob!

QUINLAN

Were learning a lot Roto--

FBI: Inside the Crime Lab
Educational/Information TV Special
Written for Alabama Public Television
Winner, Emmy for Informational & Instructional

Video	Audio
APT IQ LEARNING NETWORK INTRO AND TAG	ANNOUNCER This is a presentation of Alabama Public Television's IQ Learning Network.
A MONTAGE OF NEWS BROADCASTS, WHICH WE FLIP BETWEEN AS IF A CHANGED CHANNEL, CHRONICLE (BETWEEN SHOTS OF ANCHORS AND SCENES ON THE STREET) THE RISE OF CHRONIC X-- THE MYSTERIOUS GAS THAT'S GIVING FUN AND ACTIVE KIDS THE BORING PERSONALITY OF RESPONSIBLE, NO HUMORED ADULTS...	(Various sound bites from these news broadcasts)
...ENDING ON A FINAL ANCHOR. A PHOTO OF THE VILLIAN'S ANIMATED AVATAR IS SUPERIMPOSED ON SCREEN BESIDE HER.	ANCHOR And who's behind these nationwide attacks? The alleged perpetrator is known only as "Anonymous 99"-- a villain who's been identified solely by this menacing avatar that he or she has used to mask his or her true identity while taunting law enforcement, who have as yet been unable to stop this reign of comical terror.
CUT TO: A TIGHTER CLOSE UP OF THE ANCHOR	ANCHOR Is there anyone out there who can stop this threat?
SUDDENLY, THE BROADCAST PIXELATES AND TRANSITIONS OUT, AS IF BEING "HACKED" BY A SIGNAL DISRUPTOR, REVEALING A UTILITARIAN TITLE CARD, FEATURING THE "JET" SHEILD LOGO.	(Muted Tone FX) ALEX (offscreen) We interrupt this broadcast for a very important mission briefing. Begin encrypted connection.
"SIGNAL ENCRYPTED" FLASHES ON SCREEN.	ALEX (offscreen) Transmission in 3, 2...

Video	Audio
THE JET SHIELD LOGO ENVELOPS SCREEN, TRANSITIONING TO A VIDEO FEED OF JET HQ IN WASHINGTON DC. THERE, ALEX-- A TEEN- SITS, ADDRESSING CAMERA.	ALEX Hi Everyone! I'm Alex Gerbralter, Chief of Action for the Junior Enigma Team-- or JET! Sorry to high jack your regularly scheduled programming, but we need your help!
CU OF ALEX	ALEX As you're already well aware, the kids of the country are in a panic!
SUMMARY MONTAGE OF NEWS CLIPS	Alex (offscreen) Chronic-X-- the prank gas that's temporarily turning all us kids into stuffed shirts-- is spreading!
BACK TO ALEX	ALEX And unfortunately, the gas is so powerful, it's affecting even some of our best agents while their trying to investigate the crime!
SUDDENLY, A KID, DRESSED LIKE CLARK KENT WITH AN UMBRELLA AND A POCKET CALCULATOR, ENTERS, CHECKING HIS WATCH. HE SITS IN THE CHAIR BESIDE AND TAKES OUT A POCKET CALCULATOR & A BAG OF RECEIPTS, BEGINS WORKING.	CLARK (Mumbling) Only 249 days until Tax day... Better file them now....
BACK TO ALEX, WHO SHAKES HER HEAD	ALEX That used to be our class clown! This is why we need your help-- agents that we can communicate with safely from remote locations currently unaffected by Chronic X-- so it's up to you and only you to stop this epidemic before it's too late! And how are we going to do that?

Video	Audio
ON A PHOTO OF ANONYMOUS 99'S AVATAR	ALEX (offscreen) By unmasking Anonymous 99, and stopping his or her out of control pranking once and for all!
FIVE ADDITIONAL IMAGES SPILL OUT FROM THE AVATAR-- THE SUSPECTS (SEE ADENDUM)	ALEX (offscreen) Thanks to our experts in the field, we've narrowed down who he or she really is to five suspects-- and today we're going to figure out who is truly behind the mask.
BACK TO ALEX	ALEX And how are we going to do that? With the help of one of the greatest crime busting organizations in the world--
MONTAGE: FBI CRIME LAB	ALEX (offscreen) The FBI! The Federal Bureau of Investigation is the one of the premiere law enforcement forces in the world, and is home to some of the most intrepid and skilled crime fighters ever, with access to the top crime fighting resources on the planet.
BACK TO ALEX	ALEX: The FBI is like the real life Avengers-- plus the Justice League-- PLUS the Incredibles. EVEN THE PAW PATROL. Times, like, eleven.
BACK TO MONTAGE	ALEX (offscreen) In other words, they're more than capable of helping us get to the bottom of this mystery.
SUDDENLY, THE SCREEN TRANSITIONS TO ANOTHER TEEN-- A JET FIELD AGENT- BUZZING INTO THE BROADCAST.	DORIAN Alex! Alex, do you copy?
BACK TO ALEX	ALEX Dorian, is that you?
HENSON	DORIAN Yeah-- and do I got some good news for you!

Little Terror
Educational Short Film
Written for Super Science Showcase

JOHN PATTON JR
(sarcastic)

Yeah.

John takes the idol from Alton, bringing back the grad assistant's attention.

ALTON
What is that anyway, professor?

JOHN PATTON JR
Can't see it?

ALTON
(squinting)
Well, yeah-- uh, no-- but, that's not why I'm asking, I just don't know what it is.

John III runs long-about circles around the pair and truck's perimeter (dipping in and out of the edges of the frame in comedic peripheral fashion), making gleeful sounds, rattling the half-blind Alton. John ignores him, inspecting the artifact.

JOHN PATTON JR
Well, let's see. Um, winged-serpent motif; carved from tempered mussel shell, pretty standard; obviously Mississippian, so, 14th, 15th century? Where's the log?

Alton scrambles in his box of survey supplies he holds.

ALTON
Oh, I got it.

As Alton struggles for the log, John III unexpectedly slides from beneath the truck THROUGH the legs of the skittish grad student. He startles slightly as John III SCREAMS, and rushes back off frame. John continues to ignore his son.

JOHN PATTON JR
It's negative-painted, not Hemphill style-- so, it, was used by elites? Maybe a spiritual token or-- was it found with a grave? Alton?

Alton, squinting especially hard, dashes mad-blurry looks around for the now once-again disappeared terror.

ALTON
Where'd he go?!

JOHN PATTON JR
Alton-- the log!

Alton startles to, ungraciously fumbling to open the log, then holds the notebook extremely close to his face.

ALTON
Um-- Yes! Yes, it was found with a grave--

JOHN PATTON JR
So there you go--

John, still evaluating the piece, suddenly notices an impacted leather strap on the back. He picks away some dirt from it, frees it so it's loose enough to pull. He pulls it back delicately. The idol's wings pull back taught. He lets it go. The wings gently flap, back and forth.

Alton is still fixed on the log.

ALTON
Oh wait-- John, it says here--

JOHN PATTON JR
Alton. Did you see this?

Alton squints up from the book.

JOHN PATTON JR (CONT'D)
Watch.

Alton squints, physically moves his face close. John again demonstrates the flap.

ALTON
Wow. It still works?

JOHN PATTON JR
It's just basic physics, Alton.
Exploiting the conservation of
energy works forever.

ON IDOL AS JOHN EXPLAINS; GRAPHICS & VISUALS ALSO AID

JOHN PATTON JR (CONT'D)
(os)
See, this leather strap is connected to the wings, which are attached to the idol's base on either side by these notches here. There's enough clearance, though, to let the wings move.

(MORE)

JOHN PATTON JR (CONT'D)
 The strap is just elastic enough so
 that as you pull it, the strap
 builds up Potential Energy, you
 know, the energy held by an object
 at rest. When you let it go--

He does. Again, the wings flap.

JOHN PATTON JR (CONT'D)
 (os)
 That potential energy the strap had
 doesn't just go away-- it conserves
 it by converting it into kinetic
 energy, or the energy an object has
 in motion. There's enough potential
 energy built up when you pull back
 the strap, that the kinetic energy
 that it's converted into is applied
 to the wings, making them wiggle on
 their insecure mounts--

BACK TO JOHN

JOHN PATTON JR (CONT'D)
 Or-- they flap.

ALTON
 Yeah. Yeah, that all makes sense--
 but... Why? Why something so novel
 for a religious idol?

John shrugs.

JOHN PATTON JR
 Where *exactly* was it buried, Alton?

ALTON
 Oh-- that's right-- look at this!
 It seems odd, right?

JOHN PATTON JR
 What?

John eyes the hand-sketched plot in the log-- it's a drawing
 of a small grave, resting in it a small skeleton-- lain
 almost in an in utero fashion. "Child, Under 7 Years;
 Mississippian Era" is jotted beside it.

JOHN PATTON JR (CONT'D)
 It was buried with a-- child?

ALTON
 Yeah. Under 7 years, Clayton
 guessed.

Tom Sawyer's Last Day of Summer
Dramatic Short Film
Written for Super Science Showcase

HUCK

You know me sir?

LANGHORNE

Aye. I'm a newspaper man. Came in town to talk to Tom Sawyer.

HUCK

Oh?

LANGHORNE

And I heard a lot of tales, since I been here. From Judge Thatcher. From Muff Potter. From Tom's Aunt Polly. Seems like every adventure Tom Sawyer's ever been on-- right there by his side has been Huckleberry Finn. And then-- then I talked to Jim Watson.

HUCK

You talked to Jim?

Langhorne sits beside Huck.

LANGHORNE

Seems like you've had quite a few adventures yourself.

HUCK

You'll do right writin' 'bout Tom. I ain't no adventurer, sir. I just want to keep out of trouble.

Langhorne chuckles.

LANGHORNE

Well, Tom... Tom's one that's meant to be written about. He's a big talker. And big talkers, they can't write their own stories. They haven't the patience nor the inclination. And big talkers-- they're the ones people wanna read about, and big talkers, they sell a lot of books. Sometimes they tell the truth, most the time they stretch it a little. And they shape policy, and culture, 'cause what they're selling is simple, and easy. Even the most self-righteous folks don't realize they're gettin' fooled.

He looks to Huck.

LANGHORNE (CONT'D)
 But small talkers... Well, the world don't want 'em, but the world needs 'em. They give the world perspective. Honesty. Both sides a little right, and both sides a little wrong. Nuance, the shades of gray that make up this world. They keep the tyrants out of power and out of favor in the public opinion-- whose nature, both, is otherwise inclined.

Huck considers.

LANGHORNE (CONT'D)
 Now maybe Tom Sawyer's story needs to be told, and maybe I'm the one to tell it. But-- the Adventures of Huckleberry Finn? Well-- that's a story only you can tell.

HUCK
 I-- I ain't never told no stories--

LANGHORNE
 No?

Langhorne pulls the newspaper clipping from his pocket, offering it to Huck. Huck is caught.

HUCK
 How'd ya know-- I didn't write by my real name? Even mailed it in without an address for return.

LANGHORNE
 The more I learnt about you-- the more obvious it become. You're a good friend Huck. And (nodding to article) ya got promise with words, too.

HUCK
 Maybe too much. This brought me a lot of trouble.

LANGHORNE
 And it also brought me. And now the whole world's gonna know about Tom Sawyer. Your best friend.

Huck considers. Langhorne smiles.

LANGHORNE (CONT'D)
 You ever think about gettin'
 serious with writin' your own
 stories Huck-- you let me know.

Langhorne hands Huck a business card. Huck reads it.

HUCK
 Mark Twain?

LANGHORNE
 I don't write by my real name
 neither.

Langhorne smiles, and with a nod, exits. Huck looks at the card.

23 INT. HUCK'S BEDROOM - DAY

23

A nicely dressed Huck sits at a small writing desk in his bedroom. WIDOW DOUGLAS enters.

WIDOW DOUGLAS
 Huck? Comin' down for breakfast?

HUCK
 After a while Ms. Douglas. Thought
 I might work a piece, build up some
 appetite.

WIDOW DOUGLAS
 Polly told me Tom got to school.
 He's doin' well. Makin' friends.

HUCK
 That's Tom's nature.

WIDOW DOUGLAS
 As many letters he's sent you I
 reckon'd maybe he weren't.

HUCK
 That's Tom's nature too.

WIDOW DOUGLAS
 Well. Huck, I did want ya to know
 I'm mighty proud you changed your
 mind on the trust. You keep me
 company here-- that's payment
 enough.

(MORE)

The Ghost of the Shawnee
Educational Radio Drama
Written for Super Science Showcase

MUSIC underscores the narrator.

OLDER GIDEON

I still recall that afternoon they returned. It was cool, that day, just off the Cuyahoga River, in the wilds of the Ohio Country, a soft breeze leading towards a drafty evening, welcome that muggy season. The year was 1780, and, far east from us, the young country was still at war. I was with Myron that day, walking back from the stables, where we'd inspected our duties for the evening's watch. That's when I first heard the galloping riders.

Horses GALLOP, NEIGH near.

OLDER GIDEON

We weren't alarmed. We knew the River Riders were due back that day. I looked down the emerald sloping hill at the base of our enclave towards the tree line of the forest we were nestled just beyond, as four costumed figures appeared on horseback. Heroes of the frontier.

Horses NEIGH as they stop and settle.

OLDER GIDEON (CONT'D)

Thunderbird, draped in black such as a phantom, an illustrative bird's skull starkly prominent on her face covering cowl; Dispatch, beset in even darker tones, a saggy, brutish mask, dark as pitch, covering his face; Banshee, more colorfully draped in maroon and a scatter of earth tones, a red hood atop a mask, two-toned like a Janus face, shades split between white and maroon; and Cihuateteo, in hues of soft gray and white, only a simple, dark eye mask and a light gray hood serving as her disguise.

(MORE)

OLDER GIDEON (CONT'D)
Myron and I shared awed smiles as
we watched them approach.

MYRON
Look!

GIDEON
Aye, let's get back and tell the
others, the Riders are home--

MYRON
No, Gideon, look! Riding with
Dispatch! The Indian in buffalo
hides.

GIDEON
Huh. Who could that be?

The horses SNORT impatiently.

DISPATCH
Welcome to your new home, Ahote.

AHOTE
All I see is a hill, Dispatch.

BANSHEE
That's the idea. Our forward
perimeter plateau's above the
river. And our first defense here
at the rear is the incline. You can
just make out the logged
fortifications up the ridge.

AHOTE
I see that now.

CIHUATETEO
Well, onward, we're late for
dinner!

A horse GALLOPS off.

BANSHEE
Don't mind Cihuateteo. She still
thinks this business is fun.

THUNDERBIRD
Is she the only one, James?

BANSHEE
I detest a fowl mood, Thunderbird,
but you didn't get pummeled
yesterday.

Banshee SIGHS and RUBS HIS JAW.

AHOTE
 (cool toned)
 I am sorry. It was, in self-
 defense. Honest.

DISPATCH
 I found *that* quite fun, *actually*.

BANSHEE
 You would.

THUNDERBIRD
 Now you see why James is named for
 the *crying* Banshee.

BANSHEE
 So very clever, *Becky*.

Horses GALLOP as MUSIC TRANSITIONS.

3 INT. RIVER RIDERS STRONGHOLD - DAY

3

Sounds of ACTIVITY, a crowd moving through a small town square-like atmosphere. Horses step SOFTLY amongst the crowd. Exclaims of "It's the riders!" and "It's Thunderbird!" occasionally ring, underscored by breezy music.

BANSHEE
 The whole campus is fortified behind the two barriers-- um, the rear fence and the forward plateau. Everything but the stables, which are just east. We've six cabins, between housing, a kitchen, a workshop, hospital, even a school.

AHOTE
 There are many children here. From many peoples. Are you riders or governesses?

DISPATCH
 They're war orphans.

CIHUATETEO
 We collect them.

What's at Stake

Short Story

Written for Super Science Showcase

September 1954. Colorado.

That fall, after Mexico, we were back out west, helping a friend named Quentin Lesage—a good man. At the time, he was in a conflict with a local millionaire, name of Moltoben, over an important archaeological site of the Ancestral Pueblo. See, Moltoben was a developer, commercial—he'd hired Quint for an excavation that was mandated by the county, before he could build his latest 4-star resort there. Quentin wasn't *actually* supposed to find anything—and when he did, he *surely* wasn't supposed to try and halt construction. Quint thought he'd found proof the site held secrets of the enigmatic people who once lived there, who we knew so little about. But Moltoben didn't care about lost secrets. He cared about his hotel. So his goons stole Quentin's proof.

And Alton and me went out there to help him get it back....

BLAAASSTT!

A bullet rips through our sideview mirror, glass blistering the rain. I don't slow down.

"Is everyone all right?" Quentin cries from the seat beside. He's middle aged, of Pueblo-descent, hard worn features accent his concern.

"We gotta get off this road," I say, straining to sound unrattled, same as my days in combat. But you never really get used to getting shot at. I dart eyes to the rearview. "All right back there, Alton?"

"Uh.. uh-huh..."

"The proof, Alton! Is it still safe?" asks Quentin.

"Sure—wooaahhh!" manages my doubled-over grad student, cut short as I steer sharply off the side of the dirt road and onto the patchy terrain of the desert badlands. I glance back to the rearview, this time past Alton to the darkness outside—and the shadow with headlights that follows.

"You're taking this in stride, John," quips Quentin.

"I was in a ball turret during the war," I confess, "not my first fracas."

It's a thick night; rain, fog, black skies. No moon, no stars—no *light*. I'm going too fast for barely able to see five feet in front of me. I glance behind

again—the shadow still dead on our tail. Two more blasts of gunfire ring out to prove it.

“They’re killers, John,” Quentin says, rising a terrified whimper from Alton in the back. I scowl at Quint over his choice of words, and then another glance at Alton: “Hang on back there.”

The pursuit is merciless. “We’re not gonna lose him out here,” I finally concede, “and if we get back to the main roads, stalties will stop us.”

Quentin sighs. “We are on the wrong side of the law on this one, aren’t we? Even if Moltoben didn’t have the entire county in his pocket. This is too important, John. We can’t let them get it back.”

“I know,” I say. I think a moment. I shake my head. I take a deep breath.

“Braced back there Alton?”

“Uh.. sure?”

“What are you doing, John—?” begins Quentin.

SCREECH!

Like a madman, I kill my headlights blind and rip our 47 Ambassador even further off the beaten path. I figure at some point in the last 45-minutes we’d crossed over into Mesa Verde National Park, which meant if we could separate ourselves enough to get close to the canyon—we could lose our shadow for

good.

After several minutes of driving blind, I lose sight of the pursuing headlights. I notch back on the idle lights—they're good enough to spare us from a high-speed smash into a boulder or running off the canyon's edge.

"We've gotta ditch the car," I say, "look for a way into the canyon."

Even in pitch black and this mess of a rainstorm, we eventually find one—an inlet path dropping down into the canyon's cliff faces. I grind the clutch, slamming to a stop, and pass out the flashlights stashed beneath my seat to Quentin and Alton, who's still doubled over in the back.

"He won't be lost long," I say, "we've gotta move! The rain'll dampen our tracks!"

"Bring the proof!" Quentin shouts.

Quentin and Alton scramble out either side. With him, Alton carries a small canvas sack which carries a protruding wooden box, which in turn carries the proof. We group close and flee for the canyon in the dramatic night.

After an hour or so of disappearing deeper and deeper into the cliffs, we finally find what

Who Were the Ancestral Pueblos?

Educational Article

Written for Super Science Showcase



WHO WERE THE ANCESTRAL PUEBLOANS?

By Steph, Super Science Showcase Staff

The Ancestral Puebloans were an ancient American Indian people that existed from approximately 1200 B.C. to 1150 A.D. They were known for basket-making and their unusual mode of living: they made their homes in hollowed-out caves in large cliffs.

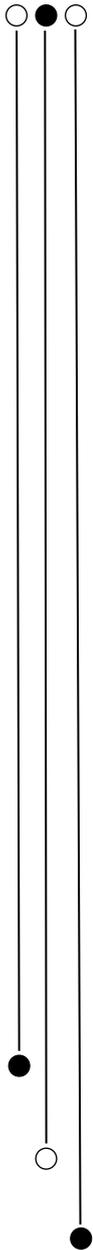
The Ancestral Puebloans lived in what is known today as the **Four Corners region**: present-day Utah, Arizona, New Mexico, and Colorado. They raised maize (corn) and squash, which seems to have been their main sources of nutrition. Their living arrangements were highly communal, with their cliff dwellings physically connecting all parts of the tribe to one another. These **dwellings** were accessible only by rope or rock climbing, and provided excellent protection from enemies.

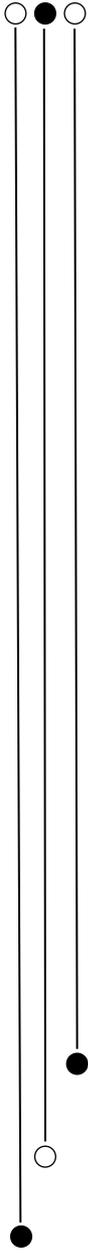
The Ancestral Puebloans' most known habitation

is in Chaco Canyon (which is now a National Historical Park). However, they also lived in at least two other major sites: Kayena, in Arizona, and Mesa Verde, which is in New Mexico and Colorado—and the location of John and Alton’s adventure. After the collapse of the Ancient Puebloan civilization, the remaining tribes people moved from the cliff areas and ultimately assimilated into other tribes, such as the Pueblo, the Hopi and the Zuni.

The Ancestral Puebloans drew many **petroglyphs** (drawings that were etched on the walls of their cave dwellings). These petroglyphs have been preserved due to the extraordinarily dry conditions of the canyons where they lived, and typically showed hunting scenes which are thought to have been made as a type of **sympathetic magic**: a common belief held by many prehistoric peoples that drawing a scene will make that scene a reality. Many other of the petroglyphs show **astronomical** images. Some scientists believe the Ancestral Puebloans drew a petroglyph of the well-documented **supernova** in 1054 A.D. that formed the **horseshoe crab nebula** known as the “sun daggers petroglyph.”

The Ancestral Puebloans’ baskets were traded widely throughout North and Central America. The baskets have been found in Mexico and in Canada,





which likely means they were traded many, many times to end up so far from where they originated. Many baskets were found in the abandoned cliff dwellings, some still containing remnants of corn, squash and cotton (which was used to make colorful clothing), and it seems likely that the dwellings were abandoned quickly, or that the population decreased significantly over a brief time period.

Scientists are uncertain why the Ancient Puebloans abandoned their dwellings and their unique way of life. Some believe it was due to a sustained dry climate that made it impossible to grow their crops; others that it was because of a revolution, where the workers overthrew the ruling elite. Some even believe sustained warfare might have been the cause. No one, at this point, actually knows—but this unique society lasted over 2000 years and was a highly influential culture. There is evidence that other societies adopted their basket-making methods, and they made some of the earliest roads in North America (possibly even the first road in the entire continent!). In fact, to date, over 200 miles of Ancient Puebloan roads have been identified. Who knows what other great remnants from the Ancient Puebloan culture are there still waiting to be found?