

The Space Rock

What would you do if a rock worth millions of dollars landed in your yard?

About the Story

Lexile: 860L (captions and sidebars)
For qualitative complexity factors, go to Scope Online.

Learning Objective:

to write a news article, record a podcast, or create a video news program about the events that unfold in a drama, integrating information from the drama's nonfiction text features

Key Skills: figurative language, key ideas and details, text features, interpreting text, character, text structure, integrating ideas

Essential Questions:

- Can money bring happiness?
- How do we make difficult decisions?
- What is an individual's responsibility to their community?

Standards:

The article and lesson support these Common Core anchor standards: R.1, R.2, R.3, R.4, R.5, R.10, W.2, W.9, SL.1, SL.2, L.4, L.6

For more standards information—including TEKS—go to Scope Online.



Your Teaching Support Package

Find your full suite of support materials at scope.scholastic.com.

Audio:

- Vocabulary slideshow
- Text to speech

Recommended pairings from the Scope archives

Skill Building Activities to print, project, or share digitally:

- Close Reading and Critical Thinking
- Preparing to Write: The Rock Creek Meteorite
- **Core Skills Workout:** Inference
- Literary Elements: Theme Anticipation Guide
- Choice Board
- Quiz*
- Contest Entry Form

*Available on two levels

Step-by-Step Lesson

Close Reading, Critical Thinking, Skill Building

1. Preparing to Read 10 minutes

Do-Now: Theme Anticipation Guide (5 minutes)

- Project the **Theme Anticipation Guide**. As students enter the classroom, have them write down whether they agree or disagree with each statement. Then ask volunteers to briefly explain their responses. Alternatively, share the **interactive version of the activity**, allowing students to respond digitally and view their classmates' responses to each statement in real time.

Preview Vocabulary (5 minutes)

- Project the **Vocabulary Slideshow** on your board or, if you're remote, share it on your computer screen. Review the definitions and complete the activity as a class. Optionally, share the Vocabulary Slideshow link directly to your LMS and have students preview the words and complete the activity independently. Highlighted words: *clod*, *combine*, *dilapidated*, *downstage*, *geologist*

2. Reading and Discussing 45 minutes

- Have a volunteer read the As You Read box on page 20 of the magazine or at the top of the digital story page.
- Assign parts and read the play as a class. Finish by reading the text feature captions aloud.
- Break students into groups to discuss the following close-reading questions. *Tip: If you're remote, you can have each group respond in a shared doc or discuss the questions in their own chat rooms.*

Close-Reading Questions

(10 minutes)

The following questions can be shared in printable or interactive form.

1. **In Scene 1, Old Karl says, “Farming is no slice of pie, but we’ve always made do with what we have.” What does he mean? What other details does the playwright include in Scene 1 to support this idea?** (figurative language, key ideas and details) *A slice of pie is a treat. By saying that farming is no slice of pie, Old Karl means that farming isn’t easy—it’s difficult and has forced the family to “make do” or manage with limited means. Other details the playwright includes to support this idea include her description of the dilapidated pickup truck, barren fields, old Karl’s well-worn boots, and not enough meat at dinner. The details about Teri and others moving away suggest that the other farming families in their community are facing similar challenges.*
2. **In Scene 2, Old Karl says, “Whenever we had money troubles, Pop checked the pipes for leaks. You don’t disturb Pop when he’s working on the plumbing.” Why was Pop checking the pipes?** (interpreting text) *Pop is not necessarily checking the pipes because they need repairing; he is busying himself with the plumbing as a way to take his mind off the stress of his family’s financial situation. He may also be repairing the pipes himself—rather than hiring a plumber—to save money.*
3. **What does the sidebar “Meteorite Collecting” help readers understand?** (text features) *The sidebar helps readers understand why meteorites are highly valued, and therefore, why scientists, reporters, and millionaires flock to Rock Creek in Scene 4.*
4. **What does Scene 8 reveal about the kind of person Pop is?** (character) *Scene 8 reveals that Pop is generous and willing to put the needs of his community above his own. In proposing his family makes the meteorite “a permanent loan” to the town, he clearly is not seeking or expecting any benefit in return from Rock Creek; he is satisfied with the good the meteorite has already done for his family and motivated by a desire to make sure the other families in his community also have what they need. The way Pop relays his thoughts on the matter and gives all of his family members a voice in the decision-making process also reveals him to be considerate and thoughtful.*
5. **Consider these lines from Karl’s poem: “There’s a space rock in our town./It stopped the ghosts from coming ’round.” What is the significance of these lines?** (interpreting text, text structure) *In Scene 1, the family discusses how Rock Creek will soon become a ghost town (a deserted town with few or no remaining inhabitants) if people continue to struggle and move away. These lines in the poem express the idea that the meteorite saved Rock Creek by bringing money, tourists, and life into the community.*

Critical-Thinking Questions

(10 minutes)

The following questions can be shared in printable or interactive form.

1. In Scene 8, Pop says, "Getting what you need out of something is better than getting all you can out of something." What does he mean? How does this idea apply to situations in real life? *Answers will vary.*
 2. Can money bring people happiness? Unhappiness? *Answers will vary.*
 3. What would you do if a meteorite landed in *your* backyard? *Answers will vary.*
- Revisit and reflect on the statements from the **Theme Anticipation Guide**. Discuss: Did reading the play develop, confirm, or change your position on any of the statements?

3. Skill Building and Writing

30 minutes

- Have students complete **Preparing to Write: The Rock Creek Meteorite**. This activity will help them organize their ideas in preparation for the writing prompt on page 24 in the printed magazine and at the bottom of the digital story page.
- Alternatively, have students choose a culminating task from the **Choice Board**, a menu of differentiated activities.

Recommended pairings from the *Scope* archives:

Debate: ["Can Fame and Fortune Make You Happy?"](#) (November 2016)

Short Read: ["Attack From Outer Space"](#) (April 2020)

Fiction: ["Lost and Found"](#) (February 2016)

Debate: ["You Just Found a Dinosaur Fossil. Now What?"](#) (November 2019)