

11th Grade Personal Narrative: Treasure Hunting - Geocaching

Task Prompt: Your class has been discussing different types of adventurous activities: kayaking, surfing, hiking, and many other hobbies. You are given three resources about geocaching, a hobby described as involving hiking and treasure hunting.

Write a story about your own adventures of geocaching. In your story, tell what happens when you find something interesting during one of your treasure hunts. When writing your story, find ways to use information and details about geocaching from the sources to improve your story.

The Cache Behind the Garage Lane

I wasn't planning to go geocaching that day but my friend said a new cache popped up behind the garage lane near our apartments, so I figured why not. The listing was called "Hidden Trail" which sounded kind of dramatic, but I knew that area pretty well and there's nothing dramatic about it. Mostly old garages, trash cans, blackberry vines that grab your clothes if you get too close.

When I got there after school the weather was kind of weird, cloudy but also bright somehow. I typed the coordinates in my phone but the GPS kept jumping around because the clouds I guess. It said I was 50 meters away, then 32, then back to 40 which was annoying. Still I just followed the arrow and hoped it would settle down eventually.

The listing comments said the cache was "near something that used to move but doesn't anymore," which could've meant a lot of things. There's an old shopping cart that's been stuck in the bushes for years, plus a broken gate that swings sometimes. I walked slow trying to look like I wasn't snooping around, even though nobody was in the alley except some cat watching me from a fence.

When I finally got within about 10 meters the arrow stopped freaking out. I looked around at the base of the garages, there were pieces of wood everywhere and some bricks stacked weirdly. One board was sticking out from the wall and it didn't look natural, like someone shoved it there to hide something behind it. When I pulled it back, sure enough, there was a small plastic container taped with black tape but the lid wasn't closed all the way, maybe from rain or someone not putting it back right.

Inside were the usual things, a folded up log and a couple tiny things to trade like a button and a keychain with half the plastic chipped off. But there was also a scrap of notebook paper,

ripped on one side. It said: “theres more if you go a little farther—dont forget to look down not up.” The handwriting was messy like they wrote it quick.

I kind of hesitated because it didn’t look official and the spelling was off, but I had nothing else to do so I walked farther down the alley. It got narrower, and the ground dipped lower like water had washed some dirt away. I probably walked 20 steps when I saw something shiny in the mud near a puddle. It was another container, smaller, a metal tin with rust around the edges. Someone had tried to draw a compass on the lid but it was barely visible.

Inside was a tiny piece of paper that said, “This used to be a meeting spot for kids when the garages where new. Theres no real cache here, just a memory.” The grammar was kind of all over the place and I wasn’t sure if this was meant to be part of the official geocache or someone just messing around. Still I put it back exactly the way I found it.

Walking home I kept thinking about how the alley felt different now. Still ugly and muddy, but somehow it felt like it had a story I didn’t know before. I guess that’s why people geocache, even if the stuff you find isn’t amazing it can still show you something you never noticed.